

Joachim Gibson

(John Gibson)

"I" Co. Louisiana 7th Infantry



Enlisted on 5/1/1861 as a Private
1st Corporal 7/25/1861
Sergeant

On 5/1/1861, he mustered into "I" Co. Louisiana 7th Infantry

Prison-of-War Fort Republic, June 9, 1862
Killed at battle of Gettysburg, Pa., July 2, 1863

Identified Canteen

IDENTIFIED CONFEDERATE WOOD DRUM CANTEEN

SGT. JOACHIM GIBSON COMPANY I, 7th LOUISIANA INFANTRY (LOUISIANA TIGERS)





This Confederate cedar wood canteen is in excellent condition, retaining both iron retention bands and all three tin bracket straps as well as the original spout. Threaded through the strap brackets is the original, thin, russet brown leather sling strap that has parallel, impressed, shallow fullers on either side of the entire strap. The strap is in fair condition, although quite dry with a small broken section in one area which someone seemingly glued together a long time ago. It has been left in the condition found. Inked on the exterior, finished side of the sling strap is **“Joachim Gibson Co I”**



JOACHIM GIBSON CO I



4484

Records
of
LOUISIANA
CONFEDERATE SOLDIERS
and
Louisiana
Confederate Commands

VI

—
IN THREE VOLUMES
—

Compiled by
Andrew B. Booth,
Commissioner Louisiana Military Records.

VOLUME I.
NEW ORLEANS, LA.

1920

Joachim Gibson

(John Gibson)

Enlisted on 5/1/1861 as a Private

1st Corporal 7/25/1861

Sergeant

On 5/1/1861, he mustered into "I" Co. Louisiana 7th Infantry

Gibson, Joachim, Pvt. Sergt. Co. I, 7th La. Inf.
En. June 7, 1861, Camp Moore, La. Roll
for July and Aug., 1861, Present or ab-
sent not stated. Promoted from 1st Corpl.,
July 25, 1861. Rolls from Sept., 1861, to
Feb., 1862, Present. Roll to June 30, 1862,
Present, captured Fort Republic, June 9,
1862, Federal Rolls of Prisoners of War,
Captured Fort Republic, June 9, 1862. Ex-
changed at Aikens Landing, Va., Aug. 5,
1862. Rolls from Jan., 1863, to April, 1863,
Present. Rolls to Aug., 1863, Killed at
battle of Gettysburg, Pa., July 2, 1863.
Record copied from Memorial Hall, New
Orleans, La., by the War Dept., Washing-
ton, D. C., May, 1903, Born England, oc-
cupation laborer, res. New Orleans, La.,
age when enlisted 28, single. Killed at
Gettysburg, July 2, 1863. Was captured at
Pt. Republic, returned before battle of
Richmond.

Prison-of-War Fort Republic, June 9, 1862

Killed at battle of Gettysburg, Pa., July 2, 1863

Joachim Gibson

(John Gibson)

Joachim Gibson (John Gibson in the unit's muster sheets), a 28-year-old, unmarried laborer, an immigrant from England living in New Orleans, enlisted in early June 1861, at the rank of Private; quickly promoted to the rank of 1st Corporal, in July 1861, Gibson accompanied his regiment to Virginia, where he was captured during the engagement at Port Republic, on June 9, 1862. After two months in captivity, Gibson was exchanged in early August at Aikens Landing (Aiken's Landing was located on the north bank of the James River – the Richmond side – just above Varina, and just below the site of where the Dutch Gap Canal was built, in the general vicinity, but up river, of Deep Bottom.

Obstructions had been placed in the James in the neighborhood of Drewry's Bluff, so Aiken's Landing was a convenient down-river point at which to transfer Confederate and Federal prisoners. Gibson was most likely out of equipment at the time of his exchange and was probably issued this canteen not long after he rejoined his regiment. At this point in their service, the 7th Louisiana, nicknamed the "Tigers" had shed their original, colorful, elaborate Zouave style uniforms, obtaining more practical uniforms akin to the soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia.

Research does not reveal if Gibson immediately rejoined his regiment upon his exchange, but he does reappear on the company rolls in January 1863; during the Fall and early Winter of 1862, the Tigers would participate in the **Battles of Antietam** and **Fredericksburg**. In the Spring of 1863, Gibson, along with his regiment, would participate in the **Battle of Chancellorsville**. According to records at the Confederate Memorial Hall in New Orleans, Gibson was killed in action, on July 2, 1863, during the 7th Louisiana's assault on **Cemetery Hill**.

Joachim Gibson (John Gibson) was listed in his Muster Sheets as being present for every engagement up to the 2 July, 1863 when he was killed.

680

Gibson, John

Co. I, 7 Louisiana Infantry.

(Confederate.)

Private | Sergeant

CARD NUMBERS.

1	46801807	20
2	1836	21
3	1911	22
4	1992	23
5	2073	24
6	2150	25
7	2576	26
8	2270	27
9	2270	28
10	2372	29
11	2373	30
12	2571	31
13	49021486	32
14	50479969	33
15		34
16		35
17		36
18		37
19		38

Number of medical cards herein

Number of personal papers herein

BOOK MARK:

See also

Confederate.

G

7

La.

John Gibson
Pvt, { Capt. D. A. Wilson, Jr.'s, Company
(Virginia Blues),
7 Regiment Louisiana Volunteers *

Appears on

Company Muster Roll †

of the organization named above,

for *dated June 7*, 1861.

Enrollment:

When *June 7*, 1861.

Where *Camp Moore*

By whom *Lt W W Pope*

Period *for the war*

Remarks:

* This company subsequently became Company I, 7th Regiment Louisiana Infantry.

† Caption of roll shows: "Ordered into service of the Confederate States by Secretary of War from the 7 day of June, 1861."

Book mark:

[Signature]

(Confederate.)

G 7 La.

John Gibson
1 Corp., Co. I, 7 Reg't Louisiana Infantry.

Appears on
Company Muster Roll

of the organization named above,
for June 7 to June 30, 1861.

Enlisted: Transferred
When June 7, 1861
Where Capt. Moore's Co.
By whom St. Pons
Period for the term of the war

Last paid:
By whom _____
To what time _____, 1861

Present or absent Not stated
Remarks:

Book mark: _____
M. J. [unclear]

(Confederate.)

G

7

La.

John Gibson
4 Supt, Co. *D*, 7 Reg't Louisiana Infantry.

Appears on

Company Muster Roll

of the organization named above,

for *July & Aug*, 186*1*.

Enlisted :

When *June 7*, 186*1*.

Where *Camp Moore La*

By whom *St Pope*

Period *War*

Last paid :

By whom *Capt M E Robinson*

To what time *July 30*, 186*1*.

Present or absent

Not stated

Remarks :

*Promoted from 4th Corp
val July 25 1861*

Book mark:

M. Price

(Confederate.)

G

7

La.

John Gibson

4 Serjt, Co. I, 7 Reg't Louisiana Infantry.

Appears on

Company Muster Roll

of the organization named above,

for *Sept & Oct*, 186*1*.

Enlisted:

When *June 7*, 186*1*.

Where *Camp Moore*

By whom *St. Pope*

Period *Mar.*

Last paid:

By whom *Capt Robinson*

To what time *Sept 1*, 186*1*.

Present or absent

Present

Remarks:

Book mark:

[Signature]

G

(Confederate.)

7

La.

John Gibson
4 *Sergeant*, 7 Reg't Louisiana Infantry.

Appears on
Company Muster Roll
of the organization named above,
for *Nov & Dec*, 1861.

Enlisted:
When *June 7*, 1861
Where *Camp Moore*
By whom *St. Pope*
Period *Mar.*

Last paid:
By whom *A. M. Livingston*
To what time *Nov.*, 1861

Present or absent *Present*
Remarks:

Book mark:

M. J. ...

(Confederate.)

G | *7* | **La.**

John Gibson
4 Reg't Co. 7, 7 Reg't Louisiana Infantry.

Appears on

Company Muster Roll

of the organization named above,

for *Jan'y 4 Feb'y*, 186*2*.

Enlisted:

When *May 20*, 186*2*.

Where *New Orleans*

By whom *Lieut Pope*

Period *War*

Last paid:

By whom *Capt Livingston*

To what time *Dec 31*, 186*1*.

Present or absent *Present*

Remarks:

Book mark: *POSITIVE* *1803*

M. J. ...

(Confederate.)

4

7

La.

John Gibson
Sergt., Co. I, 7 Reg't Louisiana Infantry.
Appears on a

Muster Roll

of released (exchanged) prisoners of the organiza-
tion named above,

for Feb 28 to June 30, 1862

Enlisted :

When June 7, 1861.

Where Camp Moore

By whom Lieut Pope

Period War

Last paid :

By whom Livingston

To what time Feb 28, 1862

Present or absent Present

Remarks: Captured at Port
Republic June 9, 1862

Book mark :

L. D. Barton

Confederate.

G.

7

La.

John Gibson
4 Serg't, Co. I., 7 Reg't Louisiana Infantry.

Appears on

Company Muster Roll

of the organization named above,

for *Jan'y 4 Feby*, 186*5*.

Enlisted:

When *June 7*, 186*1*.

Where *Camp Moore*

By whom *St Rome*

Period *War*

Last paid:

By whom *Capt Bridge*

To what time *Dec 31*, 186*1*.

Present or absent

Present

Remarks:

Book mark:

M. H. ...

(Confederate.)

G

7

La.

John Gibson
4th Regt, Co. *D*, 7 Reg't Louisiana Infantry.

Appears on

Company Muster Roll

of the organization named above,

for *Mar & April*, 1863.
Dated May 12 1863

Enlisted :

When *June 7*, 1863.

Where *Camp Moore*

By whom *St. Rose*

Period *Mar*

Last paid :

By whom *Capt Bridge*

To what time *Feb 28*, 1863.

Present or absent *Present*

Remarks :

Book mark :

M. J. ...

(Confederate.)

G

7

La.

John Gibson
4 Sgt, Co. *L*, 7 Reg't Louisiana Infantry.

Appears on

Company Muster Roll

of the organization named above,

for *May to June*, 1863.
dispt Aug 10 1863

Enlisted :

When *June 7*, 1861.

Where *Camp Moore*

By whom *St. Pope*

Period *War*

Last paid :
By whom *Capt. Bridge*

To what time *April 30*, 1863.

Present or absent

Remarks: *Killed at Gettysburg*
July 2 1863

Book mark:

M. Mann

(Confederate.)

G

7

La.

John Gibson
H. Serjeant, Co. *D*, 7 Reg't Louisiana Infantry.

Appears on

Company Muster Roll

of the organization named above,

for *July to Aug*, 1863.

Enlisted :

When *June 7*, 1863.

Where *Camp Moore*

By whom *Lieut Pope*

Period *War*

Last paid :

By whom *Capt Bridge*

To what time *April 30*, 1863.

Present or absent

Remarks: *Killed at the Battle of
Gettysburg Pa. July 2 1863*

+ Name appears in Col's report of names present

Book mark:

C. A. Bruce

(Confederate.)

G

7

La.

Arro Gibson
1st Corp Co. I (Virginia Blues),
7 Regiment Louisiana Infantry.

Appears on a
"Record"

of the organization named above,
from June 7, 1861, to Mch. 1, 1865.

Record dated *Not dated*

Enlisted:

When *June 7*, 186*1*.

Where *Camps Moore*

Period *War*

Born—(State) *England*

Occupation *Laborer*

Residence—(Nearest P. O.) *N. O.*

Age when enlisted *28*

Married or single *Single*

Remarks: *Killed Gettysburg*
July 2 1863 was captured
at Port Republic and returned
before the battle of Richmond

*From copy (made in the R. & P. Office, War Department, in May, 1903.) of an original record borrowed from the Louisiana Historical Association at New Orleans, La.—R. & P. 722177.

M. Brown

OCT. - 6.

46802571

1905.

ENGAGEMENTS.*

Bull Run, July 18, 1861	U
Manassas, July 21, 1861	U
Front Royal, May 23, 1862	U
Winchester, May 25, 1862	P
Cross Keys, June 8, 1862	P
Port Republic, June 9, 1862	P
Gaines' Mill, June 27, 1862	P
Malvern Hill, July 1, 1862	P
Cedar Mountain, Aug. 9, 1862	P
Bristoe Station, Aug. 27, 1862	P
Manassas, Aug. 28, 1862	P
Manassas, Aug. 29, 1862	P
Chantilly, Sept. 1, 1862	P
Harper's Ferry, Sept. 15, 1862	U
Sharpsburg, Sept. 17, 1862	U
Fredericksburg, Dec. 13, 1862	P
Chancellorsville, May 4, 1863	U
Winchester, June 14, 1863	U
Gettysburg, July 1, 1863	U
Gettysburg, July 2, 1863	K
Raccoon Ford, Sept. 14, 1863	
Rappahannock, Nov. 7, 1863	
Mine Run, Nov. 27, 1863	
Wilderness, May 5, 1864	
Wilderness, May 6, 1864	
Spottsylvania, Dec. 10, 1864	
Spottsylvania, Dec. 12, 1864	
Cold Harbor, June 2, 1864	
Monocacy, July 9, 1864	
Winchester, Sept. 19, 1864	
Cedar Creek, Oct. 19, 1864	
Hatcher's Run, Feb. 6, 1865	
Cat Tail Run, Feb. 7, 1865	

*The following characters mean: P. present and unhurt; w. wounded; s. w. severely wounded; k. killed; a. absent without leave; a. f. absent on furlough or satisfactorily; a. d. absent on detail or duty by order; a. s. absent sick; a. w. absent wounded; a. c. absent captured; a. a. absent under arrest; c. captured; x. deserted; m. missing; p. d. present detailed; m. w. mortally wounded.

(Confederate.)

G 1 7 Las

John Gibson
Priv Co I 7 Regt La

Appears on a

List

of non-commissioned officers and privates exchanged at Aiken's Landing, Va., Aug. 5, 1862.

List dated not dated, 186 .

Captured:
Where Port Republic
When June 9, 186 .

Delivered July 5, 186 ,
by L. Minx

Remarks:

Number of roll:

4; page 48
Aiken's Landing, Va.

(639b)

J. Archelau

Copyist.

(Confederate.)

917 La

John Gibson

Priv. Co. 7 Regt La

Appears on a

Roll

of prisoners on board the Steamer Coatzacoalcos.

Roll dated _____

not dated, 186

When taken June 9, 1862.

Where taken P. Rep.

Remarks: _____

Number of roll: _____

3; sheet 2

G. E. Jones

(CONFEDERATE.)

G

7

La

J. Gibson

pvt Co I 7 Regt La

Appears on a

LIST

of killed, wounded and missing, of
Early's Division, during the
campaign in Pennsylvania and
Maryland, June and July, 1863.

List dated.....

not dated, 186

Place..... Gettysburg Pa

Date..... July 2, 1863

Remarks:..... killed

Series 1, Vol. 27, part 2, page 474.

Herring

()

Copyist.

1371

(CONFEDERATE.)

G

7

La

J. Gibson

Pvt Co I 7 La Regt

Appears on a

REPORT

of casualties, in Hays Brigade, in
the battles near Gettysburg, Pa.,
July 1 to 3, 1863.

Report dated

July 18, 1863

Date

July 2, 1863

Remarks: Killed

Casualties, Pa., 9.

Gross

Copyist.

7th La Regt July 1.

Co A, Wounded, Private J Kennedy
 " B, " " " J M Coy, W Ford,
 " C, " " " J Casey
 " E, " " " Sergt J B Glynn
 " H, " " " C Kickey
 " I, " " " E Madden
 " L, " " " J Curstain

July 2nd

Co A Wounded, Capt W P Thompson, Private A Bonard
 " " " E Eagan, J M Quittly, Nat Lytle, J Boninson,
 " B " Sergt Geo Acker, B F Dixon, Private L Dilghman
 " " " W Kirby, J G Brown,
 " " Missing, Lieut L Worcester,
 " C Killed, Sergt Finnerty,
 " " Wounded, Capt C Cameron, Private Malloy
 " " " G Hard, J M Dermot,
 " D " Private, J Rodgus,
 " E Killed, Lieut W F Talbot,
 " " Wounded, Sergt G Anderson, Private J Hays
 " " " J J Muller, Geo Thompson, G Holzback
 " F Killed, Sgt Nichol (Private)
 " " Wounded, Private J Mauly
 " " Missing, Private John Emms, Leo Young,
 " G Killed, Color Sergt Tho Thorpe,
 " " Wounded, L G Cortes, R K McNeill, G Shannon,
 " H Wounded, Private L McDonald, W Powell
 " I Killed, Private Jerry Lynch, J Gibson
 " " Wounded, Private L Dunlavy, J Downing, W Winter

7th Louisiana Infantry Regiment

(During Sergeant Gibson's Service)

The 7th Louisiana Infantry enrolled 1,077 men during the Civil War. Of these, 190 men were killed or died of their wounds, 68 died of disease, 2 were killed in accidents, 1 was murdered and 1 executed. Fifty-three were known to have deserted and 57 took the Oath of Allegiance to the United States.

1861	
May	Organized at Camp Moore from men from New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Donaldsonville, and Livingston.
June 5	Mustered in at Camp Moore with 944 men under the command of Colonel Harry T. Hays, Lieutenant Colonel Charles DeChoiseul and Major Davidson B. Penn Company A – “Continental Guards” – Captain G. Clark Company B – “Baton Rouge Fencibles” – Captain A.S. Herron Company C – “Sarsfield Rangers” – Captain C.M. Wilson Company D – “Virginia Guards” – Captain R.B. Scott Company E – “Crescent Rifles Company C” – Captain S.H. Gilman Company F – “Irish Volunteers” – Captain W.B. Ratliff Company G – “American Rifles, Company A” – Captain W.D. Rickarby Company H – “Crescent Rifles, Company B” – Captain H.T. Jett Company I – “Virginia Blues” – Captain D.A. Wilson Company K – “Livingston Rifles” – Captain T.M. Terry
June	Moved to Lynchburg, mustering over 850 men.
June 22-23	Companies A-E under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Charles DeChoiseul moved from Lynchburg to Manassas Junction on the Orange & Alexandria Railroad. Assigned to the Brigadier General Jubal Early's Brigade at Camp Pickens.
July 18	Blackburn's Ford Two men were killed and two were wounded.

July 21	<p>First Battle of Manassas (Bull Run)</p> <p>The regiment was temporarily assigned to Longstreet's Brigade and was posted on Chinn Ridge. It participated in the pursuit of the Federal army towards Poplar Ford. In the evening it was stationed a mile northwest of the Stone Bridge over Bull Run at the Carter farm, Pittsylvania, soon known as Camp Hays. The regiment lost 3 men killed and 20 or 23 men wounded.</p>
July	Assigned to Walker's Brigade, 1st (Provisional) Corps, Army of the Potomac. Lieutenant Colonel DeChoiseul took temporary command of Wheat's Special Battalion while Colonel Wheat recovered from his wound at Manassas.
July 25	The regiment was brigaded under Colonel I.G. Seymour, senior colonel of the Brigade, with the 6th, 8th and 9th Louisiana Infantry Regiments and Wheat's Battalion.
September 29- October 1	Reconnaissance to Great Falls.
October 21	The regiment was brigaded in the Eighth Brigade of the Army of the Potomac under Brigadier General Taylor with the 6th, 8th and 9th Louisiana Infantry Regiments and Wheat's Battalion as the First Louisiana Brigade and was assigned to Ewell's Division.
1862	
May	<p>Shenandoah Valley Campaign</p> <p>Attached to Taylor's Louisiana Brigade of Ewell's Division, which joined Jackson's Army of the Valley in the Shenandoah.</p>
May 7	Somerville Heights (detachment)
May 23	Battle of Front Royal

	The regiment was in reserve and suffered only two men wounded
May 24	Middletown
May 25	First Battle of Winchester
June 1	Mount Caramel
June 8-9	Battles of Cross Keys and Port Republic The regiment lost 132 men, nearly 50% of those engaged, charging a battery supported by the 7th Ohio Infantry. Colonel Hays was badly wounded and Lt. Colonel DeChoisul was mortally wounded.
June 19	Lieutenant Colonel DeChoisel died from his Port Republic wound in Richmond. Major Penn was promoted to lieutenant colonel and Captain Thomas M. Terry of Company K was promoted to major.
June 25 – July 1	Seven Days Battles The 7th Louisiana lost 68 men.
July 25	Colonel Hays was promoted to brigadier general and given permanent command of the brigade. Lieutenant Colonel Penn was promoted to colonel and Major Terry was promoted to lieutenant colonel.
June 27	Battle of Gaines' Mill
July 1	Battle of Malvern Hill
August 9	Battle of Cedar Mountain
August 26	Bristoe Station
August 27	Kettle Run

August 28-30	Second Battle of Manassas
September 1	Battle of Chantilly
September	Maryland Campaign The regiment lost 69 men in the campaign.
September 12-15	Siege and Capture of Harpers Ferry
September 17	Battle of Sharpsburg (Antietam) Commanded by Colonel Penn, who was wounded. Lieutenant Colonel Thomas M. Terry took over the regiment, which suffered 69 casualties.
December 13	Battle of Fredericksburg The regiment was in reserve near Hamilton's Crossing.
1863	
May 1-4	Battle of Chancellorsville
May 3	Marye's Heights The regiment lost 80 men. Colonel Penn and Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Terry were captured.
June 14-15	Second Battle of Winchester Hay's Brigade circled around the west side of Winchester and assaulted the Star Fort on the northwest side of town. The 6th, 7th and 9th were in the front line with the 5th and 8th in support as the brigade stormed the fort, capturing its artillery and driving off the defenders. The 7th Louisiana lost 24 men. Captain J. Moore Wilson was wounded and

	<p>Lieutenant Vittrivius P. Terry (brother of Lt. Colonel Terry) was mortally wounded.</p>
<p>July 1-3</p>	<p>Battle of Gettysburg</p> <p>The regiment was commanded by Colonel David B. Penn and brought 235 men to the field. It lost 13 men killed, 40 wounded and 5 captured, mostly in the assault on Cemetery Hill on the evening of the second day. Lieutenant W.P. Talbot was killed on July 2.</p> <p>From the monument to Hays's Brigade at Gettysburg:</p> <p>July 1. <i>Advancing at 3 P. M. with Hoke's Brigade flanked Eleventh Corps aided in taking two guns pursued retreating Union troops into town capturing many and late in evening halting on East High St.</i></p> <p>July 2. <i>Moved forward early into the low ground here with its right flank resting on Baltimore St. and skirmished all day. Enfiladed by artillery and exposed to musketry fire in front it pushed forward over all obstacles scaled the hill and planted its colors on the lunettes capturing several guns. Assailed by fresh troops and with no supports it was forced to retire but brought off 75 prisoners and 4 stands of colors.</i></p> <p>July 3. <i>Occupied a position on High St. in town.</i></p> <p>July 4. <i>At 2 A. M. moved to Seminary Ridge. After midnight began the march to Hagerstown.</i></p>

Pelican Regiment



The **7th Regiment, Louisiana Infantry**, commonly known as the **Pelican Regiment**, was a Confederate unit organized in May 1861 at Baton Rouge. Composed of men from New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and other areas, the unit served prominently in the Army of Northern Virginia from the Seven Days' Battles to Appomattox, notably under General Early.

Key Details About the 7th Louisiana Infantry (Pelican Regiment):

- **Formation:** Organized in May 1861 and entered Confederate service in June 1861.
- **Commanders:** The unit was part of brigades led by R. Taylor, Harry Hays, and Zebulon York.
- **Major Battles:** Fought at First Manassas, Jackson's Valley Campaign, Seven Days' Battles, Maryland Campaign, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, and the Wilderness.

Louisiana Tigers During the Civil War

During the Civil War, Louisiana's battalions and regiments of foot soldiers were collectively known as the Louisiana Tigers with a reputation for reckless, often alcohol-fueled behavior.

Present throughout the **Civil War**, from First Manassas to Confederate General Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Louisiana's Confederate infantry forces were a part of the Army of Northern Virginia and were commonly known as the Louisiana Tigers. The nickname originated with one New Orleans volunteer unit and, due to a combination of fierce fighting and notorious actions, came to encompass a six-company Louisiana battalion. Ultimately, the entirety of the state's foot soldiers in the Civil War's eastern theater came to be known as the Louisiana Tigers.

With the onset of the war in April 1861, thousands of white Louisiana men joined hastily assembled **infantry companies** across the state, prepared to fight for the newly formed **Confederate States of America**. These locally organized groups of roughly one hundred men each—in units bearing such names as the Carondelet Invincibles, Atchafalaya Guards, and Pelican Greys—mustered into service as the battalions and regiments of foot soldiers that, by the end of the war, were collectively known as the Louisiana Tigers.

Civil War-era Louisiana saw the formation of several units associated with the predatory big cat, groups such as the Calcasieu Tigers and the Rapides Tigers. Yet a New Orleans-based company has the most direct lineage to the Louisiana Tiger brigade: the Tiger Rifles. Raised by Kentuckian Alexander White, the company included dozens of dockworkers and deckhands, many hailing from Ireland and White's home state upriver, as well as several reported felons. Only two native Louisianans—identified in census records as “mulatto”—appeared on the company rolls. Members embellished their hats with slogans such as “Tiger Found for Happy Land,” “Lincoln's Life or a Tiger's Death,” and “Tiger in Search of a Black Republican,” according to local newspapers.

By the spring of 1861 White's Tiger Rifles, now wearing French Zouave-style uniforms, assembled at Camp Walker on the grounds of the Metairie Racecourse. There they mustered with four other New Orleans companies: Old Dominion Guards, Walker Guards, Delta Rangers, and Rough and Ready Rangers (later Orleans Claiborne Guards). Commanded by Chatham Roberdeau “Rob” Wheat, a Virginia-born veteran of the Mexican-American War and filibuster affair in Nicaragua, the regiment subsequently trained at **Camp Moore** in St. Helena Parish. With the addition of the

Catahoula Guerillas, an array of farmers and merchants from North Louisiana, the men formally organized as the First Louisiana Special Battalion, more commonly known as Wheat's Battalion.

The five-hundred-strong unit quickly earned a reputation for its reckless, often alcohol-fueled activities, repeatedly brawling with the other volunteer companies at Camp Moore. The First Special Battalion was far from unique, however, as recruits from across the state achieved notoriety in the lead-up to battle and early days of the war. The Fourteenth Louisiana (including Carroll Parish's Tiger Bayou Rifles) and Georges de Coppens's Louisiana Zouaves proved particularly troubling as, according to local accounts, they fought, drank, and looted across the countryside en route to Virginia.

Such aggressive, often violent tendencies served the foot soldiers well on the battlefield, gaining the Louisianans early praise in the war's eastern theater. During the First Battle of Bull Run, Wheat's Battalion—including White's Zouave-uniformed Tiger Rifles—played a key role in repelling Union forces, even after the major took a bullet to the chest. For their conduct in the conflict's opening battle, Wheat's entire unit became colloquially known as the Tiger Battalion.

The animal moniker gained wider use as disquieting stories of the First Louisiana Brigade's exploits circulated through the Confederate ranks. Their infamy exploded in the wake of the Union's Peninsula campaign in southeast Virginia, with the press repeatedly reporting on their drunken brawls, livestock killings, and indiscriminate thievery. Barely a year into their deployment, their reputation and nickname had become firmly established: the scrappy infantry brigade would simply be known as the Louisiana Tigers.

Despite their loutish misdeeds the Tigers also achieved acclaim for their efforts on the battlefields of Virginia. Stonewall Jackson's campaign through the Shenandoah Valley saw them join with the First Maryland Infantry to force a Union retreat at Front Royal on May 23, 1862. At the Second Battle of Bull Run three months later, the Tigers of the newly created Second Louisiana Brigade repelled federal forces using only rocks and stones after exhausting their ammunitions supply. However, the Battle of Gettysburg in July 1863 and the Battle of the Wilderness in May 1864 resulted in heavy losses for both brigades, ultimately leading to their consolidation in the spring of 1864.

By the time of Lee's surrender at Appomattox the following year, nearly thirteen thousand men had served in the state's eastern theater infantry collectively known as the Louisiana Tigers. A quarter of these foot soldiers did not live to see the end of the war and the Confederacy's dissolution. Fueled in part by romanticized narratives of the **Lost Cause**, the soldiers' renown only grew in the decades that followed, and in

1896 Louisiana State University adopted the name Louisiana Tigers for its football team



References to the Tigers wearing their Zouave uniforms in Waynesboro by this point (early 1862) of the Civil War are absolutely incorrect. As the war progressed in **1862, the Bureau of Clothing in Richmond (Richmond Depot) was already consolidating and issuing Richmond patterned clothing to the men of the Army of North Virginia. The commutation system of clothing was already prohibited by this point and the issuances of clothing to the soldiers of the Army of Northern Virginia consisted of a Richmond Depot made shell jacket, trousers, headgear and other various clothing and equipment.** Although several states that clothed its soldiers such as North Carolina or South Carolina were prominent, there is no evidence suggesting the Tigers were wearing flashy uniforms. This can be attested to by the citizens of Waynesboro itself, in that the residents could not tell the Tigers apart from other units of Early's Division.

In 1862, most of the Louisiana troops received clothing from the Richmond Depot. The Tigers were among those men to receive clothing. Some of the soldiers decided to consolidate the new look, while keeping portions of their sun-bleached uniforms. Taking into consideration the clothing issuances after the Maryland Campaign of 1862, the Tigers lost the Zouave appearance and looked no different than that of the average soldier in the Army of Northern Virginia.

Tigers in the Cornfield: Hays' Louisiana Brigade at Antietam

D. R. Miller's Cornfield was a long way from New Orleans' docks and marshes, but for many "Louisiana Tigers" in Hays' Brigade this deadly spot would become their final resting place...

By David A. Welker – Author of *The Cornfield: Antietam's Bloody Turning Point*

In the war's earliest days, only the New Orleans company raised by Captain Alexander White bore the famous moniker, the "Tiger Rifles." White's company quickly gained the attention of Major Chatham Roberdeau Wheat, seeking men for his 1st Special Battalion, Louisiana Volunteer Infantry (the 2nd Louisiana Battalion). Also joining Wheat's battalion were Captain Robert Harris's Walker Guards, Captain Henry Gardner's Delta Rangers, and Captain Harry Chaffin's Rough and Ready Rangers (later renamed Wheat's Life Guards), then organizing at nearby Camp Davis, sited between the city's Common and Gravier Streets at South Broad (modern Camp) Street.



Major Wheat

The Tigers' commander, Chatham Roberdeau Wheat, was a uniquely American mix of intelligence, daring, and rough adventurer. Born April 9, 1826 in Alexandria, Virginia his preacher father moved the family to New Orleans shortly afterward. Elected an officer in the 1st Tennessee Mounted Regiment at 20, Wheat served under General Winfield Scott in the Mexican War. Despite being elected to the Louisiana State Legislature in 1848 and admitted to the bar the following year, Wheat soon returned to military service – as colonel of a "filibuster" mercenary expedition in Cuba. Now essentially a professional soldier of fortune, Wheat in 1855 accepted a brigadier general of artillery's commission from the Mexican State of Guerrero to campaign against Santa Anna and in 1860 travelled to Italy to serve under Garibaldi in the Campaign of 1860. Upon learning of Louisiana's secession Wheat returned home, offering his services to

the Confederacy.

The roughly 500 men joining Wheat's command were a similarly tough crew. Many were foreign-born, particularly Germans and Irish Americans, and nearly all emerged from New Orleans' rough working classes. This was particularly true of those coming from the wharves and docks, who made up one of the Nineteenth Century's lowest social classes and performed the most dangerous, dirty, and undesirable work available. One observer described Wheat's men as "the lowest scum of the lower Mississippi...adventurous wharf rats, thieves, and outcasts...and bad characters generally." Regardless, many men had already served in local militias or as filibusters in various overseas expeditions.



An original Tiger hat

None were tougher, however, than White's original Tiger Rifles company. Captain White himself was a smuggler and gambler who had served prison time, despite his Mexican War Navy service and recent efforts to reform as a respectable married steamer captain. Recruited around his steamer crew, the Tiger Rifles were soon outfitted in distinctive Zouave dress—modeled on French North African units—of blue vests, red tasseled fezzes, and their signature “Wedgwood blue and cream” one-and-one-half-inch vertically striped cottonade ship pantaloons.” They painted distinctive pictures and mottos on their hats, such as one depicting a fist fighter and the words “Before I was a Tiger,” while others read “Tiger Bound for Happy Land,” “Tiger Will Never Surrender,” “A Tiger Forever,” “Tiger in Search of a Black Republican,” or “Lincoln's Life or a Tiger's Death.” Their flag was the very model of irony, depicting a “gamboling lamb” with “Gentle As” written above.



Wheat's colorful Tigers' original uniforms

By May 1861 the battalion elected Wheat its major, joining other Louisiana regiments training at Camp Moore. There the five companies received their weapons, a mish mash seized from the Baton Rouge Federal armory in January 1861 including ancient Model 1816 flintlock conversions, Connecticut-made Model 1841 “Mississippi” Rifles, and Model 1842 muskets. Most lacking bayonets, the men carried instead large private purchase Bowie knives.

On June 6, 1861 Louisiana officially recognized Wheat's elected rank and accepted his unit as the “1st Special Battalion, Louisiana Volunteers. Although Wheat's political maneuvering to grow the unit and become the 8th Louisiana Infantry Regiment failed, the Battalion nonetheless brought a sixth

company into its ranks, Captain Jonathan W. Buhoup's Catahoula Guerrillas. Five days later, Wheat's five full-strength companies boarded a train headed to Virginia for what everyone knew would be the one and only battle deciding this still-new war.



Got something to say about our striped pants or socks? I thought not...

Arriving in Northern Virginia, Wheat's Tigers were assigned to Brigadier General Nathan "Shanks" Evans' Seventh Brigade in the Confederate Army of the Potomac. By dawn on July 21, 1861 the Tigers were posted on the far-left flank of Beauregard's line along Bull Run, on Matthews' Hill, where they were the first to confront advancing Federals under Colonel Ambrose Burnside. Greatly outnumbered, Wheat daringly ordered his Tigers to charge – briefly stalling the Union attack. Though scoring their first victory of the war, it had cost the Tigers 11 dead, two missing and 38 wounded –

including Major Wheat, shot through the lungs. Though now proven fighters in battle, it was their behavior in camp during the ensuing months that cemented the Tigers' reputation.



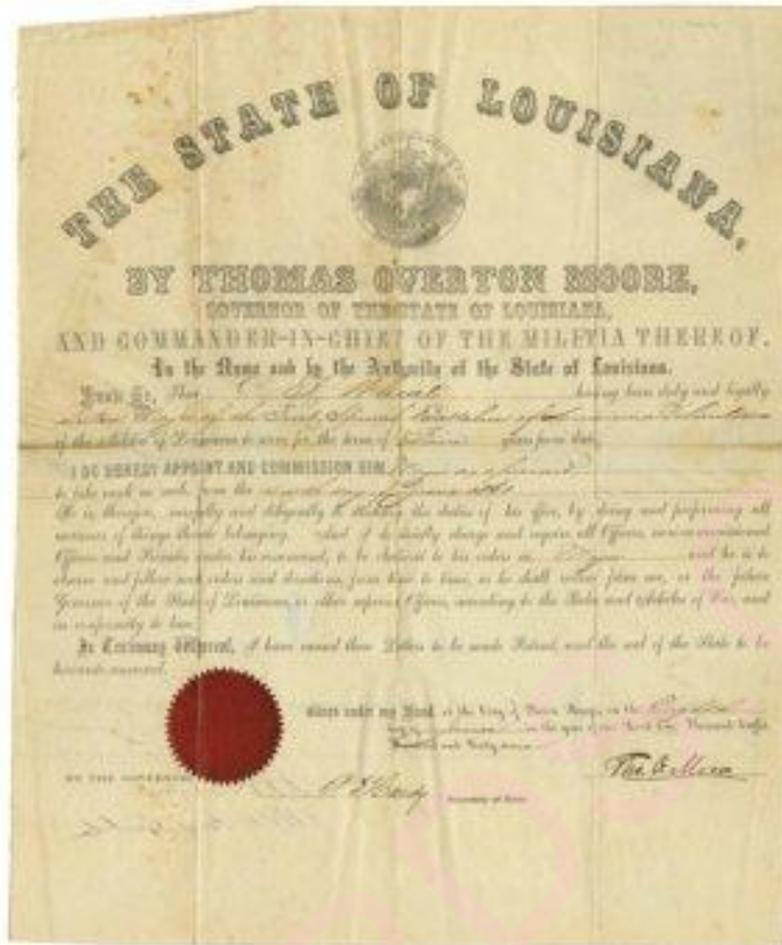
Assigned now to Brigadier General Richard Taylor's First Louisiana Brigade, part of Major General Richard Ewell's Division, they settled into "Camp Florida" near tiny Centreville, Virginia. With time to spare Wheat's men again revealed their street tough nature, which reached a crescendo when Tigers Dennis Corcoran and Michael O'Brien were executed on December 9, 1861, following a drunken row in camp which ended when the **7th Louisiana's** Colonel Hays drew a pistol on Corcoran (the executed men are buried today in the Centreville Episcopal Church's adjacent graveyard). As their brigade commander noted "so villainous was the reputation of this battalion that every commander desired to be rid of it." Nonetheless, soon the entire brigade adopted the Tiger moniker, popularly becoming "the Louisiana Tiger Brigade."



The Tigers' new uniforms

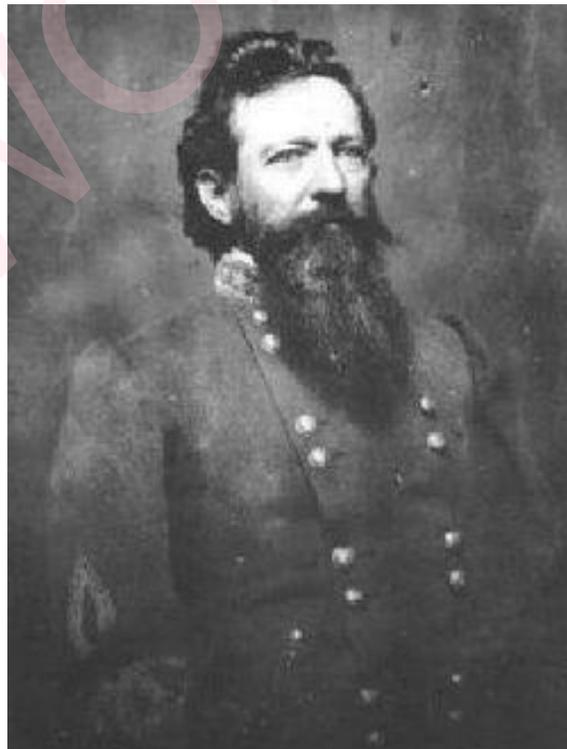
In spring 1862 Wheat's battalion and the Tiger Brigade joined Major General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson in his Shenandoah Valley Campaign in battles at Front Royal, First Winchester, and Port Republic. Wheat's four-company battalion—now minus the Catahoula Guerrillas, which fled to organizational safety in the **7th Louisiana**—replaced their worn Zouave uniforms for the Louisiana Brigade's dress, grey jean cloth jackets and pants trimmed in black.

Transferred with Jackson's army to defend Richmond from Union General McClellan's advancing host proved costly. Colonel Wheat was killed during the June 27, 1862 Battle of Gaines Mill and combat, disease, and desertion had whittled the Special Battalion down to only 60 officers and men. Lacking Wheat to champion them administratively, what remained of the original Tigers was merged into the 1st Louisiana Zouave Battalion, essentially "reorganized out of existence." Those few original Tigers who remained to reach Sharpsburg on September 17th participated with Starke's Brigade in driving two of Gibbon's Wisconsin regiments back into the Cornfield. For better or worse, the Special Battalion's reputation and name had shifted to its former brigade – Taylor's Brigade became the Louisiana Tiger Brigade.



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

Wheat's commission, found on his body after Gaines Mill



Brigadier General Harry T. Hays

The Louisiana Tiger Brigade now consisted of the 5th, 6th, **7th**, 8th, and 14th Louisiana Infantry, along with the Louisiana Guard Artillery. With General Taylor's July 1862 transfer west, the 7th **Louisiana's** General Harry T. Hays assumed formal command but because Hays remained away recuperating from a shoulder wound sustained at Port Republic, the 5th Louisiana's Colonel Henry Forno assumed de facto command.

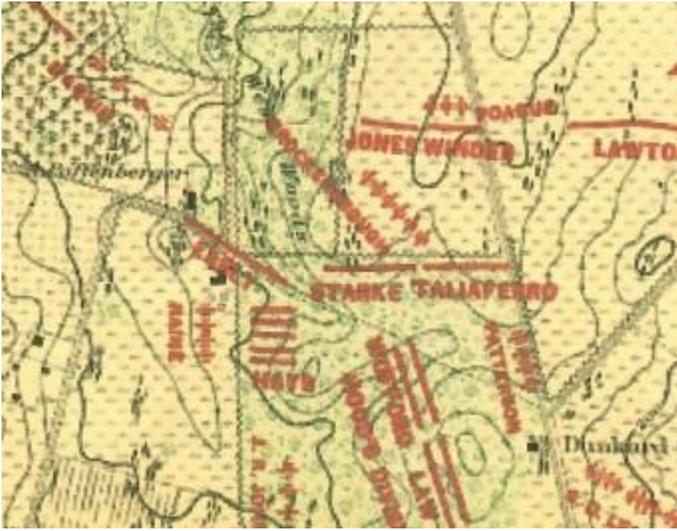
Moving north as part of Lee's 1862 Virginia Campaign, the Tigers' next saw significant combat during the Second Battle of Manassas. Posted on August 29 along the famous unfinished railroad cut, after several waves of Union assaults expended their ammunition and with another blue wave coming, the men grabbed rocks lining the railroad bed – hurling the stones blunted the Federal attack. Still, the Tigers' lost 37 killed and 95 wounded and command shifted again when Colonel Forno was wounded late in the day, placing the 6th Louisiana's Colonel Henry B. Strong in charge. Moving east on August 31 brought them into action again during the rain-soaked fight at Chantilly, after which the Tigers finally enjoyed some well-earned rest.



Scene of the Tigers' famous rock fight, Second Manassas' Unfinished Railroad cut

But by September 3 the Tigers were again moving north, this time heading into Maryland. Taking part in the comparatively easy capture of Harpers Ferry on 15 September, General Hays finally rejoined the Tigers on the 16th in time to lead them back into Maryland and rejoin Lee's army gathering at Sharpsburg by nightfall.

Hays' Tiger Brigade halted behind the Dunker Church just as Hood's Division received its first fire in what was soon to become the Battle of Antietam. Meanwhile, as units arrived General Jackson posted them in a defensive position facing north on the flanks of the Hagerstown Pike. Stonewall put his own former command, Jackson's Division, in the first line, while Ewell's Division deployed behind and on the left flank of Jackson's position. Out in front of the entire position on a small knoll were six artillery pieces of Poagues' Battery. Behind this strong division-plus sized formation was Hays' Brigade, and in their rear—around the Dunker Church—Lawton's and Trimble's Brigades. Stuart's cavalry held the two or so miles between Jackson's left and banks of the Potomac River.



Tigers' position overnight, at dawn

While in the West Woods the Tigers' suffered their first casualty at Antietam near dark when Union artillery responded to the long-range fire of Poague's battery, supporting Wofford's infantry brigade then engaged in Miller's Cornfield. A random shell slammed into the woods, killing the 9th Louisiana's Lieutenant A. M. Gordon, after first tearing off both of his legs. Nonetheless, the Tigers and Jackson's other troops settled down for a fitful night amidst drizzling rain and intermittent

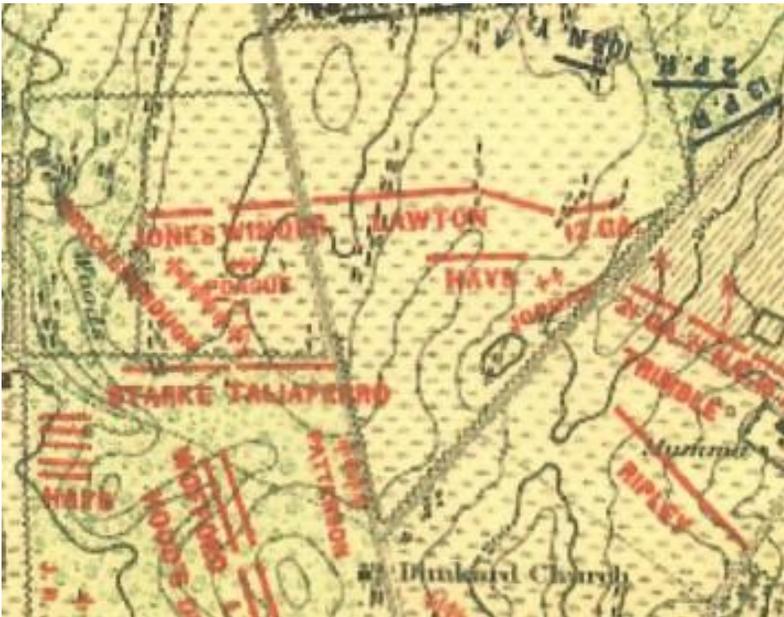
skirmishing. The 14th Louisiana's William P. Snakenberg barely slept that night, however, troubled by a premonition of his wounding in the coming battle. Fighting off an inclination to request his colonel keep an eye on him, fearing he might be thought a shirker, Snakenberg instead shredded personal letters and destroyed anything he feared falling into the enemy's hands, ending his uneasy night by consuming all his remaining food.

Around 10:00 that evening Jackson replaced Hood's exhausted command with Lawton's Division, which moved forward through the dark to form Stonewall's salient opposing the Cornfield. Lawton's former brigade, led by Colonel Marcellus Douglass, posted on the left facing north, while Trimble's Brigade, commanded by Colonel James A. Walker, moved into position on the right. With this small force Jackson would do great things, come dawn.

Union General Joseph Hooker, overseeing McClellan's opening attack on the Confederate left flank and the Federal I and XII Corps, used the darkness to plan his assault for dawn. Two divisions of his I Corps would open the attack, both aiming for the small, white Dunker Church as a shared objective, to take the ridge Jackson held and break the Southern left. Under this plan Brigadier General Abner Doubleday's Division would drive straight south along the Hagerstown Pike, while Ricketts' Division would advance diagonally across D. R. Miller's fields.

As sunrise revealed the first stirrings of Hooker's attackers, Confederate artillery on Nicodemus Heights, to the Tigers' left, opened on the enemy. Rather than deterring the Federals, this fire only accelerated their advance. As the Tigers watched from the relative safety of the West Woods, Lawton's and Trimble's Brigades facing the southern end of the Cornfield opened on Yankee attackers.

Although only one brigade of Ricketts' force, Brigadier General Abram Duryee's New Yorkers and Pennsylvanians, reached the southern end of the Cornfield, their determined attack was wreaking havoc on General Lawton's defense. Worse, Lawton soon discovered that his brigade faced not only Duryee in front but Yankees remaining in the East Woods to his right—Brigadier General Truman Seymour's men—and portions of Doubleday's advance, the left-most of Brigadier General John Gibbon's Iron Brigade, as well. Worse, in shifting to meet these threats a 120-yard gap had appeared between Lawton's and Trimble's Brigades, in the very center of his line. If this wasn't plugged soon, Union attackers would surely plunge into it and shatter his formation. Quickly, Lawton sent an aide to find General Hays.



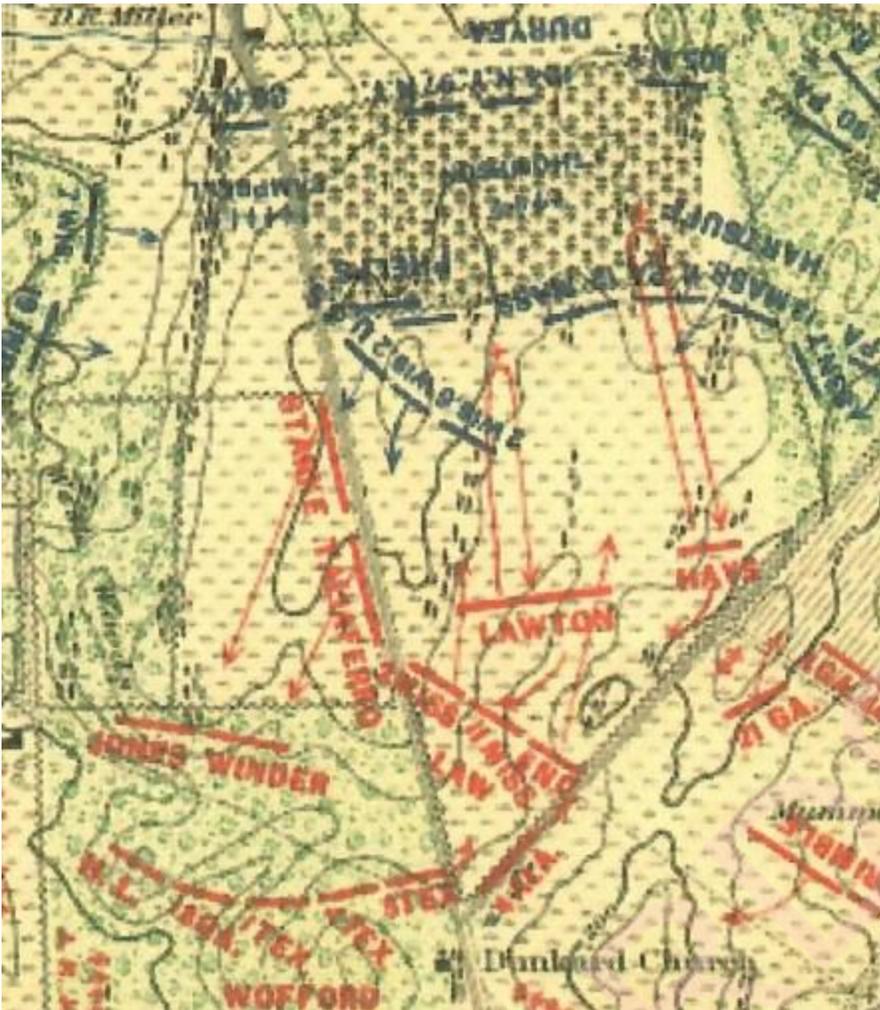
In response, Hays' 550 or so Tigers swept out of the woods, north of the Dunker Church, and onto the field. Confused by the apparent ambiguity of Lawton's order sending them to "a point in our lines yet unoccupied," Hays marched his men uncertainly forward and dispatched his assistant adjutant general, Captain John H. New, to sort out where they were supposed to be. After three moves General Lawton finally settled things by posting Hays behind Lawton's Brigade, in reserve. Though in the rear, this spot was deadly enough.

"We lay in that position with a fire from

three Yankee batteries and one from a battery of our own answering, firing over our head, besides a fire of Infantry on the Brigade in front of us," the 6th Louisiana's Lieutenant Ring later told his wife. "I thought, darling, that I had heard at Malvern Hill heavy cannonading, but I was mistaken." For the 5th Louisiana's Captain Fred Richardson these exposed moments brought a particular horror and he recalled "...a shell from the enemy plunged through my poor camp, passing first through the body of poor William [Canfield], then cut off the leg of John Fitzsimmons, then both feet of D[avid] Jenkins, and passed through my poor friend Nick [Lieutenant Canfield, William's brother], entering at the small of the back, coming out at the breast, tearing out and exposing his heart...in one shot I lost three killed." Another such shell killed the 5th's Charles Behan – on his 18th birthday.

The brigade's earlier wanderings had confused Colonel Walker, who assumed the Tigers were advancing on his left and so ordered Trimble's Brigade forward into the corn after Duryee's now-retreating Yankees. Though slow to respond, soon the whole of Trimble's Brigade pressed forward until finding Matthews' and Thompson's Union batteries; opening instantly, they forced Walker to halt. Then, still believing Hays' Brigade was advancing and seeing Union reinforcements heading straight at him through the corn, Walker retired Trimble's Brigade – yielding the eastern end of the Cornfield.

Lawton's Brigade, too, pushed into the gap created by Duryee's retreat, while to its rear the Tigers began advancing in response to an earlier plea for help from Colonel Douglass. But before the Tigers could reach them, Lawton's men were halted and began falling back, taking heavy infantry fire to both flanks—exposed by their too rapid advance—and from artillery in their front. But what really stopped and drove back Lawton's Brigade was the arrival of a fresh Union brigade ahead in the corn. With both Lawton's and Trimble's Brigades retreating, the Confederacy had lost hold of the Cornfield.



It apparently had taken little urging to get the five Tiger regiments—the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 14th Louisiana—moving forward because doing so offered relief from the deadly Federal artillery fire. By the time Hays’ Tigers reached Lawton’s line—which might have been moving backward by then—the Louisianans were alone. Still, on the Tigers pressed, crossing the southern fence and pressing deeper into the deadly Cornfield.

The fresh Union force that had driven away Lawton’s men was Brigadier General George L. Hartsuff’s Brigade, commanded now by Pennsylvanian Richard Coulter in place of the just-wounded general. Intended as the centerpiece of Ricketts’ Division’s opening attack, Hartsuff’s removal had stalled the brigade’s advance but once squared away it pressed confidently into the corn. So swift and successful had its

drive become that Coulter recalled some of his 12th Massachusetts skirmishers and Thompson’s Battery had limbered up its guns to join the advance. In an instant, though, Coulter’s command was robbed of its success as Hays’ Tigers came over a rise and through the shattered corn at the double-quick.

Seeing the Tigers advancing with speed and determination, Coulter decided to secure a better position than standing in this open field. Ordering his two left-most regiments to “Right wheel, March!” had the 83rd New York and 13th Massachusetts swing right, moving like a barn door hinged on the right. Coulter’s line now resembled a huge “L,” facing south and west – and into the center of this position marched Hays’ Tigers.

“The skirmishers had all disappeared,” recalled the 13th Massachusetts’ Austin Stearns, “we boys thought we were to go for them with the bayonet, and we fixed the same. Neither side, with the exception of the skirmishers and batteries had fired, but now it was time for the infantry to take their turn, and we were getting uncomfortably near.”



8th Louisiana Tigers

Hays' Brigade reached a point where it could go no farther on momentum alone. Having passed beyond Lawton's right flank, Yankees were now on their right and blocking their path in front. Halting the men, General Hays ordered his brigade to open fire. "The rebs fired first but we being so near, many of the balls went over our heads, but still many took effect," Corporal Sterns added. Now commenced one of the deadliest firefights of this most deadly day. It was 6:40 a.m.

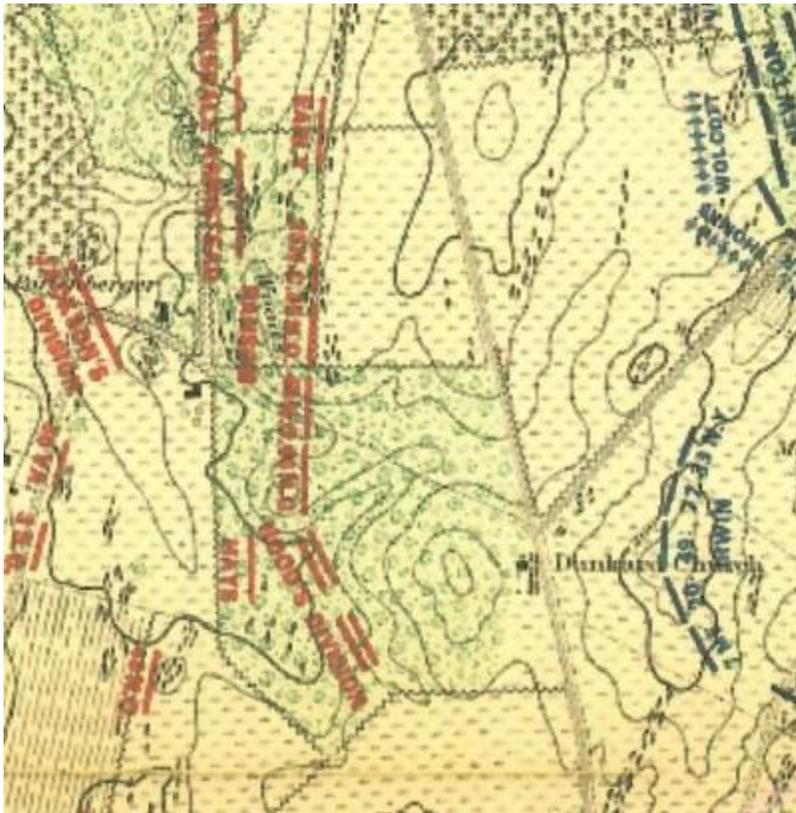
Stuck in a terrific crossfire by being caught in Colonel Coulter's L formation, the Tigers suffered greatly trying to drive away Hartsuff's Brigade. "The balls were coming so thick at this time that I feared I should never be able to get off the field," recorded the 8th Louisiana's Lieutenant George Wren. As the Tigers' ranks thinned, Wren discovered "...but three out of eighteen men [in my company] standing, several had just fallen wounded and in one moment more a ball passed through the calf of my left leg." Private Snakenberg found his premonition confirmed when just after loading his rifle "I felt something burn me and seemed to paralyze my left side. I stood still trying to think of the matter, not knowing I was wounded, and...pulled my clothes away from my body, when everything seemed to turn green to me and I staggered for 20 feet and fell." Former brigade commander Colonel Strong of the 6th Louisiana, too, was killed, atop his white horse—which also fell—and officer and mount passed from this world as a pair.



6th Louisiana Tigers

The 6th Louisiana's Lieutenant George Ring described the Tigers' Cornfield fight to his wife, "We...commenced firing upon the enemy who were in front of a wood about two hundred yards off, protected by a battery. We stood there about a half an hour and found ourselves cut all to pieces." "I was struck with a ball on the knee joint while I was kneeling by Col. Strong's body, securing his valuables. I got another ball on my arm and two on my sword in my hand, so you can see I have cause to thank God that he has protected me in this great battle." William Snakenberg found slightly more temporal help when his friend Mike Clark helped him away to find a field hospital.

Hay's Brigade had held on as long as possible but soon found its position literally melting away. When Confederate reinforcements of Hood's Division appeared, the Tigers eagerly retreated toward the Dunker Church and their original position. There General Hays reported gathering only 40 men, although that number certainly grew as others found their way back to the brigade (by the next morning this number had risen to 90, despite additional casualties suffered on the 17th). Here they remained from roughly 9:30 until 12:15 as the fighting continued in the Cornfield. Their saving reinforcements of Hood's Division meanwhile were similarly repulsed and similarly fell back beyond the church. McLaw's Division and other Confederate reinforcements arrived to drive away Major General Edwin Sumner's Union II Corps attackers, as other of Jackson's troops drove back Brigadier General George Greene's Division.



Hays' Tigers' Final Position at Antietam

Sometime before 1:00, Hays' Tigers went forward once more, advancing to support Hood's Division's hold on the West Woods immediately west of the church. Despite Hays' implied aggressiveness claimed in his Antietam report—"I moved again to the front..."—more likely his command was ordered there in response to the growing line of fresh Federal VI Corps brigades and artillery which was poised to attack the West Woods yet again.

Although this was not to be, the massed Yankee guns incessantly shelled the Confederate position, causing the Tigers additional suffering and casualties. Among these was the 6th Louisiana's Captain H.

Bain Ritchie, who had initially assumed regimental command upon Colonel Strong's death. As Lieutenant Ring wrote "We remained in the front exposed to frequent shelling from the enemy until 5 o'clock p.m., when we fell back to a less exposed position.

The losses Hays' Louisiana Tigers suffered at Antietam was unimaginable. The brigade recorded 45 killed—including 10 officers—and 289 wounded, as well as two missing, a total of 336 casualties for its trip into the Cornfield. Among its regiments, the 8th Louisiana had fared the worst, incurring 103 casualties, although the 6th and **7th Louisiana** suffered the most killed with 11 each. The 6th lost all twelve of its company-grade officers—five killed outright—and its color bearer, Sergeant John Heil.

Although despite this cost they had failed to drive Hartsuff's Brigade from the Cornfield, the Tigers had nonetheless torn the once-fresh Yankee unit to pieces, making its own retreat inevitable. The Tigers' too shared shockingly high losses with Hartfuff's Brigade, particularly his 12th Massachusetts, which suffered 76 percent casualties—the highest for any Union regiment at Antietam. Perhaps more significantly, the Tigers had cleared the Cornfield's eastern end, which eased Hood's Division's efforts in the Cornfield.

Despite its casualties suffered at Antietam, much fighting remained ahead for Hays' Louisiana Tiger Brigade. Although in reserve at Fredericksburg in December 1862, during the Battle of Chancellorsville the Tigers and Early's Division endured more combat in the May 4, 1863 fight for Banks' Ford. During Lee's second invasion of the North, Hays' Louisianans fought at the June 13-15 1863 Second Battle of Winchester, notably seizing West Fort, leading General Ewell to rename the spot "Louisiana Heights" in the Tigers' honor.



Hays' Tigers (left of the firing officer) at Gettysburg

At Gettysburg, Hays' Tigers held the Confederate right flank striking Cemetery Hill during the battle's second day. During the November 7, 1863 Battle of Rappahannock Station nearly half of Hays' Brigade was captured.

Entering the 1864 Overland Campaign with a new stock of men—Lee's May 1864 army reorganization merged them with the Second Louisiana "Pelican" Brigade—the Tigers fought at both the Wilderness and Spotsylvania, where General Hays was wounded by a shell that ended his Civil War combat service.

The Tigers, now commanded by the 14th Louisiana's Brigadier General Zebulon York, joined Jubal Early's drive down the Shenandoah Valley to threaten Washington D.C., taking part in both the July 9 Battle of Monocacy in Maryland and the July 12 attack on Fort Stevens. In Washington, D.C. When York was wounded during the September 19, 1864 Third Battle of Winchester, Brigadier General William R. Peck took charge, leading the Tigers in rejoining the Army of Northern Virginia in the works defending Petersburg. By April 1865, the Tigers had given their all and, like Lee's other troops, faced the inevitable and surrendered. But their service to Louisiana and other causes was not done.

The Tigers Invade the Union

By Terry L. Jones

On June 23, 1863, Gen. Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia began to cross the Pennsylvania state line. Gen. Jubal Early's division led the way, and among Early's veterans were approximately 1,600 Louisiana Tigers in Gen. Harry T. Hays's brigade.

Over the previous two years, the Tigers had gained as much notoriety for thievery and drunken, violent behavior in camp as they had for their bravery in battle. Stories of their wild exploits were so widespread that civilians dreaded having the Louisianians in their neighborhood. Now the Tigers were headed to the "land of milk and honey" and its endless looting possibilities.

In describing the Tigers' crossing the Mason-Dixon Line, the Eighth Louisiana's Lt. J. Warren Jackson wrote, "We shook Md dust off of our feet and marched into the union to the tune of 'Dixie.'" Crowds of curious civilians stood along the road to watch the ragged invaders file by. Jackson claimed the men teased the local people by telling them "that we had Eat up the last mule we had and had come over to get some beef & bacon. Others said we were going back into the union at last."

One of Lee's goals in the invasion was to confiscate food, livestock, shoes and anything else his army could use. A large number of African-Americans were also captured and sent back to Virginia as slaves, though there is no record of what role the Louisianians played in that sordid affair. What is clear is that the Tigers prowled through southern Pennsylvania seizing whatever they fancied.

Lee authorized the destruction of bridges, railroad tracks, government property, and legitimate military targets, but he ordered that private property be respected. For the most part, the rebels obeyed him, although General Early did burn the abolitionist Thaddeus Stevens' ironworks near Greenwood; he also levied monetary tributes on towns and threatened to burn them if the citizens did not comply. The Confederates were even ordered to give receipts for anything seized for the army, and soldiers were to pay for goods they took for personal use. One civilian wrote that the rebel officers "were apparently very careful to give receipts for all horses, cattle and other property confiscated and told our people that if they won the war, their government would pay their bills and redeem their currency in gold, but if they lost the war, the Federal government would be obliged to make settlement."

Waynesboro, just across the border and about 20 miles southwest of Gettysburg, was the first town on the Tigers' itinerary. A local resident, 16-year-old Lida Welsh, watched Early's veterans march down the street. All the rebels "seemed cheerful," she later wrote. "They spoke kindly to the children on the porches; no doubt many of them were fathers of little ones. When a 2-year-old boy, left alone for a short time, stood on a rocking-chair, and rocked with all his tiny strength until the chair moved along to the very edge of the porch, a dozen men broke ranks and rushed to save the little fellow."

Nevertheless, according to Welsh, the Tigers' officers had a difficult time keeping the men under control after they discovered a hidden cache of whiskey. Some of the soldiers relieved civilians of clothes, money, and personal possessions. Welsh reported that two men were grabbed on Main Street and taken into an alley, where they were robbed and forced to exchange their civilian clothes for the soldiers' filthy uniforms. She also noted that the Tigers particularly liked to steal hats and shoes.

It was during these first few days in Pennsylvania that the Tigers realized their infamous reputation had preceded them. One Louisiana soldier, Charles Batchelor, claimed the people readily gave food to passing soldiers, "only asking that their barns and dwelling be spared." Lt. Jackson agreed. "The people were very much afraid of us and gave the men everything that they asked for." No doubt the people feared all of the rebels, but the Tigers held a particular terror.



Attack of the Louisiana Tigers on a battery of the 11th Corps at Gettysburg

One member of the Seventh Louisiana walked into a house and politely asked the mistress if he could have some food. The woman agreed and while busying herself in the kitchen asked the soldier his regiment. When he proudly replied, "Seventh Louisiana!" she fainted. The Tiger rushed to the kitchen and knelt over the unconscious woman just as her husband walked through the door. When he angrily demanded an explanation, the befuddled Tiger told him of their short conversation. The man relaxed and told him that rebel cavalry had galloped through town a short time before and informed the people "that the Louisiana Tigers would kill, burn and destroy everything and everybody in the country." His wife had spent the last few hours dreading their arrival, and the shock of having a Tiger in her kitchen was just too much for her.

When Hays's brigade reached Gettysburg on June 26, Thomas Reed, a private in the Ninth Louisiana, was approached by a frightened woman who begged, "Spare me and my children, and you shall have everything we have got on the place!" Reed wrote that she was "the worst scared woman I had ever seen." When Reed told her all he wanted

was some food, she invited him into her house. Before she was finished, other famished Tigers wandered inside to partake of her hospitality. Reed claimed that by the time they took their leave “the little woman was almost crazy.”

Hays’s Tigers reached the city of York, 30 miles northeast of Gettysburg, on June 28. By this time, they had learned to promote their fierce reputation. As the men marched through town they overheard a group of children ask their father, “Why Papa I thought the Rebs had horns, where are they?” Turning toward them as they passed by, the soldiers jabbed their bayonets at the children and scowled, “Here are our horns!”

Foraging parties scoured the countryside and played a game of hide and seek with local farmers who were determined to protect their livestock. As Capt. William Seymour recalled,

Horses were found in bedrooms, parlors, lofts of barns and other out of the way place[s]. Major Campbell, Acting Quartermaster of our Brigade, called at a large, finely furnished house, the owner of which he had learned was possessed of a splendid horse. The proprietor stoutly denied that he had such an animal but, unfortunately for him, a neigh from an adjoining room gave the nay to his assertion and revealed the hiding place of the much-desired quadruped. The Major quietly opened the door and there in an elegant parlor, comfortably stalled in close proximity to a costly rosewood piano, stood a noble looking horse.

Judging by the reports filed by citizens for loss of property, more Tiger depredations occurred around York than anywhere else. Squads of men roamed the countryside looking for horses and food. One group took three horses from some civilians who were trying to hide them in a field. Another band of Tigers waylaid the Kessler family as they rode in a wagon and forced them back to camp. The rebels eventually let them go, but kept the wagon and five mules. The Kesslers walked home, only to discover they were missing two horses and numerous bushels of oats, corn, and horse feed.

A gristmill owner claimed that Tigers paid him a visit and left with 8 barrels of flour, 15 bushels of corn and 15 meal bags. At another mill, members of Hays’s brigade reportedly took 25 bushels of flour, 60 bushels of corn and 50 bushels of wheat. They also burned the owner’s fence rails for campfires and destroyed 20 acres of grass by camping on it.

The city of York itself did not escape the prowling Tigers, either. Private Reed wrote: “Some of the boys made a raid on the merchants of York and got a lot of hats and shoes. I got a nice hat, which I was very proud of.” Apparently, the rebels paid for everything they took from York’s merchants, albeit in worthless Confederate money. One local businessman, Jacob Sechrist, reported that Louisiana Tigers visited his

grocery store and took 30 pounds of cheese, 5 pounds of tea, 30 pounds of sugar, 8 pounds of coffee, 6 pairs of drawers, 5 undershirts and a new suit of clothes. Louisianians also “shopped” at N. Lehmayer and Brothers, walking away with 225 coats, 100 pairs of suspenders, 50 handkerchiefs and 50 pairs of wool socks.

Another unidentified store owner who claimed he had nothing left to sell let in one of the Tigers’ officers when the rebel offered to pay gold for some shirts. The officer later told his men where to get the shirts and they went to the store. When the owner declined to sell them anything for Confederate money, the soldiers forced their way in and discovered the shirts and some liquor. The owner refused to let them have the liquor so the soldiers pushed him out the door, locked it behind him and started to “indulge on a great spree.” They made so much noise that a crowd gathered as the Tigers walked out with armloads of goods. Approaching the store owner, they asked what they owed and settled their bill. The dismayed businessman reported the incident to the men’s officers but they simply told him “that the day would come when he would be glad to have some Confederate money in his possession.”

After Early’s division departed from York, a local resident wrote his brother, “The County people are beginning to come in. They were plundered indiscriminately particularly by a Louisiana brigade. Horses and mules taken, houses broken open, and everything the thieves fancied stolen.”

The Tigers’ activities continued even into the Battle of Gettysburg. A Union soldier named Justus Silliman was wounded and captured on the first day, and was treated in Hays’s field hospital. He later wrote home, “The rebels occasionally came in bringing sheep, chickens, etc captured at neighboring farm houses. ... Occasionally some of the rebs would come up from the city with carpets, collars, shoes and other articles taken from the stores in Gettysburg.”

There is no doubt the Louisiana Tigers preyed on civilians during the Gettysburg campaign, but they were relatively tame in obedience to Lee’s orders. One officer wrote that the men actually “behave worse in Va. than they did in Penn.” Captain Seymour recalled,

During our march the inhabitants were treated with the greatest kindness and consideration. ... Everything that was taken for the use of the army was paid for, except in some cases when the tender of the money was refused. Stragglers would sometimes make predatory excursions into barnyards and dairies belonging to the persons who were disposed to be inimical and unaccommodating — this was unavoidable; but I did not hear of a single instance of a citizen being insulted or his property damaged.

A Pennsylvania woman agreed, and wrote that the “southern boys were polite and courteous, but ragged and dirty.” A Franklin County historian claimed the local people “remember[ed] the Louisiana Tigers, who were much dreaded” but “there is no record that the soldiers harmed any one along the line of march, but they needed food, and a chicken or a pig running at large was not safe during this invasion.”

Maj. Robert Stiles of the Charlottesville Artillery, a Virginia unit, witnessed one memorable encounter a Waynesboro family had with Hays’s brigade. Stiles had been talking with a mother and playing with her young son, when her older son ran up and breathlessly asked, “Mother, Mother! May I go to the camp with the rebels? They are the nicest men I ever saw in my life. They are going to camp right out here in the woods, and they are going to have a dance, too!” Standing next to the front gate was “a bowing, smiling, grimacing, shoulder-shrugging Frenchman.” In broken English, he promised the mother he would look after the boy. The woman had already seen Stiles befriend her younger son, so she reluctantly consented.

Stiles wrote years later how he watched the young boy and his Cajun chaperon disappear out of sight. “If the brigade did have the dance, then the lad saw what was really worth seeing, for if there was anything Hays’ Creoles did and loved to better than to fight, it was to dance, and their camp stag dances, sandwiched in between a big march and a big battle were said to be the most ‘utterly utter’ performance in the war of faun-like pranks that grown and sane men ever engaged in.”

The Tigers’ romp came to an end on July 1. That afternoon, the Louisiana brigade helped rout the Union XI Corps at Gettysburg and captured 3,000 prisoners (twice as many men as General Hays commanded). The next day, Hays led a dramatic twilight attack against two Union artillery batteries atop Cemetery Hill. In vicious hand-to-hand fighting, the rebels captured several cannons and succeeded in breaking the Union line. It appeared that Robert E. Lee had finally gained the upper hand, but no reinforcements were sent to exploit the breakthrough, and a determined Yankee counterattack forced Hays to retreat. A Union prisoner saw the Tigers return and claimed, “A madder set of men I never saw.” One Gettysburg resident who had watched the Louisianians chase down the XI Corps the day before wrote, “There seemed now to be an entire absence of that elation and boastfulness which they manifested when they entered the town on the evening of the first of July.”

The campaign that started out so promising took a heavy toll on Hays’s brigade. Of the 1,600 Louisiana Tigers who crossed into Pennsylvania on June 23, only 945 were present for duty when they retreated two weeks later.

Gettysburg



Confederates captured at Gettysburg. Some believe that these were three Louisiana "Tigers."

Louisiana soldiers, primarily in Hays' and Nicholls' brigades, suffered heavy casualties during the desperate July 2, 1863, assault on East Cemetery Hill, with roughly 724 total casualties reported for Louisiana units throughout the three-day battle. Specific casualties on July 2 included members of the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th Louisiana regiments.

- **Key Action:** On the evening of July 2, the Louisiana "Tigers" brigade participated in a charge on East Cemetery Hill, resulting in intense close-quarters combat and significant losses.

The **7th Louisiana Infantry**, part of Harry T. Hays' Brigade (part of Ewell's Corps), fought at Gettysburg on July 1st, helping to rout the Union XI Corps, and notably participated in the fierce, late-evening assault on **Cemetery Hill** on July 2nd, pushing into Union lines before being repulsed, suffering significant casualties in these actions.

Key Engagements:

- **July 1st (First Day):** The regiment was involved in the initial fighting, pushing Union forces back through town and onto the hills.
- **July 2nd (Second Day):** The **7th Louisiana** was heavily engaged in the late-day attack on the right flank of the Union line, storming Cemetery Hill and engaging in desperate hand-to-hand combat, achieving a breakthrough but ultimately failing to hold the position due to lack of support.
- **Casualties:** They suffered substantial losses, with about 24% of their engaged men killed, wounded, or missing, a testament to their intense fighting.

Location:

- They were part of Hays' Brigade, which, after the initial day's fighting, was positioned to assault the eastern face of Cemetery Hill.

In essence, the **7th Louisiana** was on the front lines of the Confederate assault on the Union's right flank at Gettysburg, particularly on the evening of July 2nd, near Cemetery Hill.

Battle of East Cemetery Hill

The **battle of East Cemetery Hill** during the American Civil War was a military engagement on the second day of the Battle of Gettysburg, in which an attack of the Confederacy's Louisiana Tigers Brigade and a brigade led by Colonel Robert Hoke was repelled by the forces of Colonel Andrew L. Harris and Colonel Leopold von Gilsa of the XI Corps (Union Army), plus reinforcements. The site is on Cemetery Hill's east-northeast slope, east of the summit of the Baltimore Pike.

Confederate General Robert E. Lee assigned Lt. Gen. Richard S. Ewell's Second Corps to launch a demonstration against the Union right to distract the Army of the Potomac during Longstreet's attack to the south-southwest (Hood's Assault, McLaws' Assault, and Anderson's assault). Ewell was to exploit any success his demonstration might achieve by following up with a full-scale attack at his discretion. Preceded by a 4 p.m. artillery barrage from Benner Hill, the demonstration's infantry attack commenced with Johnson's Assault on Culp's Hill. The Union artillery lunettes on East Cemetery Hill provided protection from the barrage, and the counterbattery fire on Ewell's 4 batteries forced them to withdraw with heavy casualties (e.g., Major Joseph W. Latimer).

The attack on East Cemetery Hill

Baltimore Pike: Artillery lunettes downhill and along the east of the pike were uphill of the Union infantry line at the Brickyard Lane stone wall.

Northwest: Maj. Gen. Robert Rodes's division along the dirt path (now Long Lane) in the darkness was not ready to attack a different side of Cemetery Hill until the east battle was almost over.

Engagement

After the Confederates attacked Culp's Hill at about 7 p.m. and as dusk fell around 7:30 p.m., Ewell sent two brigades from the division of Jubal A. Early against East Cemetery Hill from the east, and he alerted the division of Maj. Gen. Robert E. Rodes to prepare a follow-up assault against Cemetery Hill proper from the northwest. The two brigades from Early's division were commanded by Brig.

Gen. Harry T. Hays: his own **Louisiana Tigers Brigade** and Hoke's Brigade, the latter commanded by Colonel Isaac E. Avery. They stepped off from a line parallel to Winebrenner's Run southeast of town. Hays commanded five Louisiana regiments, which together numbered only about 1,200 officers and men. Avery had three North Carolina regiments totaling 900.

The 2 Union brigades of 650 and 500 officers and men. Harris' brigade was at a low stone wall on the northern end of the hill and wrapped around the base of the hill onto Brickyard Lane (now Wainwright Av). Von Gilsa's brigade was scattered along the lane as well as on the hill. Two regiments, the 41st New York and the 33rd Massachusetts, were stationed in Culp's Meadow beyond Brickyard Lane in expectation of an attack by Johnson's division. More westerly on the hill were the divisions of Maj. Gens. Adolph von Steinwehr and Carl Schurz. Colonel Charles S. Wainwright, nominally of the I Corps, commanded the artillery batteries on the hill and on Steven's Knoll. The relatively steep slope of East Cemetery Hill made artillery fire difficult to direct against infantry because the gun barrels could not be depressed sufficiently, but they did their best with canister and double canister fire.

Attacking with a Rebel yell against the Ohio regiments and the 17th Connecticut in the center, Hays' forces bounded over a gap in the Union line at the stone wall. Through other weak spots some Confederates reached the batteries at the top of the hill and others fought in the darkness with the 4 remaining Union regiments on the line at the stone wall. On the crest of the hill against the gunners of Wiedrich's New York battery and Ricketts' Pennsylvania battery "with bayonet, clubbed musket, sword, pistol, and rocks from the wall,... 75 North Carolinians of the Sixth Regiment and 12 Louisianian's of Hays's brigade... cleared the heights and silenced the guns."

The 58th and 119th New York regiments of Krzyżanowski's brigade reinforced Wiedrich's battery from West Cemetery Hill, as did a II Corps brigade under Col. Samuel S. Carroll from Cemetery Ridge arriving in the dark double-quick over the hill's south slope through Evergreen Cemetery as the Confederate attack was starting to ebb. Carroll's men secured Ricketts's battery and swept the North Carolinians down the hill to sweep the Louisiana attackers down the hill until they reached the base and "flopped down" for Wiedrich's guns to fire canister at the retreating Confederates.

Brig. Gen. Dodson Ramseur, the leading brigade commander, saw the futility of a night assault against artillery-backed Union troops in 2 lines behind stone walls. Ewell had ordered Brig. Gen. James H. Lane, in command of Pender's division, to attack if a "favorable opportunity presented", but when notified Ewell's attack was starting and Ewell was requesting cooperation in the unfavorable attack. Losses on both sides were severe; e.g., Confederate Col. Avery: "...tell my father I died with my face to the enemy.

7th Regiment, Louisiana Infantry

Overview:

7th Infantry Regiment [also called the **Pelican Regiment**] was organized in May, 1861, and entered Confederate service at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in June. The men were from New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Donaldsonville, and Livingstone. Ordered to Virginia with more than 850 men, the unit served under General Early at First Manassas. Later it was brigaded under R. Taylor, Hays, and York. It was prominent in Jackson's Valley Campaign and on many battlefields of the Army of Northern Virginia. The 7th served from the Seven Days' Battles to Cold Harbor, then was involved in Early's operations in the Shenandoah Valley and the Appomattox Campaign. It took 827 men to First Manassas, had 132 disabled at Cross Keys and Port Republic, and lost 68 during the Seven Days' Battles and 69 in the Maryland Campaign. The unit sustained 80 casualties at Chancellorsville and 24 at Second Winchester, lost twenty-four percent of the 235 engaged at Gettysburg, and had 180 captured at Rappahannock Station. It surrendered with no officers and 42 men. The field officers were Colonels Harry T. Hays and Davidson B. Penn, Lieutenant Colonels Charles DeChoiseul and Thomas M. Terry, and Major J. Moore Wilson.

7th Louisiana Infantry Regiment

The 7th Louisiana Infantry enrolled 1,077 men during the Civil War. Of these, 190 men were killed or died of their wounds, 68 died of disease, 2 were killed in accidents, 1 was murdered and 1 executed. Fifty-three were known to have deserted and 57 took the Oath of Allegiance to the United States.

"Louisiana Tigers" was the nickname of several infantry units of the Confederate States Army from Louisiana during the American Civil War. Originally applied to a specific company, the nickname expanded to a battalion, then to a brigade, and eventually to all Louisianan troops in the Army of Northern Virginia. Although the exact composition of the Louisiana Tigers changed as the war progressed, they developed a reputation as brave but undisciplined shock troops.

The original Louisiana Tigers

The origin of the term came from the "Tiger Rifles," a volunteer company raised in the New Orleans area as part of Major Chatham Roberdeau Wheat's 1st Special Battalion, Louisiana Volunteer Infantry (2nd Louisiana Battalion). A large number of the men were foreign-born, particularly Irish Americans, many from the city's wharves and docks. Many men had previous military experience in local militia units or as filibusters. They (and the regiments that later became known as the Tigers) were organized and trained at Camp Moore.

Origins

The famous filibuster Roberdeau Wheat, returning from Italy in the spring of 1861, intended to raise a company of New Orleans troops and then a full regiment for Confederate service. On April 18, 1861, just a few days after Fort Sumter was attacked by Confederate forces, the New Orleans *Daily Crescent* carried the following announcement: "We understand that our friend, Gen. C.R. Wheat, is about to raise a company of volunteers, to serve in the Army of Louisiana. His headquarters are on 64 [Saint] Charles [Street], where we advise all friends of a glorious cause to repair and enlist."

Wheat called his company the “Old Dominion Guards” to commemorate his native state’s (Virginia) recent secession from the United States to join the Southern Confederacy. With the help of Obedia Plummer Miller, a well-established New Orleans attorney, Wheat quickly recruited fifty or so men to his company, mostly expatriate Virginians, men like Henry S. Carey, a relative of Thomas Jefferson’s, Richard Dickinson, who would become Wheat’s adjutant, and Bruce Putnam, a towering man who became Wheat’s intimidating sergeant major.

While Miller, Carey, Dickinson, and Putnam continued recruiting for the Guards, Wheat was able to attract four already-forming companies to his banner: Captain Robert Harris’s Walker Guards, Captain Alexander White’s Tiger Rifles, Captain Henry Gardner’s Delta Rangers, and Captain Harry Chaffin’s Rough and Ready Rangers (later called Wheat’s Life Guards), which were assembling a few blocks away at Camp Davis on the grounds of the “Old Marine Hospital/ Insane Asylum/Iron Works” between Common and Gravier Streets at South Broad (today’s Camp) Street. Many of the men of these precocious units, unlike those from the more upscale Old Dominion Guards, were former filibusters who had served with Wheat or Walker in Nicaragua. Since the late campaigns, they had slipped back into their old jobs as ship hands, stokers, dock workers, watermen, draymen, screw men, stevedores, or simple laborers on the New Orleans waterfront. As such, they were considered as being the lowest members of white Southern society. One disgusted observer proclaimed that many of Wheat’s recruits were “the lowest scum of the lower Mississippi...adventurous wharf rats, thieves, and outcasts...and bad characters generally.”

The Walker Guards were raised under the auspices of Robert Harris, one of Wheat’s former comrades in the Filibuster Wars. As the name denotes, many of Harris’s recruits had “smelt powder...saw the elephant...[and] felt bullets” in Nicaragua. Since the late war, Harris reportedly became the operator of a bawdy gambling establishment along the waterfront. The Tiger Rifles, the Delta Rangers, and the Rough and Ready Rangers, however, Wheat’s other cohorts, made no special claim to fame. All that is known about them, other than the fact that they were largely Irish ship hands, dock workers, stevedores, or draymen, is that the commander of the Rangers, Henry Gardner, had signed a petition which called on the governor of Louisiana to convene a secession convention and declared that the intrepid commander of the Tiger Rifles, Alexander White, was a known felon and river pilot. Similar to William Walker in stature, the fiery “White,” if that was his real name, was reportedly “the son of a one-time Southern governor,” supposedly from Kentucky. During a game of high-stakes poker in his youth, White claimed that he had shot a man who accused him of cheating. Through the influence of his supposed family, he was able to escape prosecution as long as he left the state and went underground. Fleeing to New Orleans, the vast Southern metropolis where it was easy to get lost, White most probably gambled, conned, and boozed his way through life until the War with Mexico when he enlisted in the U.S. Navy to pilot men and material down to Corpus Christi, Tampico, or Vera Cruz. After his five-year enlistment was up, he settled down, got married, and became the captain of the steamer Magnolia, which hauled goods between New Orleans and Vicksburg. During this time White once again lost his temper, severely pistol-whipped a passenger on his steamer, was arrested and convicted, and as a result, ended up in the Louisiana State Penitentiary in Baton Rouge. By March 1861, with Louisiana’s secession and the subsequent U.S. blockade, White began to form a company of volunteers around his crew and was even able to rent prime space for a recruiting station at 29 Front Levee, between Gravier and Poydras streets, near the Custom House and Camp Davis.

Wheat, using his gentlemanly appeal, was apparently able to talk Harris, White, Gardner, and Chaffin into forming a battalion under his command with the assurance that all involved would better be able to control their destinies if they acted as one. And with Wheat's eminent stature as a Mexican War veteran, a Southern partisan, a former assemblyman, and a general officer in two foreign armies, they would no doubt get the choice assignments and equipment. As such, on April 23, 1861, the New Orleans *Daily Crescent* carried the following announcement: "Gen. C.R. Wheat, with reference to raising a battalion, invites such of our friends and citizens generally, as feel an interest in the cause, to call at No. 29 Front Levee Street, where they will find the material for the first battalion of the States, and one that will make its mark when called upon."

With the deal cut, all commands, including the Old Dominion Guards (which was originally assembled across from the prestigious St. Charles Hotel), moved their constituent recruiting stations to Captain White's on Front Levee Street and recruitment became a shared task. To attract even more bellicose souls to his nascent battalion, men who "were actuated more by a spirit of adventure and love of plunder than by love of country," or who filibuster General Henningsen once proclaimed "thought little of charging a battery, pistol in hand," Wheat christened his command "the Tiger Battalion." He then extolled his volunteers, led by Captain White's large company of Tiger Rifles who had "painted a motto or picture of some sort on [their]...broad brimmed...hat[s] such as: A picture of Mose, preparing to let fly with his left hand and fend with his right, and the words, 'Before I Was a Tiger,'" to continue to comb the docks, thoroughfares, alleyways, hotels, poor houses, and jails of the New Orleans waterfront for more recruits. Other slogans that the Tiger Rifles painted on their hats included: "Tiger Bound for Happy Land," "Tiger Will Never Surrender," "A Tiger Forever," "Tiger in Search of a Black Republican," or "Lincoln's Life or a Tiger's Death."

Uniforms and equipment

While the men of the ad hoc battalion continued to attract more recruits—and in some instances impressing "known Yankees" into service, shaving their heads—Wheat worked through the Ladies Volunteer Aid Association of New Orleans to help uniform the Walker Guards, the Delta Rangers, and the Old Dominion Guards in red flannel "battle" or "Garibaldi" shirts and jean-wool trousers "of the mixed color known as pepper and salt." For headgear, the men apparently retained their own broad brimmed hats of various earthy tones (except Henry Gardner's Delta Rangers who were reportedly presented with gray or blue wool kepis and white cotton havelocks). Harry Chaffin's Rough and Ready Rangers were reportedly uniformed in light gray wool jackets and trousers with matching kepis.

The Tiger Rifles received their uniforms from A. Keene Richards, a wealthy New Orleans businessman. Because he was "so impressed by their drill and appearance" at Camp Davis, Richards elected to outfit White's company as Zouaves: dark blue wool Zouave jackets with red cotton trim (no sereoul), distinctive red fezzes with red tassels, red flannel band collar shirts with five white porcelain buttons, and outlandish "Wedgwood blue and cream" one-and-one-half-inch vertically striped cottonade ship pantaloons that would become their signature. They were also provided with blue and white horizontally striped stockings and white canvas leggings.

Most of the lieutenants and captains of the battalion more than likely uniformed themselves in dark blue wool single breasted frock coats or short jackets with matching trousers, red or blue wool kepis with stiff black leather bills, red officers' sashes, and white canvas leggings worn over or under the

trousers. The officers of the Tiger Rifles most probably wore blue wool single-breasted short jackets with red or blue wool trousers, white canvas leggings, and red wool kepis. Wheat chose to wear the uniform of a field grade officer in the Louisiana Volunteer Militia: a red kepi bedecked with appropriate Austrian gold lace, a double-breasted dark blue wool frock coat with brass shoulder scales, and red wool trousers. He also sported a buff general's sash, no doubt to commemorate his past commissions in the Mexican and Italian armies.

While Wheat, Richards, and the ladies were gathering the uniforms, the company commanders arranged to have guidons, banners, or full-blown battle flags made for their units. The Walker Guards' banner was made of "blue silk with a white crescent in the center." The Tiger Rifles' flag consisted of a "gamboling lamb" device with "Gentle As" written derisively above it. The Delta Rangers' flag, which became the battalion's color at the battle of Manassas by "the luck of the draw," was a rectangular silk "Stars and Bars" with eight celestial points in a circular pattern. As the five companies were being filled and uniformed, Wheat moved his volunteers to Camp Walker at the Metairie (pronounced met-are-E) Race Course/Fairgrounds in the center of the city near Carondelet Canal and Bayou John. On May 10, 1861, Wheat was elected major by his fellow company commanders (Obedia Miller becoming captain of the Old Dominion Guards) and state officials officially recognized his battalion. On May 14 the battalion was moved eighty miles north by rail to Camp Moore in Saint Helena Parish, near the town of Tangipahoa and the Mississippi border. The encampment, named after Louisiana's secessionist governor Thomas Overton Moore, was the central depot for organizing, training, and mustering Louisiana volunteer units for Confederate service.

Upon arrival, the Tigers were issued newly fabricated Louisiana Pelican Plate or fork-tongue belts, cartridge boxes, cap boxes, and knapsacks which were manufactured by the New Orleans-based Magee and Kneass or James Cosgrove Leather Companies. They were also issued their weapons. While the Walker Guards, the Delta Rangers, the Old Dominion Guards, and the Rough and Ready Rangers seem to have been issued either M1842 muskets or aged M1816 conversion muskets with socket bayonets, the men of the Tiger Rifles, Wheat's chosen skirmishers, were issued the coveted M1841 "Mississippi" Rifle, made by the Robbins and Lawrence Gun Company of Connecticut. Governor Moore's insurgents had seized these accurate weapons, among the best in service at the time, from the Federal Arsenal at Baton Rouge in January 1861. To offset their absence of bayonets, the Tigers were either issued or brought along their own Bowie-style knife or ship cutlasses, implements which were described as "murderous-looking...with heavy blades...twenty inches long with double edged points...and solid long handles."

Training

With their weapons and equipment in hand, the men of Wheat's Battalion were trained in the latest light and heavy infantry techniques by the Old Filibuster himself in the pine stands which surrounded Camp Moore. Once their exhausting and sometimes frustrating sessions were over, many of the Tigers often drank, played cards, and got into fights with themselves or other units. One man scoffed that the Tigers were "the worst men I ever saw.... I understand that they are mostly wharf rats from New Orleans, and Major Wheat is the only man who can do anything with them. They were constantly fighting with each other. They were always ready to fight, and it made little difference to them who they fought." Private William Trahern of the up-country Tensas Rifles (soon-to-be Company D, 6th Louisiana) claimed that he once heard Wheat declare: "If you don't get to your places, and behave as soldiers should, I will cut your hands off with this sword!" One man was in fact so afraid of Wheat's

belligerent filibusters that he stayed as far away from their encampment as possible. He later wrote: “I got my first glimpse at Wheat’s battalion from New Orleans. They were all Irish and were dressed in Zouave dress [sic.], and were familiarly known as ‘Tigers,’ and tigers they were too in human form. I was actually afraid of them, afraid I would meet them somewhere in camp and that they would do to me like they did to Tom Lane of my company—knock me down and stamp me half to death.”

As the Tiger Battalion meshed at Camp Moore, five other men with less military experience than Wheat were commissioned colonels and their assembled companies were mobilized into regiments for Confederate service. No doubt embarrassed and frustrated, Wheat was spurred to desperate action. On June 6, 1861, he made a creative deal with the state to officially commission him a major of volunteers and to recognize his five companies temporarily as the “1st Special Battalion, Louisiana Volunteers.” With the special or temporary status secured, Wheat hoped to attract four or five more companies and become the colonel of the soon-to-be organized 8th Louisiana Regiment.

In the political wrangling that followed, Wheat’s rowdy dock workers seem to have repelled potential allies to their cause as Henry Kelly, a retired U.S. Army officer from northern Louisiana, became the commander of the Eighth Regiment. With Kelly’s ascension, on or about June 8, Captain Jonathan W. Buhoup’s company of Catahoula Guerrillas voted to leave Kelly’s command and threw in its lot with the Tiger Battalion. As the Guerrillas were primarily the sons of native-born planters or were doctors, lawyers, farmers, overseers, or artisans from Catahoula Parish in northern Louisiana, they were complete social opposites from the majority of the members of Wheat’s Battalion. Originally intending to become part of a cavalry regiment, the Guerrillas outfitted themselves in gray wool short jackets, matching mounted trousers, gray wool kepis, riding boots, and, like the Tiger Rifles, were armed with stout Mississippi Rifles, looking much like dismounted dragoons. Buhoup had lobbied hard for John R. Liddell, a prominent Catahoula Parish planter, to be colonel of the 8th Regiment with himself as its lieutenant colonel. When he and Liddell failed in their bids to gain field commissions, however, Buhoup used what was left of his political leverage to have his company transferred to the Special Battalion where he hoped to gain a field commission once it was converted into a full regiment.

With six companies now under his belt—an interesting cross-section of Louisiana society—one which David French Boyd of the soon-to-be organized 9th Louisiana perceptively described as being “a unique body, representing every grade of society and every kind of man, from the princely gentleman who commanded them down to the thief and cutthroat released from parish prison on condition he would join Wheat....Such a motley herd of humanity was probably never got together before, and may never be again,” Wheat resolved to get his menagerie to Virginia, the seat of war, as soon as possible. Six other Louisiana infantry formations, the First, Second, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Regiments, had already been dispatched from the Pelican State to the Old Dominion and Wheat did not want to miss the grand battle that was supposed to win Southern independence in one fell swoop.

On June 13, 1861, not a week after his battalion’s formal organization, Wheat loaded five of his six companies (the Rough and Ready Rangers were retained at Camp Moore because it failed to sufficiently fill his ranks) aboard a freight train that was bound for Manassas Junction, a major staging area for the gathering Confederate army in Virginia. In so doing, Wheat gave up his bid to form a regiment from the special battalion, at least for the time being, and his unit was officially named the “2nd Battalion, Louisiana Volunteers” by the state. To the officers and men of the battalion, however, they would always be known as the “1st Louisiana Special Battalion,” “the Special Battalion,”

“Wheat’s Battalion,” “the Tiger Battalion,” “the Star Battalion,” “Wheat’s Louisiana Battalion,” “the New Orleans Battalion,” or simply as “Wheat’s Tigers.”

The First Battle of Bull Run (First Manassas)

The battalion first saw combat during the First Battle of Bull Run (First Manassas), where it anchored the left flank on Matthews Hill long enough for reinforcements to arrive. During this action, the Tiger Battalion conducted several brazen attacks, with Roberdeau Wheat himself suffering a serious wound at the foot of Matthews’s Hill. The Tigers were assigned to Brig. Gen. Nathan George Evans’s 7th Brigade, Confederate Army of the Potomac, and fought at Stone Bridge, Pittsylvania, Matthews’s Hill, and Henry Hill. All told, the Louisiana Tiger Battalion listed 47 casualties at the battle (31 wounded, 12 killed, 3 captured, and one wounded and captured).

“Report of Major Chatham Roberdeau Wheat, First Special Battalion Louisiana Volunteers, of the Battle of Manassas, Virginia, July 21, 1861. Manassas, August 1, 1861,

Sir:

I beg leave herewith, respectfully, to report the part taken by the First Special Battalion of Louisiana Volunteers, which I had the honor to command in the battle of July 21. According to your [i.e., Colonel Nathan Evans’s] instructions, I formed my command to the left of the Stone Bridge, being thus at the extreme left of our lines. Your order to deploy skirmishers was immediately obeyed by sending forward Company B under Captain White. The enemy threatening to flank us, I caused Captain Buhoup to deploy his Company D as skirmishers in that direction.

At this juncture, I sent back, as you ordered, the two pieces of artillery which you had attached to my command, still having Captain Alexander’s troop of cavalry with me. Shortly after, under your orders, I deployed my whole command to the left, which movement, of course, placed me on the right of the line of battle. Having reached this position, I moved by the left flank to an open field, a wood being on my left. From this covert, to my utter surprise, I received a volley of musketry which unfortunately came from our own troops, mistaking us for the enemy, killing three and wounding several of my men [sic.]. Apprehending instantly the real cause of the accident, I called out to my own men not to return the fire. Those near enough to hear, obeyed; the more distant, did not. Almost at the same moment, the enemy in front opened upon us with musketry, grape, canister, round shot and shells. I immediately charged upon the enemy and drove him from his position. As he rallied again in a few minutes, I charged him a second and a third time successfully.

Finding myself now in the face of a very large force—some 10,000 or 12,000 in number—I dispatched Major Atkins to you for more reinforcements and gave the order to move by the left flank to the cover of the hill; a part of my command, mistake, crossed the open field and suffered severely from the fire of the enemy. Advancing from the wood with a portion of my command, I reached some haystacks under cover of which I was enabled to damage the enemy very much. While in the act of bringing up the rest of my command to this position, I was put hors de combat by a Minie ball passing through my body and inflicting what was at first thought to be a mortal wound and from which I am only now sufficiently recovered to dictate this report. By the judicious management of Captain Buhoup I was borne from the field under the persistent fire of the foe, who seemed very unwilling to spare the wounded. Being left without a field officer, the companies rallied under their respective captains and,

as you are aware, bore themselves gallantly throughout the day in the face of an enemy far outnumbering us.

Where all behaved so well, I forbear to make invidious [i.e., unfair] distinctions, and contenting myself with commanding my entire command to your favorable consideration, I beg leave to name particularly Major Atkins, a distinguished Irish soldier, who as a volunteer Adjutant, not only rendered me valuable assistance but with a small detachment captured three pieces of artillery and took three officers prisoners. Mr. Early, now Captain Early, as a volunteer adjutant, bore himself bravely and did good service. My adjutant, Lieutenant Dickinson was wounded while gallantly carrying my orders through a heavy fire of musketry. Captain Miller of Company E, and Lieutenants Adrian and Carey were wounded while leading their men into the thickest of the fight. All of which is respectfully submitted C. R. WHEAT, Major, First Special Battalion, Louisiana Volunteers.”

Tiger execution

After First Battle of Bull Run, the Tigers grew in disrepute in the army due to their rowdy, sometimes uncontrollable behavior, especially after they were assigned to Brig. Gen. Richard Taylor's newly-formed “Louisiana Brigade” (later called the 1st Louisiana Brigade” or the “Louisianan Tiger Brigade”), Maj. Gen. Richard Ewell's Division, which was encamped (“Camp Florida”) around Centreville, Virginia. After one too many drunken brawls and acts of insubordination, two Zouaves, Dennis Corcoran and Michael O'Brien, from the Tiger Rifles were tried by court-martial on Taylor's orders and executed. Their remains are interred at the Centreville (Virginia) Church.

Stonewall Jackson's Valley Campaign

In early spring 1862, Richard Ewell's Division (which included Taylor's Tiger Brigade) was detached from the Confederate Army of the Potomac and sent west to reinforce the Confederate Army of the Valley, which was commanded by Stonewall Jackson. As such, the Tigers participated in his 1862 Valley Campaign, proving instrumental in Confederate victories at the battles of Front Royal, Winchester, and Port Republic. Because of a nasty friendly-fire incident during (and after) the battle of Manassas, the Zouaves of the Tiger Rifles (Company B) decided to dye out the blue in their jackets before the Valley Campaign, making them a ruddy-grey-brown. As for the rest of the battalion, which now consisted of the Walker Guards (A), the Delta Rangers (C), the Old Dominion Guards (D), and Wheat's Life Guards (E, formerly the Rough and Ready Rangers)(out of disgust, the Catahoula Guerrillas asked for and received a transfer to Maj. Henri St. Paul's 7th Louisiana Battalion and then the 15th Louisiana Infantry Regiment), they wore the uniform that was issued to them by their state government in the autumn of 1861: two shirts, one checked and one flannel; one bluish-gray jean-wool short jacket with nine Louisiana State buttons and epaulettes, trimmed with black cotton tape; matching trousers; white canvas leggings (buttoned); blue-gray jean-wool kepis with stiff black bills and trimmed with black wool and one variously colored jean-wool over coat. Many of the men apparently chose to continue to wear their distinctive red flannel Garibaldi shirts however, and they probably kept their issue jackets in a bedroll or pack until discarded. Like in 1861, they were armed with either M1842s or M1816 conversion muskets with socket bayonets. “Wheat's Tigers” were best known for leading the attack, crossing a burning bridge under fire, and seizing a Federal supply train at Front Royal and taking entrenched Federal batteries at the Winchester, and Port Republic.

Seven Days Battles

In late spring, Jackson's force was sent eastward to participate in the Peninsula campaign. Following Wheat's death at the Battle of Gaines's Mill and with but some 60 officers or men under Captain Harris, the Tiger Battalion was merged with the 1st Louisiana Zouave Battalion.

The combined unit took heavy casualties during the Northern Virginia campaign and the subsequent Maryland campaign, where its leader, Lieutenant Colonel Georges De Coppens, was killed. The depleted battalion was transferred from the Army of Northern Virginia after the Battle of Fredericksburg. It served in various districts until it was finally disbanded in December 1864.

Hays's "Louisiana Tiger" Brigade

By then, the nickname "Louisiana Tigers" had expanded to encompass the entire brigade, which was commanded by Brig. Gen. Harry T. Hays following Taylor's promotion and transfer to the Western Theater. By the Battle of Fredericksburg in late 1862, Hays's Brigade was composed of the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th Louisiana Infantry Regiments, and was a part of the division of Maj. Gen. Jubal A. Early.

One of the Tigers' greatest moments occurred on August 30, 1862, the third day of the Battle of Second Bull Run, when members of the 9th Louisiana Infantry Regiment beat back repeated Union assaults on the Confederate lines, described as follows: "After successfully breaking up three Union assaults, the Tigers found themselves dangerously short of ammunition. Two men of the 9th Louisiana were dispatched to the rear for more but a fourth Union attack was mounted before they returned. The ensuing clash was 'the ugliest fight of any' claimed Sergeant Stephens. Groping frantically for ammunition among the dead and wounded, the Louisianians were barely able to beat off the determined Yankees, who threw themselves up to the very muzzles of the Tigers' muskets. When the Tigers fired their last round, the flags of the opposing regiments were almost flapping together. In desperation Lieutenant-Colonel Michael Nolan shouted for the men to make use of the numerous rocks that lay scattered around the embankment. Sensing that the rebels were at the end of their rope, the Yankees were charging up to the base of the embankment when suddenly fist and melon size stones arched out of the smoke that hung over the grade and rained down upon them. "Such a flying of rocks never was seen," claimed one witness, as the Tigers and other nearby Confederates heaved the heavy stones at the surprised federals. Numerous Yankees on the front line were killed by the flying rocks, and many others were badly bruised." — *From "Lee's Tigers: The Louisiana Infantry in the Army of Northern Virginia" (Louisiana State University Press) by Terry Jones.*

Another point of pride for the Tigers came at the Battle of Chantilly, September 1, 1862, where a soldier from Company D of the 9th Louisiana was credited with killing Union General Philip Kearny.

During the 1863 Gettysburg campaign, Hays's Brigade played a crucial role in the Confederate victory at the Second Battle of Winchester, seizing a key fort and forcing the withdrawal of Union troops under Maj. Gen. Robert H. Milroy. During the subsequent invasion of southern Pennsylvania, much of the populace feared the thievery and drunkenness often associated with the colorful Louisianians. At the Battle of Gettysburg, Hays's Brigade stormed East Cemetery Hill on the second day and seized several Union artillery pieces before withdrawing when supporting units were not advanced.

In the autumn of 1863, more than half the brigade was captured at the Battle of Rappahannock Station, and 1,600 men were shipped to Northern prisoner-of-war camps, many to Fort Delaware.

Most would be paroled and would later rejoin the Tigers. The replenished brigade fought in the Overland Campaign at the Battle of the Wilderness and the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House, where General Hays was severely wounded.

Final organization

During the subsequent reorganization of Robert E. Lee's army in late May, the much-depleted brigade of Tigers was consolidated with the "Pelican Brigade," formally known as the Second Louisiana Brigade, which had also lost its commander, Leroy A. Stafford, a long-time Tiger. Zebulon York became the new commander.

The nickname Tigers subsequently came to encompass all Louisiana infantry troops that fought under Lee in the Army of Northern Virginia. Nearly 12,000 men served at one time or another in various regiments that were destined to be part of the Louisiana Tigers. The name was at times also used for other Louisiana troops, including Levi's Light Artillery Battery and Maurin's Battery, but it was the infantry that is most often associated with the term.

Later, York's consolidated brigade of Tigers fought in Early's army during the Battle of Monocacy and several subsequent battles in the Shenandoah Valley. In late 1864, the Tigers returned to the Army of Northern Virginia in the trenches around Petersburg, Virginia. By the Appomattox Campaign, many regiments were reduced to less than 100 men apiece, and Brig. Gen. William R. Peck had become the Tigers' final commander.

Postbellum

Following the Civil War, many former Tigers joined the Hays Brigade Relief Association, a prominent New Orleans social and political organization. Harry T. Hays, by then the local sheriff, mobilized the association during the 1866 New Orleans Race Riot. A company of former Louisiana Tigers joined the Fenian Invasion of Upper Canada on June 1, 1866, and fought the Canadian militia the next day at the Battle of Ridgeway.

State of Louisiana monument at Gettysburg

Confederate Monuments at Gettysburg

The State of Louisiana monument is southwest of Gettysburg on West Confederate Avenue, across from Pitzer's Woods. (Tour map: West Confederate Avenue – Part 4) It was dedicated on June 11, 1971. A nearby marker bears a tablet with the names of the commission responsible for the monument.

Louisiana sent over 3,000 men to Gettysburg with the Army of Northern Virginia. Around 725 became casualties. It was the seventh largest contingent and the seventh highest casualties of the twelve Confederate states at Gettysburg (see the States at Gettysburg).

State of Louisiana monument at Gettysburg

The monument is entitled "Spirit Triumphant." It was created by Donald DeLue, who was also the sculptor of the State of Mississippi monument and the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors monument. The sculpture represents a wounded gunner of New Orleans Washington Artillery clutching a Confederate battle flag to his heart. Above him the Spirit of the Confederacy sounds a trumpet and raises a flaming cannonball.