

Private Thomas N. Alexander
Co. I – 37th North Carolina Infantry

Enlisted 1-28-1864 at Liberty Mills, Virginia.

Co. I – 37th North Carolina was part of Lane's Brigade, Wilcox's Division of A. P. Hill's Third Corp of the Army of Northern Virginia.

June, 1864 Furloughed home sick.

August 16, 1864 wounded in action on the Weldon Railroad south of Petersburg.

August 21, 1864 at Winder Hospital in Richmond, Virginia.

October, 1864 through February, 1865 home in North Carolina on wounded furlough.

Paroled in Charlotte, North Carolina on May 11, 1865. "signed by mark"

Our story does not end in 1865. In 1935 Thomas made a recording of the "Rebel Yell" for WBT Radio in Charlotte. This was the "Rebel Yell" of an infantryman in the 3rd Corps of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

In California, in the early 1930's, a Hollywood sound studio made a recording of Private S. S. Simmons of the 8th Virginia Cavalry. He served mostly in the western parts of Virginia and was captured in Hardy County (W. Virginia) in August of 1864 and was in Camp Chase and Point Lookout until May of 1865. The UDC had this recording on an Edison disc. The Museum of the Confederacy asked permission, in 2007, to play it and try to retrieve the recording. There were concerns that the disc might be destroyed. However, the winning concern was that if they did not try we would never know if this "Yell" was the same as the WTD "Yell."

The results are remarkable! These two soldiers, from different states, one infantry and one cavalry, in different commands, sound the same. Using the magic of modern sound mixing the MOC was able to take these two voices and turn them into a Company of 80 men, a Regiment of 500 men, and a Brigade of 1800 men. The sound sends chills up your spine. It sounds like the demons of the earth have been released.

Private S. S. Simmons was our "Soldier of the Month" in July of 2009. Tonight we honor Private Thomas N. Alexander, Company I, 37th North Carolina Infantry. We thank him for his service and we thank him and a cavalryman, whom he never met, for leaving us a remarkable gift.

(Compiled Service Record – Confederate, United Daughters of the Confederacy, Richmond, Virginia Micro Copy 270, Roll 399; Mr. Mark Ramsey of Owen & Ramsey Booksellers, Richmond, Virginia; "The Rebel Yell Lives" CED, MOC, 2008. See footnotes on Pvt. S. S. Simmons archived on the James City Cavalry website as our Soldier of the Month in July, 2009)