

The Black Horse Cavalry

***Organized
in
Fauquier
County***



***Co. H. 4th
Virginia
Cavalry
C.S.A.***

1

- The Black Horse Cavalry is arguably, the most famous Confederate Cavalry company.
- Why is BH so famous in Civil War literature?
- Why did Mort Künstler's paint this picture (sold out, etc.)
- That's not all.

Native Sons-The Black Horse Cavalry



2

- About 1985 Don Pretchtel did “Native Sons- The Black Horse Cavalry”
- What was so special about the Black Horse
- Why does every mention of them in the literature refer to them as “famous”?
- New book; “Lincoln’s Cavalry” when discussing First Manassas, refers to them as the “famous” Black Horse.
- That’s what I’m going to try to tell you.

William Henry Fitzhugh Payne 2nd Capt. of B.H.



3

- This guy started it all
- He was a lawyer. Commonwealth's Attorney for Fauquier
- Attended VMI, prominent family (look in telephone book for Payne)
- He married his first cousin
- So, not in good graces of family
- About 30 at time of war
- What did he do?

B.H. Began at Bellevue



4

- This was his wife's family's home – Bellevue
- Just over View Tree Mountain
- Most beautiful view in Fauquier
- (My great grandmother's sister married there.)

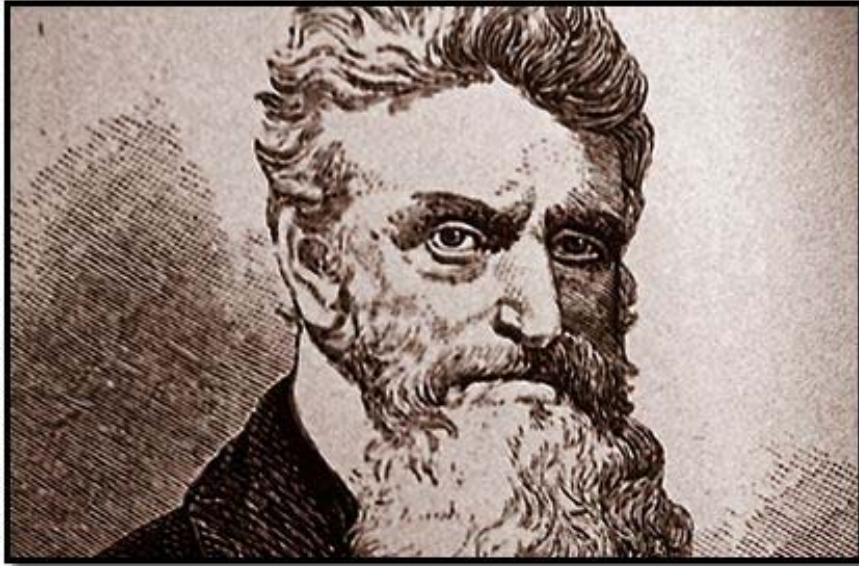
Conceived at Dinner Party



5

- Well, one night, the Paynes attended a dinner party there
- With John Scott, another lawyer
- Talked about coming events
- Disunion was “in the air.”
- They knew the war was coming
- Economic exploitation.
- “When in the Course....” Charles Adams
- Decided to form militia cavalry company
- At next “court day” they organized co. in Scott’s office.
- Scott elected captain. All officers were lawyers.
- Members were from landed gentry- mostly plantation/farm families. Upper crust.
- Initial membership about 76.

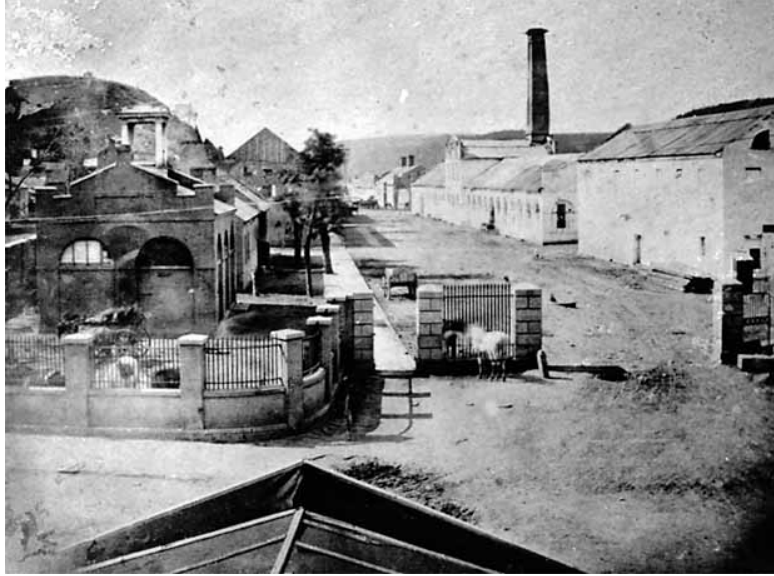
The Terrorist John Brown



6

- America's first terrorist
- Started in mid-west, (bleeding Kansas)
- In Nov. 1859, led band to takeover of Harper's Ferry
- First act was to kill a free black when they came into town

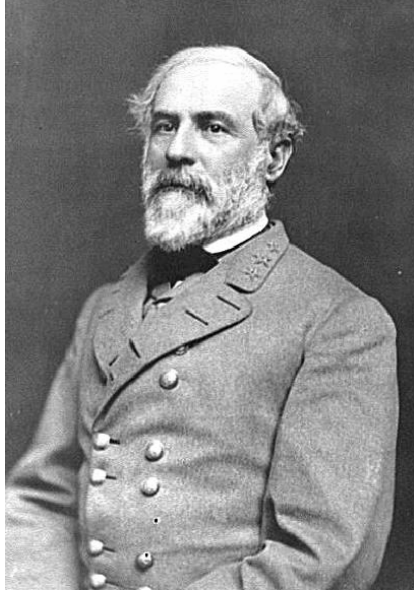
Fire House at Harpers Ferry



7

- Town defended themselves,
- Brown holed up in firehouse at armory
- Telegrams went far and wide
- Did not know whether Brown was isolated group, or part of a much larger slave revolt or invasion from north.
- State panicked
- Governor mobilized many militia companies to proceed to HF.

Gen. Robert E. Lee



8

- First to arrive was Lee with Jeb Stuart as 2nd in command and a squad of U.S. Marines.
- Story is well known.
- Attacked firehouse and captured Brown.
- One marine killed.
- Black Horse road to HF with Turner Ashby's Rangers
- Black Horse arrived too late
- Were sent to Charlestown where Brown was to go on trial

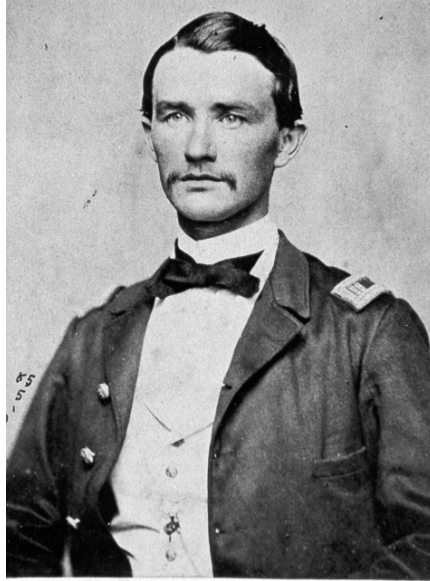
Were Brown's Guard at Jail in Charlestown



9

- Here is jail
- Black Horse assigned to guard jail and town.

Robert Randolph 3rd Captain



10

- Robert Randolph was Lt. (Later Capt. & Lt. Col.) Lived at the Grove (now Scott Carter's home) on Meetz Rd at Balls Mill.
- 27 years old
- Father was cousin to Robert E. Lee.
- He was graduate of U. VA law school
- Was practicing lawyer in Fauquier. Ran display ad in newspaper
- Robert Randolph, Nov 26 to sister Roberta:
“ ...My great fear is that the enemy will not come, for really I would like to have a small brush with some of these abolitionists – but they are not coming- the forces are too strong here for them.”

The Hanging



11

- BH escorted Brown to hanging
- Where he was duly, and JUSTLY, hung.
- You have to understand, he and Northerners were inciting slave rebellions.

Nimrod Milton Green



**Lillian
Norman's
grandfather**

**Taken at
Harpers
Ferry during
John Brown
affair**

12

- This is a typical BH cavalryman in uniform
- Lillian Norman (many years pres. Of BH chapter of UDC.
- Right fancy.

Keith, Helm & A. Payne



13

- Here is a famous BH photo
- James Keith, Erasmus Helm, Alexander Payne

Black Horse Ball



14

- After the John Brown affair, well, you can imagine the excitement
- Women of Fauquier threw a famous ball for the BH.
- I imagine it looked like this!
- (Blue Grey ball)

Fauquier Sulphur Springs



15

- We don't know where ball was held.
- Perhaps it was held here at Fauquier Springs.

Tensions kept building

- On April 1, 1861, Fauquier votes 1999 to 1 to succeed. (--- Dixon voted no.)
- Robert Randolph to sister, April 29, 1861:

“I believe our national troubles are becoming more and more alarming every day and we seem to be getting farther and farther from an amicable adjustment of our difficulties. For my part I am anxious that an issue should be made. Like a fellow in love, I prefer anything to my present state of suspense, and would not object to a little war if we could once more have a little quiet. I say little war, but I am thinking if it once commences it will be anything but a little war.”

Lincoln underestimated resolve of South.

Cub Run Bridge



16

- Union forces invaded VA. BH went to 1st Manassas
- Formed in front of Warren Green Hotel:
 - “There was such a sight and such a greeting! We can never forget it. ...every window filled,, matrons and lords, wives and sweethearts, a battery of merry, sparkling eyes. Many lads were wounded in this their first engagement – pierced to the heart.”
- Charged retreating Union forces at Cub Run Bridge:
- Randolph: We captured some 21 cannon, and worked all night getting it back...with the whole train worth upwards of a million dollars and delivered them over to Gen. Beauregard and Jeff Davis amid tumultuous applause from the soldiers. [First PR event!!]
- Newspapers reported BH in charge of Zouves. Not True.
- “But ah, Bert, the sight of the battlefield now how horrid. Mangled bodies lying thick upon the ground and poor wounded men begging for a little water. Sad indeed is the sight. I can stand the fight while the firing is going on, but the sight afterwards is revolting.”

Scouted Fauquier – Commended by Lee



17

- BH assigned to Gen. Bonnam and then to Gen. Joe Johnston for a while.
- In Oct. Randolph promoted to Capt. Of BH. “I may say I am in clover now. I have the finest company in the Northern or Southern army, and I trust that providence may aid me in leading such noble men and brave hearts to noble deeds.”
- In Winter of '63, BH sent to Fauquier to get horses and keep an eye on the Yankees.
- In gen. Order. Lee says: Capt. Randolph of the Black Horse Cavalry made many bold reconnaissance in Fauquier, taking more than 200 prisoners.”
- Lee tactfully didn't mention that some BH also got drunk and stole tobacco from a Culpeper farmer.
- Yankees would report “BH is active.”

Gen. Stonewall Jackson



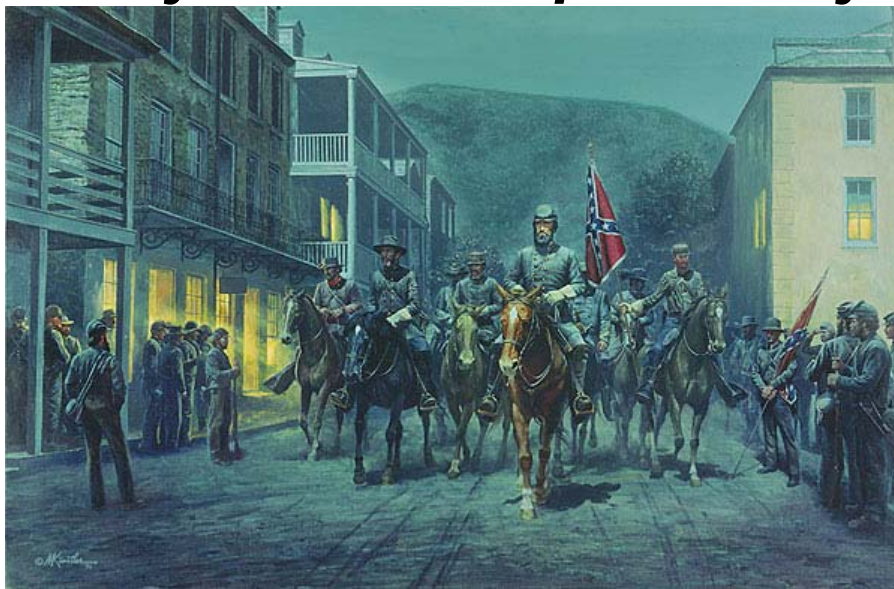
18

- This is the guy that really raised the BH to prominence.
- Before the battle of 2nd Manassas, BH assigned to Jackson as bodyguards, scouts and couriers.
- They his ONLY cavalry.
- On way, at Plains, 30 of BH sent back to guide Gens. Lee and Longstreet to Jackson. There Lee delivered famous flank attack that routed Yankees.

2nd Manassas



Only Cav. at Harpers Ferry



20

- Then, the Maryland campaign began that started with Harpers Ferry and ended with Antietum.
- Again, BH assigned to Jackson.: James Keith reported:
 - Along the route, there was manifested by the people the greatest curiosity and desire to see their great General...when Jackson was pointed out the them they would send up a great shout, and the General, lifting his cap would gallop away from the applause....The BH sent forward one of their members to ride as near to Jackson as military etiquette would allow. He was, bay all odds, the ugliest fellow in the command; indeed, the BH used to brag that he was the ugliest fellow in either army. When the next admiring crowd was passed, and they demanded to see the great captain, this soldier was pointed out to them. When they shouted and cheered he halted, ...and received their compliments. Jackson, of course, had galloped on as usual. When the General, turning in his saddle, saw what was going on he was greatly amused, and the joke was repeated until the novelty wore off.”
- Commended in Jackson’s official report, almost unheard of for Co.

Martin Home Farm-Casanova-1898



21

- One family had three brothers in BH, the Martin family.
- Two, three, even four brothers not unusual.
- Farm was at intersection of Meetze Rd and Beach Rd.
- Were descendants of Germantown Martins.
- Bob, Josh, and Dick
- Prosperous family – 700 acres.
- Home became refuge and base for BH.

Martin Home Farm-2000



22

- House today.

Robert Martin

“The Bravest Man in Lee’s Army”



23

- 1st Sergeant of BH.
- Bob awarded rifle as “bravest man in Lee’s Army. Rifle exists.
- Alexander Hunter:

“Bob Martin ought to have lived in the days of the Crusades. He would have made an ideal Sparticus, or a Jack Cade, for he was a born gladiator: six feet one inch in height, weighing about 180 pounds, with not an ounce of superfluous flesh, it was no wonder he was the acknowledged leader among the daring men of the Black Horse.

“In personal strength he was a phenomenon, and he was a quick and active as a panther. He had a good, honest countenance; his eyes were gray, and his firm mouth and chin showed the character of the man. In action he had the sternest face I ever saw, and his eyes had within them a baleful glitter that was terrifying. As a partisan he was at his best.”

“Josh” Martin



24

- This is Bob’s brother George Washington Martin
- Involved in famous incident.
- In August, 1864, Early assigned to Valley, BH went with him.
- There, he was involved in a famous, rather, notorious incident.
- Let me introduce the “players”.

The War Criminal Sheridan



25

- In the valley, Early battled Gen Phillip Henry Sheridan, America's first war criminal.

Gen. Montgomery Meigs



26

- This is Montgomery Meigs.
- The renowned Union Quartermaster.
- If Union could do anything, they could move material.
- His son, Lt. John Rogers Meigs was on Sheridan's staff and a favorite.
- Martin and couple others on a scout and ran into Lt. Meigs. It was twilight, and raining.
- Firefight resulted in Meigs getting killed.
- Sheridan outraged at death on one of his "favorites."

Tomb of Lt. John Rogers Meigs



27

- He was found in the road
- Buried in Arlington National Cemetery
- Can you imagine what that statue cost?

The Burning



28

- Sheridan went berserk!!
- Thought Meigs killers were bushwhackers.
- Ordered every home within 5 miles of event to be burned.
- And it was done.
- Even today in the valley, they speak of “the burning.”
- Imagine what would have been said if Gen. Swartzkoff, in Desert Storm, had started burning Iraq homes, because he believed they harbored partisans, or because someone ambushed some of his soldiers.== WAR CRIMINAL.

3 of 4 Helms Brothers, K.I.A



29

- I've told you about the Martin brothers. They all survived the war.
- The war was not always so kind to families.
- The Helm family was a prosperous Warrenton family, with FOUR sons in the Black Horse.
- If you park your car in front of the gates to the Warrenton Cem. And look to the West, you will see the Helms family plot. The four brothers are buried side by side.
- Three of the brothers were killed, 62, 63, 64.
- Can you imagine the grief of those parents?

At Gen. Payne's Home 1890



30

- A widely circulated photo of the first BH reunion.
- They were in their 50s now.
- They had settled down to ordinary lives in Fauquier.
- Where was this photograph taken?

Payne House Today



31

- Payne home
- S.E. Corner of 5th St and Lee .
- Better question, why was this picture taken?

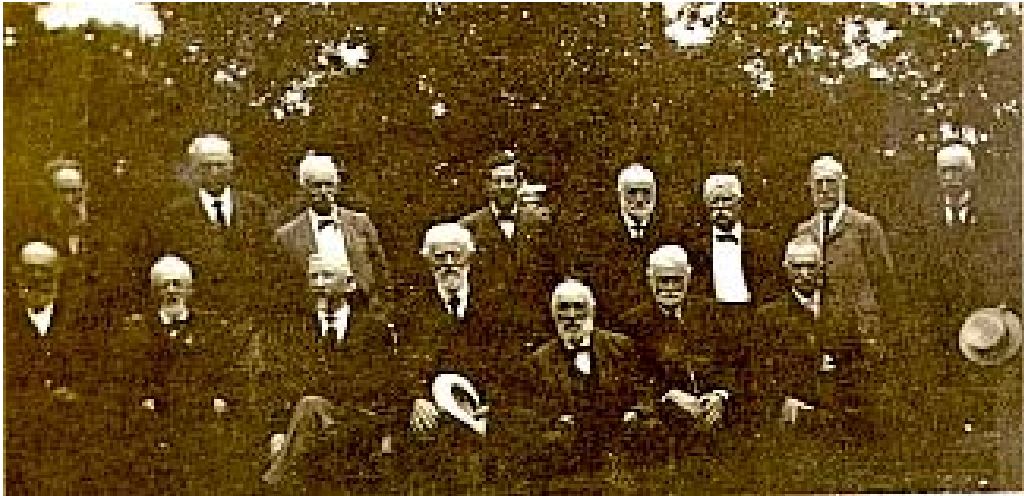
Lee Monument-Richmond



32

- The occasion was the gathering to attend the dedication of the Lee monument in Richmond.
- They took the “cars” to Richmond.

1909 Reunion



33

- They continued to meet well into 20th century.
- But, fewer and fewer.

1912 Reunion



34

- Taken 22 years after first photo.
- 17 meet at home at Fauquier Springs.
- What happened to them?
- Lived lives of distinction.

Grave of John Scott 1st Capt.



35

- Scott lived long life.
- Wrote book on Mosby
- Was Commonwealth Attorney in Fauq. For 25 years.

Grave of Col. Robert Randolph



36

- Killed at meadow bridge, commanding 4th Virginia
- He and Jeb Stuart died the same day, May 12, 1864.
- Buried at Eastern View

Grave of William H. F. Payne



37

- What happened to second Capt?
- Promoted to Brigadier
- Became chief counsel to Southern Railway.
- His first dau. Married son of General Eppa Hunton.
- Eppa Hunton, Jr., a lawyer (Hunton and Williams).
- She died and Eppa married her sister.
- Their children were said to be the only children with two Confederate General officers as grandfathers.
- She was harpist. At St. James, stained glass window next to organ, memorialized her, playing harp.

Strother Seth Jones



38

- This is the grave of Strother Seth Jones, the bugler of the BH
- He is my grandfathers grandfather, lying in Warrenton, Cemetery.
- I mention it just to note that that is how I became interested in the BH.

What Happened to Bob Martin?



39

- Why have we never heard of Bob Martin, the “bravest man in Lee’s army”? Unusual?
- Because he was killed shortly after the war farm accident. Driving a farm cart, and horse ran away, and Martin thrown from cart.
- Died TOO soon. Confederate veteran movement did not begin until the 1890s. By then, he had disappeared from historical memory.
- Research is interesting. Where was he killed. I despaired of finding out anything about him.
- See next page for Randy Carter

What happened to Josh Martin?



40

- **Josh** became the symbol of the family in Fauquier.
- When he died in 1894, aged 50, a fund for his monument was raised.

The most famous of the Blackhorsemen

The lamb of the household

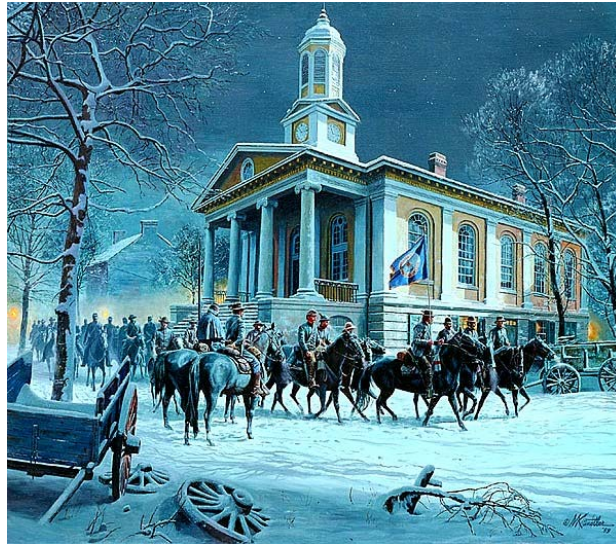
The lion in battle

He looked the foe in the face,

And in a bittersweet line,

“The Martin boys, the pride of **old** Fauquier.”

Remember the Black Horse



41

- I hope to raise a monument to the BH.
- Mort Künstler donated 26 prints for money to be raised for monument.
- Now have about \$12,000.
- Need substantially more.
- Surely the most famous Confederate Cavalry company deserves to be remembered.
- Surely the bravest man in Lee's army deserves to be remembered.
- So I occasionally think of the little prayer:
 - Lord god of hosts, be with us yet,
 - Lest we forget, lest we forget.