Confederate hero honored...

LOOKING AT HISTORY — Carl Ford shows his rifle to James Read, the great-great-grand nephew of Lt. Charles Read, as his fellow members of the Jones County Rosenhills, Larry Calhoun and Howard Patrick, look on during memorial services at Rose Hill Cemetery on Saturday morning.

Monument placed at Rose Hill Cemetery
"When Mr. Hewitt Clark, our Meridian author, decided to come to Meridian to release his new book, which is a biography of Lt. Read, we thought it would be a wonderful time for the monument dedication."

— Dr. Bill East, Friends of Rose Hill Cemetery

raising of money for that monument resulted in the placing of that monument in April of 1999 to honor him. The camp was waiting for an appropriate time to dedicate that monument.

"When Mr. Hewitt Clark, our Meridian author, decided to come to Meridian to release his new book, which is a biography of Lt. Read, we thought it would be a wonderful time for the monument dedication," East added.

Although he was a poor student, graduating at the bottom of his class from the Naval Academy, Lt. Charles "Saxton" Read went on to become known as one of the most courageous men in the Confederate Navy. His daring tactics and naval prowess even earned him the nickname "John Paul Jones of the Confederacy".

In fact, during one 23-day period, Read and his crew of 17 volunteers captured 22 Union vessels using only one cannon.

When the war ended, Read married only to have his wife die at an early age. He remarried though, this time to Miss Nebraska Carter, of Meridian. Read and his new wife moved to New Orleans, but often visited friends in Meridian. And it was during one of these visits to Meridian that Read died.

Before he died though, Read learned of Rose Hill Cemetery and asked that his body be laid to rest with his Confederate comrades buried there.

According to East, there are many reasons we should honor the memory of men like Read such as his character and courage.

"The characteristics we honored in Lt. Read are not because he was a Confederate, it was because he was an American and a Mississippian," East said. "And those character traits of resourcefulness, inventiveness, loyalty to his country and extreme degrees of courage are characteristics that are worthy of honoring in our ancestors."

East said he was pleased with how the ceremony went Saturday morning and the large crowd that attended. The crowd included many Meridianites but there were also a lot of Read's ancestors, coming from as far away as Pennsylvania and California. And several descendants of Read's shipmate, John Billups, even came for the ceremony.

Since many of the people involved in the ceremony had never met before, a reception was held Friday night at Weidmann's to give everyone a chance to meet. And according to East, the out-of-towners who attended had nothing but praise for Meridian.

"Last night a reception and dinner was provided for all of the descendants who numbered more than 35 for Lt. Read and several for John Billups, his shipmate," East said. "We had 64 at that dinner and I have never seen more people impressed with southern hospitality and with the people of Meridian who would take time to honor one of their ancestors."

Evans Smith is a staff writer for The Meridian Star. E-mail him at esmith@meridianstar.com.
COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY

HONORING

CHARLES WILLIAM "SAVEZ" READ
LIEUTENANT, CONFEDERATE STATES NAVY

Charles William Read
13 May 1840–25 January 1890

PRESENTED BY
W. D. CAMERON CAMP 1221, SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS,
FRIENDS OF ROSE HILL CEMETERY
and
HEWITT CLARKE

ROSE HILL CEMETERY
MERIDIAN, MISSISSIPPI
SATURDAY – JULY 15, 2000
PROGRAM

COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY

Pipe Medley
Pipe Jean Orcutt

9:00 a.m.

Honoring

9:30 a.m.

Assembly
Bugler

Rev. Tom Wood, Chaplain
W. D. Cameron Camp 1221, SCV

Invocation

Jones County Rosin Heels
Confederate Marine Detachment

Presentation of the Colors

Jimmy Walker, Color Bearer
W. D. Cameron Camp 1221, SCV

Pledge and Salutes

Mayor John Robert Smith

Welcome

Billy Ray Hankins, Commander
Mississippi Division, SCV

Remarks

Ward Calhoun, Commander
Mississippi Society, Military Order Stars & Bars and
Adjutant, W. D. Cameron Camp 1221, SCV

Remarks

Dr. Bill East, President
Friends of Rose Hill

Remarks

Hewitt Clarke, Author of
HE SAW THE ELEPHANT, Confederate Naval Saga of Charles Read, CSN

Unveiling of Marker for Lieutenant Charles William Read
Charles Read,
Great-great-grandson of Charles William Read

BONNIE BLUE FLAG

PLACING OF WREATHES

For Charles William and Nebraska Carter Read
Lizabeth Schultz,
Great-great-great-granddaughter of Charles William Read

For William Donald Cameron
Sharle Miller Alloway,
Great-granddaughter of William Donald Cameron
Rifle Salute
Taps
DIXIE
Announcements
Retiring of the Colors
Benediction

CONTINUING
LT. CHARLES READ COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY
at UNION STATION 11:30
Lunch

Music Dedicated to Lt. Charles Read
Hoppy Spinks and his Band

Presentation of the Book, HE SAW THE ELEPHANT
Hewitt Clarke

Family History and Anecdotes
Charles William Read Descendants
Tim Read, being from Virginia was asked to speak on Charles Read's exploits along the James River.

CONTINUING
LT. CHARLES READ COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONY
at ROSE HILL CEMETERY
4:30 p.m.

History of Rose Hill Cemetery and the Confederate Burial Mound and Biographical Sketches of Some of the Noble Citizens Buried at Rose Hill, presented by Dr. Bill and Mary East.