

The Washington Volunteer ... PUGET SOUND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE ... NOV 2007

MEETING: November 8, 2007

China Harbor, 2040 Westlake Avenue North, Seattle, Washington

MENU CHOICES: Pork Chop or Salmon

Dinners include: salad, vegetable delight, General Tao's chicken, fried rice and fresh fruit. Cost is \$21, payable at the door. Social hour at 6 p.m.; dinner served at 7 p.m.; program at 8 p.m. Call Marty Wingate at 206-782-3941 or email her at martywin@earthlink.net to make reservations. Deadline for reservations is Tuesday, November 6.

Elizabeth Vandiver to Speak at November Meeting



Elizabeth Vandiver will discuss *A Southerner in the Peloponnesian War*, Basil Lanneau Gildersleeve's look back at his Civil War service. During the war, Gildersleeve wrote editorials for the Richmond Examiner, rode with the 1st Virginia Cavalry, and served as an aide to General John Brown Gordon, until severely wounded in the Shenandoah in 1864. After the war he remained a passionate Southerner. He was also one of America's greatest classical scholars.

An Assistant Professor of Classics at Whitman College, Elizabeth Vandiver has received the American Philological Association's Excellence in Teaching Award and other teaching awards, and has taught several courses for The Teaching Company. ☞

NOTE: Remember to turn off cell phones before the meeting so there are no distractions for the speakers.

Field Report from Gettysburg

By Rick Solomon

Last April I registered to go on a tour of the Second Day of the Battle of Gettysburg with Ed Bearss scheduled for the weekend of October 13-14. Back in October 1980 I had gone to the National Congress of Civil War Roundtables in Chattanooga. There were many speakers at that Congress including Gary Gallagher, Jerry Russell and Ed Bearss. Battlefield tours of Chickamauga and Chattanooga were led by Edwin Cole Bearss. What I remember about those tours was Ed's almost photographic memory of where various units, down to the regimental level, were located throughout the battlefields, and an enthusiasm and booming voice by this former marine.

On Saturday, October 13, about 40 of us boarded the bus outside of the Days Inn at 8 a.m. Although it had been 27 years since I last saw him it seemed to me that Ed hadn't aged a day. His stentorian voice was intact, his memory was sharp, his enthusiasm undiminished, and as we all were soon to find out, his energy seemingly boundless. It would have been an incredible demonstration by a 44 year old. Ed is 84 years old. The first thing we did was retrace by bus the route taken by Longstreet's two divisions, McLaws and Hood, on the morning and afternoon of July 2 to get into position to attack the Union right flank. Some facts that were unknown to me such as Law's brigade of Alabamans had marched 26 miles since 2 a.m. by the time they got into position on the Confederate extreme right to commence the attack. Besides marching this long distance Law's men had virtually no water in their canteens when the attack commenced. At Little Round Top Ed showed us exactly where the left flank of Chamberlain's Twentieth Maine was located and gave his opinion that Chamberlain is given too much credit for the defense of Little Round Top. Others who should be given more credit, according to Ed, were Chamberlain's brigade commander, Strong Vincent, Patrick O'Rourke of the 140th New York, Stephen Weed and Gouverneur Warren.

If you haven't been to Gettysburg in a couple of years, like me, some incredible sights await you thanks to the efforts and leadership of the Superintendent Latcher. The superintendent is trying to restore the battlefield foliage to the condition it was in at the time of the battle by using photographs and accounts that were contemporaneous to the time of the battle. In the area around Devils Den, trees have been cut down to reveal more of the Valley of Death, the Slaughter Pen, Houck's Ridge and the Triangular Field. By doing this tree cutting, vistas have been opened up to other parts of the battlefield, thereby making it easier to understand the battle. The briar patch by Trostle Farm is once again a briar patch

instead of the heavy woods that it had been for decades. Thus we were better able to understand the repulse of Wilcox's Alabama brigade by the 1st Minnesota, which resulted in 82% casualties to that Union regiment. Peach trees have been replanted in the Peach Orchard and other farms that had them at the time of the battle.

On Saturday we also visited the Peach Orchard and the Wheatfield. Both days our group had an all-you-can-eat lunch at General Pickett's Buffet. On Saturday night I tried to dine at one of my favorite restaurants in the world, the Dobbin House, but due to Gettysburg College having it's Homecoming Weekend, the waiting time was prohibitive.

On Sunday Ed picked up the pace as we explored the area, by special Park permit, with a long walk from the Trostle Farm to Watson's battery which had been taken over by the 21st Mississippi of Barksdale's brigade of beserkers, only to be thrown back by the "Harpers Ferry Cowards" of Willard's New York brigade. On one of the maps that we were given an "x" marked the spot where Barksdale was killed. Ed, in a very decisive manner, told us the map was wrong and that Barksdale had been killed several hundred yards to the east. As we walked through tall grass and up and down hills, Ed left many of us scrambling to catch up with him, all the while giving us a non-stop account of what happened in that area of the battlefield. Later we, with a permit from Gettysburg National Park, retraced the footsteps of the attack of Wright's Georgia brigade from the Emmetsburg Road to the Angle near the Copse of Trees. This was the same ground that Pickett's Division would cover the next day. That day I sat directly opposite Ed during lunch and we talked further about Wright's attack. What was supposed to happen on the Second Day was for Hood's and McLaw's divisions of Longstreet's Corps to attack in echelon, followed by Anderson's and Pender's divisions of Hill's Corps. But two brigades of Anderson's division on Wright's left flank, Posey's and Mahone's, failed to attack, while to the left of those brigades Pender's attack came to a halt almost immediately after it started with the mortal wounding of Dorsey Pender. There were far less Union troops in this area of Cemetery Ridge than the next day during the Pickett-Pettigrew-Trimble Charge. It is Ed's opinion that the Confederate assault to the center of the Union line had no chance of success on July 3, while on July 2, if Wright had been supported by Posey and Mahone's brigades and Pender's division, that attack could have broken the Union line in half and won the battle for the South. Posey and Mahone claim that they never received orders from their superior, Dick Anderson, to advance. Curiously neither Anderson, Anderson's superior A.P. Hill, or Lee say anything in their reports of the failure of these six brigades to advance to the left of Wright. It is believed that Lee and A.P. Hill were both ill that day, Lee with diarrhea and Hill with a flair up of his syphilis. Ed Bearss lays the blame of this failure on Lee, Hill and Anderson.

On Sunday afternoon we toured Culp's Hill and East Cemetery Hill. Here Ed made the point that at the beginning of the Second day Meade was most concerned with his right flank which was anchored on Culp's Hill. As the battle on the left flank grew in intensity Meade stripped Culp's Hill of units until only George Sears Greene's New York brigade was left to defend this high ground. We walked all the way from Sprangler's Spring to the top of Culp's Hill. During this walk Ed gave the opinion that David Ireland of the 137th New York was just as much a hero with his defense of the Union extreme right flank as Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain of the 20th Maine was a hero of the extreme left flank of the Army of the Potomac. Then we covered the attack by Avery's North Carolina brigade and Hays' Louisiana brigades against East Cemetery Hill in the face of two dozen cannon.

We had beautiful weather both days - clear blue skies with temperature in the sixties. As for Ed Bearss, he is a national treasure or as Smithsonian Magazine put it "in Civil War circles, Ed Bearss is nothing short of a rock star." Amen! I urge all of the members of PSCWRT to sign up for a battlefield tour with Ed while he is still alive and mentally and physically intact. When he is gone, he will be irreplaceable. Ed asked me about how Dio Richardson was doing since Dio had been on a number of Ed's tour in past years. I told Ed that Dio had passed away the week before. Ed said he was very fond of Dio and that his passing was too bad. I asked Ed about coming out to speak to our Roundtable next year and got contact information for him. I will try to coordinate these efforts with Pat Brady. LONG LIVE ED BEARSS! 🐻

A Visit to the Home of Joshua Chamberlain

By Sylva Coppock

The decision to vacation in Maine in August was made by my younger sister, who lives in Oklahoma. Since I knew nothing about Maine, I was content to let her develop an itinerary and take me along to visit Acadia National Park, tour lighthouses dotting the Atlantic coastline, see art galleries and shops in seaside towns. My only caveat was that we had to stop in Brunswick, Maine so I could visit the home of Fannie and Joshua Chamberlain. I had fallen in love with Josh Chamberlain, or rather with Jeff Daniels in the role of Chamberlain, in the movie "Gettysburg" and I was curious about this historic old house.



In 1858 Chamberlain purchased the Wilde House, where he, his wife Fannie, and their first daughter Grace, had previously lived in rented rooms. It was a modest but roomy one-and-one-half-story home, already over 30 years old when they moved in. It had once been rented by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and his bride, when Longfellow was already a renowned poet and former professor at Bowdoin College.

In the spring of 1867 Chamberlain moved his house a short distance east to a more desirable location, facing the wide main street of Brunswick, across from the First Parish Church, where Fannie's adoptive father was the pastor. In 1871 Chamberlain undertook a major remodeling project that elevated the existing house to a second story and built a new level the existing house. The finished home had 20 rooms, and was suitable for entertaining and guests, activities which Fannie loved. She filled the home with rich furniture; antiques, paintings and fine oriental carpets.

Chamberlain died in 1914, and the home was sold out of the family by Chamberlain's granddaughter, Rosamond Allen, in 1939, to a local landlord who converted it into apartments. Time and transients took a toll on the house and it was scheduled for demolition in 1982. But the Pejepscot Historical Society rescued the Chamberlain House and began restoration on what would become the Joshua L. Chamberlain Museum.

We were greeted in the entryway, by an elderly gentleman dressed in clothing that might be attributed to almost any time period: camel-colored trousers of a soft-comfortable fabric; a serviceable vest, over a striped flannel shirt and a dark non-descript jacket. With thick, wiry grey hair, a handsome bushy mustache, and legs that might have been bowed by long days in a saddle, he appeared quite comfortable in his role as tour guide.

He led us from room to room, explaining the progression of the restoration work and pointing out original as well as restored areas of the building. He explained each of the artifacts and how they fit into the life of their owner. There were portraits of Chamberlain's family, parents and siblings, his wife and children, antique household furnishings, and a huge library of books. Chamberlain's sword and rifle were housed in a glass case, along with other artifacts. There were maps from various campaigns, and tattered battle flags. Our guide, conspiratorially, shared rumors about family members and their relationships, talked of petty jealousies and told stories common to every family.

Chamberlain was wounded six times during the war, and was laid low by recurrent bouts of malaria, but the most moving artifact for me was the pair of boots that Chamberlain wore when he was slightly wounded in the foot by a spent bullet at the battle of Gettysburg. I wondered why a man of Chamberlain's position would not simply discard the boots and purchase new ones. But, the insole of the boot had been carefully mended, and Chamberlain continued to use them until they were put aside and preserved so that nearly 150 years later, we could revere them. I suppose that might illustrate the unpretentious character of the man!

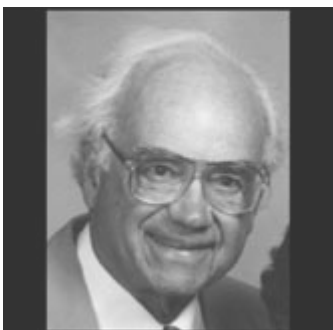
Our tour guide gave us a concise explanation of the changes that had taken place in the old house since Chamberlain moved there in 1858, and showed us the plans which were used to convert the low house into a home suitable for the president of Bowdoin College, and the four-term governor of the State of Maine.

Bowdoin College campus is just steps away, and the Chamberlain family is buried in the Pine Grove Cemetery a block or two east of the house. Brunswick has recently commissioned and installed a handsome statue in the Town Commons in honor of their hometown hero.

I was very glad we went! ☺

Passing Notices

The PSCWRT has lost two of its past members since last spring. Former member W. Stewart Pope passed away on June 30, 2007. One of our founding members, Dio Richardson died on October 6. Both will be missed.



WILLIAM STEWART POPE

Stewart Pope was born March 18, 1917 and died on June 30, 2007. He was a beloved father and grandfather, Stewart Pope, born in Selma, Louisiana, to Jacob and Ida Pope, passed away peacefully, at home, in Seattle, Washington. Stewart followed his mother's lead and attended Louisiana Tech. He went on to graduate from Louisiana State University in journalism. He went to New York City, after graduation, to attend the World's Fair in 1939. He acquired a job with the American Cyanamid Company as well as doing freelance photography. In early 1941 he joined the Navy and was assigned to a four-stack destroyer as a Lieutenant. While stationed at Pearl Harbor, on that fateful Sunday morning, Stewart and his crew narrowly missed being attacked along with their beloved comrades. He was involved in the Battle of Midway and active encounters with submarines during his five years in the Pacific Theater. After his discharge as a true hero and Pearl Harbor survivor, he was able to use his training in journalism by acquiring a job at the Renton News Record. In April, 1949, Stewart married Ellen White, whom he loved

dearly during their 54 year marriage. Stewart lost the love of his life when Ellen passed away in 2003. In 1952 Stewart was offered the opportunity to purchase a Ford dealership, which he did, naming it Pope Ford of Renton. In 1970, after 18 successful years, he sold his business and set up a sheltered workshop for the mentally retarded at Pier 91. He ran this for three years and then began selling commercial real estate in Bellevue, which he continued doing until he retired. Stewart was an avid tennis player and played until he was 87. He was a long time member of the Seattle Tennis Club where he honed his lifelong love into an amazing skill. Stewart is survived by a son, Lachlan Pope and wife, Rebecca, of Bothell and a daughter, Hillis Parker and husband, David, of Louisiana. He is also survived by many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



DIO PRITCHETT RICHARDSON

Was born in Seattle, Washington on August 28, 1919, Dio Richardson passed away the evening of October 6, 2007 in Seattle with family at his side. Dio graduated from Roosevelt High School and in 1942, from University of Washington, where he was a member of ROTC and the Oval Club. During World War II, Dio deployed with the 15th Infantry Regiment from Fort Lewis to French North Africa, Sicily, and Italy, earning five Battle Stars. He remained in Italy for a year with occupation forces in Civil Affairs Unit under the British 8th Army. Returning to Seattle, Dio attended Law School at the University of Washington, where he was a member of the Phi Delta Phi Legal Fraternity. Dio Richardson worked and raised his family in Seattle. His career was in property development and management. A Scottish Rite, 32nd degree Freemason, Dio was member of St. John Lodge #9 and the Nile Shrine

Temple. He co-founded the Puget Sound Civil War Round Table, and was a long standing member of the Bellevue Gyro Club. He is survived by his son, David Barr Richardson and his daughter, Darcie Anne Richardson, and his brother, Jackson Childress Richardson. He is also survived by his dear friend, Phyllis Koskinin. ☹

Civil War Living History Day -- Saturday, February 16, 2008

In conjunction with its upcoming exhibit, **Lincoln: The Constitution and the Civil War** – open January 19 through April 20, 2008 – the Museum of History & Industry (MOHAI) is eager to announce that it will host a “Living History Day” on Saturday, February 16, 2008. The goal of this event is to provide visitors with an opportunity to witness a normal day in the camp of a company of Federal troops stationed in the Pacific Northwest during the Civil War, 1861-1865. To support MOHAI, the Puget Sound Civil War Round Table has appointed Board Member Mark Terry to coordinate with the museum in organizing activities for this special public program. He is working with Chaps, a Pacific Northwest Living History group, and also elements of the Washington Civil War Association to create an event that is of the highest quality and appropriate for a public audience of all ages. Mark could use your help with this activity and if you'd like to be a part of this special effort call him at 425-337-6246 or send him an email at Markimlor@comcast.net.

2007-2008 OFFICERS

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Puget Sound Civil War Round Table meets on the second Thursday of each month, September through May. The PSCWRT is a 501c3 organization, and as such, donations you make to the organization are tax deductible.

Membership Dues

Dues are \$20 for an individual and \$25 for a couple. You can mail your dues to the PSCWRT, c/o Stephen Pierce, 8008 190th Street SW, Edmonds, WA 98026. **Questions?** Email is horseless1@juno.com, or call him at 425-640-8808.

*Send news items for the December issue of **The Washington Volunteer** to Sylva Coppock (SylvaCop@comcast.net) by November 20, 2007.*