

# Greeks Served in Civil War

5/25/05

By Steve Frangos

Special to The National Herald

On July 22, 1861 at camp Moore, Louisiana, 73 men enlisted for the duration of the Civil War. Together with seven assigned officers, they constituted Company I of the 10th Louisiana Infantry Regiment. Among the enlisted were six sailors who cited Greece as their country of birth. They were: Paoli Agius, 35; Francisco Liappi, 48; John George Met-

aleno, 30; Andre Nicole, 33; Christopholo Salonicho, 40; and Constantino Villisariez, age 22.

Their names do not show traditional Greek phonetic characteristics. This was not unusual, however.

For example, Apostolos Valerianos, though born in Greece in the 16th Century, changed his name and sailed under the Spanish flag for decades with the name, Juan de Fuco. Some changed them because non-Greeks had difficulties

in pronouncing or spelling Greek names correctly. For example, official military records have Paoli Agius also listed as Paoli Aguis, Paoli Ageos, Paoli Agros, Paul Agus, Paul Agos, Paul Agous, Paul Argoz, and Paul Ajios. Nevertheless, in every instance, the men cited Greece as the country of their birth.

On July 29, 1861 the 10th Louisiana Infantry Regiment de-

Continued on Page 4

# Greeks Served Both Union And Con

Continued from page 1

parted New Orleans by train and reached Richmond on August 3, 1861. They established their camp at the fairgrounds, where they received a warm welcome from municipal authorities, and from the citizens. On August 18, 1861 the regiment received orders to reinforce the Confederate troops commanded by General J.B. Magruder at Lee's Mills on the Warwick River.

On April 1862, Union troops under the command of General George B. McClellan began to disembark at Fort Monroe, Virginia, a movement heralding the beginning of the Peninsular Campaign. Its objectives were the destruction of the Confederate forces and the capture of Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy.

Advancing in two columns, the Union forces were stopped by General Magruder's outnumbered Confederate Troops on a defensive line extending from Yorktown on the north along the little Warwick River to the James River on the south. At Dam No. 1, on April 16, 1862, the 10th Louisiana Infantry Regiment, coming "to the front on the double quick," fought its first major battle, hurling back Union forces from its sector of the defensive line. The official records indicate that all of the Greeks in Company I of the 10th Louisiana Infantry regiment participated in this action.

A month later, the peninsular campaign of General McClellan began to collapse slowly as his forces retreated in an orderly fashion to the south towards Harrison's Landing. In this retrograde action, on June 29, 1862, the 10th Regiment participated in the battle of Savage Station. Two enlisted men of Company I deserted, one of whom was Constantino Villisariez. Official records cite his date of desertion as September 15, 1862. However, his name is absent in the rosters of Company I in the five battles following Savage Station (i.e., Malvern Hill, Cedar Run, Bull Run No. 2, Chantilly and

Harpers Ferry - September 15, 1862). This suggests that his desertion may have taken place shortly after the battle at Savage Station.

## EMERGED UNHARMED

On July 1, 1862 Union and Confederate forces engaged in a hotly contested battle at Malvern Hill. Union troops, under the command of General Porter, held strong defensive positions and repulsed all attacks by the Confederates, who suffered 5,000 casualties in two hours of fierce fighting. The losses on both sides were heavy. All of the Greeks in Company I participated in the operations and emerged unharmed.

In response to this setback at the Yorktown-Warwick line, General McClellan decided to initiate siege operations. But before he could bring up heavy siege guns, on the night of May 3, 1862, General Magruder evacuated his positions and began retreating up the peninsula to better defensive positions around Richmond. At Williamsburg, his regiment fought a rear guard action on May 4, 1862. Again, Company I took "an active hand" in this skirmish. In these operations, the forces of General Joseph E. Johnston joined those of Magruder, with Johnston assuming command of the combined troops.

With the peninsular campaign at an end, General Robert E. Lee left a garrison of 20,000 troops to protect Richmond, and sent General Stonewall Jackson north towards Washington to observe the movements of the Union forces under the command of General Pope. At Cedar Run, on August 9, 1862, General Jackson, now with the 10th Louisiana Regiment under his command, caught up with and engaged General Banks' Corps of Pope's army.

In this action, John George Metalieno was listed as "absent" in the official roster of the company, but he reported for duty and fought in the next major battle, Bull Run No. 2. In the meantime, Union forces, which had retreated to Harrison's landing, were ordered by President Lincoln on August 3 to return to Washington.

General Lee, knowing that McClellan's army was embarking for Washington, decided to attack and destroy Polk's forces before McClellan could reinforce him. Union and Confederate forces clashed in the battle of Bull Run No. 2 on August 28-30, 1862. The Federal troops were defeated and forced to



Records show that many sailors w  
their country of birth.

retreat in an orderly fashion to join McClellan's forces to defend Washington. Pope's casualties numbered 16,000 and Lee's 9,197. It was in this engagement that Andrea Nicole was captured. According to the official records, he took the oath of allegiance to the United States shortly thereafter. He was one of two enlisted men of Company I who was married.

Instead of proceeding towards Washington, Jefferson Davis and General Lee devised the strategy of invading the North with the expectation that a sequence of victories might induce diplomatic recognition of the Confederacy by European powers and an ultimate peace agreement with the Union.

With the 10th Louisiana Infantry Regiment a part of Jackson's troops, it is not surprising that, in succession, Company I participated in the battles of Harpers Ferry, Sharpsburg, Fredericks-

# federacy In The Civil War

burg, Chancellorsville, Winchester and Gettysburg, the latter being the decisive turning point of the Civil War.

In was in the battle of Sharpsburg that Christopholo Salonicho was killed in action on September 17, 1862. In the same engagement, Paoli Agius was shot and seriously

There is no indication of his presence in Company I in other battles. The final notation in the official records shows that he "deserted his regiment and joined the Confederate Cavalry in December, 1862."

John George Metalieno was promoted to corporal in February 15, 1862. He was wounded in the

document with the title, "Unofficial memorandum." It identifies the officers of "Greek Company A, Louisiana Militia, Capt. Nicolas Touloubief, 1st Lt. Alex. Laxaredo, 2nd Lt. D. Gregori, 2nd Lt. N Bragoreff, and 2nd Lt. Constantino Coratosos." In addition, there is a military order issued from the Adjutant General's Office in New Orleans dated June 5, 1861, which reads:

"Order No. 478. Col. J.T. Winemore will issue to Capt. Nicolas Touloubief of the Greek Company A of one captain, three lieutenants, eight noncommissioned officers and 70 privates (illegible)... and subsistence stores (illegible)..."

The order is written in an excessively ornate penmanship, making it difficult to comprehend the meaning of a few segments. When additional references could not be located with respect to "Greek Company A," a letter was sent to the historical section of the Department of Defense requesting their assistance in uncovering any information on that unit. After an exhaustive search, they responded by stating that no additional information could be found.

The history of the men born in Greece who served in the Confederate army must not be viewed as a single, isolated case, but as an occurrence in the Union forces, as well. Since New Orleans was a major seaport to which ships from many nations charted their course, it is to be expected that New York City and Boston would also have been the ports of entry for Greek immigrants, some of whom, in all probability, enlisted in the armed forces of the Union.

The above was authored by the late George P. Perros, Esq., and Professor Theodore P. Perros. It was furnished to the National Herald by Steve Frangos, who obtained reprinting permission from AHEPA.

Readers interested in contacting Mr. Frangos are encouraged to e-mail him at [greekwrite@yahoo.com](mailto:greekwrite@yahoo.com).



who enlisted in the army during the American Civil War cited Greece as

wounded in the right shoulder joint, the term, "disabled," is written in the official report. He is listed in the Hospital Muster Roll of the Louisiana Hospital in Richmond (December 2, 1862). Nine months later, on September 25, 1863, he is listed on a register in the C.S.A. General Hospital in Danville, Virginia. By direct order No. 250 of General Robert E. Lee, Paoli was ordered to report to the Surgeon General in Richmond, on October 6, 1863. The last available information concerning him, dated January-February 1864, is that he was detailed to the laboratory in Mobile, Alabama.

The oldest enlisted member of Company I was Francisco Liappi, who was 48 years of age. He was present and accounted for in all engagements through Malvern Hill. For the battle of Cedar Run, the official records indicated that he was absent due to sickness.

battle of Gettysburg on July 3, 1863. In the next two engagements in which Company I was involved, Payne's Farm and the Wilderness, the records show that he was absent due to sickness. There are conflicting accounts, however. One states that he was absent at the Wilderness, but another reference indicates that he was captured there. The official Federal document states that he was captured at Spottsylvania on May 11, 1864 and taken first to the Old Capitol Prison in Washington, DC. He was then transferred to Fort Delaware on June 15, 1864. The final records state that he died of acute dysentery on August 15, 1864.

In the various documents relating to the Louisiana Militia, references are made to the existence of companies such as the German Company, the Italian Company, etc.

Interestingly, there is an extant