

THE WASHINGTON VOLUNTEER
PUGET SOUND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
HTTP://WWW.PSCWRT.ORG/
NOVEMBER 2013

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, November 14, 2013

China Harbor, 2040 Westlake Avenue North, Seattle, Washington

Time: Social hour at **6 p.m.**; Dinner served at **7 p.m.**; Program at **8 p.m.**

MENU CHOICES: Mongolian Beef, Chicken or Salmon

Dinner includes: salad, vegetable delight, General Tso's chicken, fried rice and fresh fruit.

Cost is \$21 for adults and \$10 for minors and college students, payable at the door, but reservations and meal choices are required.

To make reservations and meal choices, use one of these options (most preferred first):

Click on <http://www.pscwrt.org/about/dinner-reservations.php>

Email **Rod Cameron** at: rodcam@comcast.net

Or lastly, call **Rod Cameron** at **206-524-4434**

Deadline for reservations is 12 NOON on Tuesday, November 12, 2013.

NOTE: Remember to turn off cell phones before the meeting so there are no distractions for the speaker. Thank you!

**PROFESSOR SCOTT SAGAN WILL DISCUSS
PICKETT'S OTHER CHARGE: THE HIDDEN HISTORY
OF A CONFEDERATE GENERAL'S INDIAN SON.**

Jimmie Pickett was George Pickett's mixed-race son born near Fort Bellingham, whom George gave to settlers near Olympia when he left Washington Territory to join the Confederacy in 1861. An article by Professor Sagan and his son Samuel in the Wall Street Journal, June 22-23, 2013, <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323893504578555281194469040.html> tells of Jimmie Pickett and of the efforts of LaSalle Corbell Pickett, his stepmother back east, to cover up his existence. A Professor of Political Science at Stanford University, Sagan is the author or editor of many works, including *Moving Targets: Nuclear Strategy and National Security* and *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed*.

IMPORTANT DISPATCHES

NOVEMBER: BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION MONTH

In the realm of keeping the memory of the American Civil War alive, there is nothing more important than the acquisition, restoration and interpretation of the battlefields and important sites of that conflict. Each and every day, significant historical land related to the Civil War is under threat from development all across our country.

Thankfully there is an organization that is fighting on behalf of history- the Civil War Trust (CWT). Each year the Puget Sound Civil War Round Table makes a donation to the CWT, which then uses those funds to purchase property related to Civil War battlefields and sites. This month is your opportunity to become directly involved in this effort is twofold. First, you can become a member of the Trust. Then, whatever you give, you will be able to write it off on your tax return! Also, if you haven't joined the CWT, you are invited to do so. It is a good

feeling to be able to give to what you care about. The second way is to search the cracks in your couch and lounge chair...and don't forget under the seats of your car...and bring your spare change and folding money (blank checks are also a good thing...) to put in our PRESERVATION BUCKET. By filling the bucket, you will be directly increasing the donation to the CWT by your PSCWRT. This will also be a lot of fun.

Here's an example. Back in 1996, I visited Gettysburg. A friend of mine and I wanted to walk the path of the 26th North Carolina Infantry. We parked near the park entrance on McPherson's Ridge and walked down to Willoughby Run. Unfortunately, west of this stream there was a fence and beyond it a golf course! This was ground that Pettigrew's Brigade (including the 26th) crossed on their way to confront the Federal Iron Brigade. It was discouraging to think that we couldn't walk on that hallowed ground...

Fast forward. The CWT, with the support of their members and others were able to purchase the property that included the golf course. So in time, that land will be restored to what it might have looked like 150 years ago and give a chance for battlefield trampers to walk that ground in search of their heritage and history, rather than a dimpled white ball. It was a great feeling for me to help support that effort because I am personally connection to it.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Editor: Please welcome our new members. Look for their name tags and get to know them! If your name is listed here and there is something incorrect, contact me and let me know- Thanks!

Jean Reges Burn

Mary Ann Gwinn & Steve Dunnington

Wendell Carlson

Elliot Kriegh

Stephen & Patricia Clayton

John K. & Renata McIlhenny

Carl F. Hoseit

Margaret Questad

Richard & Vanessa Ness

& Returning members: Harley & Sandra Crain



WHY GETTYSBURG?

By Mark R. Terry

Starting in 2011, to commemorate the Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War, the United States Postal Service has been releasing stamps related to each year of the war. As Newsletter Editor, just for fun I purchased each set to send newsletters to our non-Internet members. I never had a problem buying them. What does this have to do with Gettysburg? When I recently went to the Post Office to purchase the 2013 set of stamps- Gettysburg/Vicksburg (see above)- they were gone! In fact, every Post Office I went to was sold out of them!

It made me wonder- out of all the battles, engagements, actions and skirmishes of the Civil War, why does the Battle of Gettysburg hold such a fascination for people?

Here are some ideas. There are surely more than these and in fact I bet someone has written a book about this subject...

Gettysburg: Turning Point of the Civil War

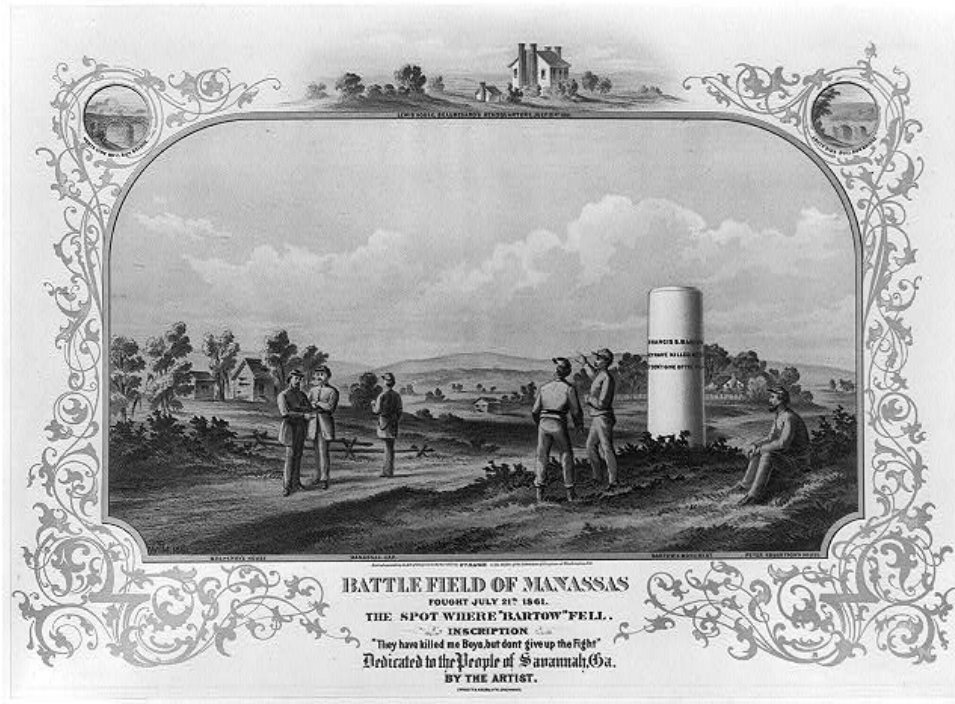
Over the last 150 years, this has become conventional wisdom. Pick up any school textbook and this is what it will say, sometimes with other interesting claims. For instance, one high school U.S. History text I read stated that General Lee's plan in invading Pennsylvania was to "split the North in two"! Not sure how Marse Robert was going to accomplish that, but with statements like that, it is no wonder Gettysburg is so notable. Some modern historians have concluded that Gettysburg may not have been the turning point it is often referred to. Stephen Sears felt Antietam was the turning point because it brought about the Emancipation Proclamation, while other historians have listed the capture of New Orleans, or Vicksburg as more decisive, since both of those helped open the Mississippi River and split the Confederacy in two. In short, there were many decisive points in the war, but Gettysburg tops them all in the general mindset of the public.

The President gave a little speech

On November 19, 1863, President Abraham Lincoln gave his brief, but profound "Gettysburg Address" in dedicating the national cemetery at Gettysburg. During the war, Lincoln often visited troops, even traveling to several battlefields, but he never gave any speeches as he did at Gettysburg. Pretty hard for any other battlefield to top that! This month, Civil War enthusiasts and reenactors will be descending on Gettysburg for the annual "Day of Remembrance". Because of the 150th anniversary, the parade will be pushed back to November 23rd apparently because they won't have enough room for everyone. To see all the events revolving around Gettysburg this month (and there are many), go here: <http://www.gettysburg.travel/150/event.asp>

Location, Location, Location

Once the armies left Gettysburg and went south, there were few threats to the area, so even before the war was over, the battlefield was being preserved. In 1864, the Gettysburg Battlefield Memorial Association was formed for this purpose. Why so early? Even by July 5th, 1863, citizens from neighboring towns were walking the battlefield, collecting souvenirs! Few other battlefields had this situation. For instance, after the Battle of First Manassas was on July 21, 1861, a monument (below) to Georgia Col. Francis Bartow, who was killed in action was dedicated on September 4, 1861.



Unfortunately, with that land changing hands so often, the obelisk soon disappeared- though the original base is still there. Memorials and monuments soon began springing up on the landscape surrounding Gettysburg, which had a head start on most other battlefields. In 1990, Gettysburg was the most visited National Battlefield Park with 1.2 million visitors. I remember my first visit, back in the summer of 1970 at the age of 11. I can recall the many tour buses and throngs of tourists on Little Round Top. There was an almost carnival-like atmosphere. A few days later we went to Antietam/Sharpsburg. It was late in the day and we were the *only* visitors! What a contrast...

Gettysburg as Drama

The Battle of Gettysburg was dramatic in many ways. It was the northernmost major battle, literally the “high tide” of the South. It was fought in a relatively open landscape of small farms and fields with opposing ridges and hills on the flanks, almost amphitheater-like. Contrast this with Chickamauga or the Wilderness, where opposing units blundered into one another because of the heavy woods and underbrush. Much as theater plays are often written in three acts, there were three days of fighting at Gettysburg. As Allen Guelzo writes in his recent book *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion*, each of the three days had drama of its own, where crucial Union reinforcements held off a Confederate attack which might have carried the day if successful.

The Bloodiest Battle

The importance of a battle is sometimes measured by the amount of blood that was spilled. In that regard as well, Gettysburg tops the list. With the two opposing armies locked in a three day death struggle, the butcher’s bill was high. A combined 40,638 casualties were recorded, which includes, killed, wounded, captured and missing. This is out of a grand total estimated to be about 165,000 soldiers at the battle, which is a horrendous loss rate. The second bloodiest battle? Chickamauga, with 28,399 total casualties- some 12,000 less! It comes as no surprise that the Army of Northern Virginia and the Army of the Potomac fought very little for the next nine months. It took that long for them to recover their losses and re-organize their commands.

Remember that in the months previous to Gettysburg both Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville were also fought, two other very bloody battles...

Conclusion

For all of these reasons and more, Gettysburg remains the King of Civil War battles in the minds and hearts of Americans. This is so much the case, that in the 150 years since the Civil War, I would wager that more books have been written about Gettysburg than any other single battle or engagement of the war. On my own shelf there are books on the overall campaign, books about each day's fighting, books about different areas of the battlefield, books on Pickett's Charge, books on the marches to and from Gettysburg, books on the *meaning* of the battle and even books about the ghosts of Gettysburg! There wouldn't be so many books about Gettysburg if there weren't a market for them. Oh, did I mention there is a *magazine* about Gettysburg? So, I suppose perhaps a better title for this article would be **Why Not Gettysburg?**

By the way, if you haven't read Allen C. Guelzo's book *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion*, I urge you to do so. Though there have been many books written about the Gettysburg Campaign, Guelzo's writing has a way of drawing you in, almost like he was giving a presentation in person. He doesn't shy away from the many controversies of the battle, but gives good historical reasoning for his views. It could use better maps, but for an overall view using modern scholarship, the book is really worth a read.

VISITING SHILOH

By Dick Miller

Shiloh National Battlefield Park is in the middle of nowhere. It lies at least 2 ½ hours to the southwest of Nashville and just about the same distance to the southeast of Memphis. Even Glorietta Pass Battlefield Site is only 30 some miles to the east of Santa Fe and feels a lot closer to civilization than Shiloh. That said, Shiloh is definitely worth the drive for anyone interested in the Civil War. Not only was Shiloh the first major Western battle (and some might argue the first major battle of the war), Shiloh National Battlefield Park was among the first battlefield parks to be established by the federal government. Dedicated in 1894, the park benefitted from the many veterans who volunteered their time to locate unit markers throughout the battlefield. Like the other battlefield parks established in the 1890s (Chickamauga-Chattanooga, Vicksburg, and Antietam), Shiloh offers the visitor grand state monuments, more modest regimental monuments (at least for the Union regiments), and scores of markers denoting the units involved in the nearby action.

Mark Grimsley's and Steven E. Woodworth's [Shiloh: A Battlefield Guide](#) proved a valuable aid to touring the battlefield. Because the battle unfolded on both the Union right and left flanks, the guide book organizes its tour into either east or west stops. That enables the user to follow the battle chronologically on either the left or right side without having to zigzag across the battlefield. What is lost in this approach is the ability to follow the action that was occurring at the same time on the other side of the battlefield.

Be sure to use the tour stop map on page 2 of Grimsley's and Woodworth's guide. It is easy to get disoriented on the battlefield because the roads don't go east/west or north/south and because much of it is covered in heavy woods. (Although Chickamauga is also covered in heavy woods, much of the battle was on the axis defined by the north/south Lafayette Road. Not so at Shiloh).

The battlefield guide does a good job of getting you from stop to stop with precise mileage from point A to point B. But there are problems with the guide. The directions are incomplete getting you from the last east stop on April 6 to the first west stop on the same day (if that is the order you follow. You could just as easily do the west and then the east.) However, with the tour stop map, you can easily find where the tour picks up. It is also helpful to pick up the battlefield brochure from the Visitor's Center as the roads are well marked on it.

I recommend walking the length of the Sunken Road. Grimsley and Woodworth describe well the action that occurred there and in the Hornet's Nest. What makes the guide book enjoyable is that the authors briefly discuss some of the scholarship that conflicts with commonly held beliefs about the battle. For example, at the end of the excursion along the Sunken Road, they mention that fact that although Prentiss is credited with holding the center and avoiding disaster for the Army of the Tennessee, Grant blamed Prentiss, believing that he should have been able to extricate himself and his troops and avoid surrender. Grimsley and Woodworth also note that the fields in front of the Sunken Road did not have any Confederate mass graves which would suggest that the fighting there may not have been as intense as Prentiss and his veterans would claim after the war.

I was able to tour the battlefield using Grimsley's and Woodworth's guide in about 5-6 hours. I spent some of that time searching for the 59th Ohio monument (my great-great grandfather's unit) and the marker that located their fight with Breckenridge's Confederates on April 7. It is a good idea to take sandwiches with you for the day because there is only one restaurant in the area. The Catfish Landing Restaurant is on the Tennessee at the edge of the battlefield. It is a pleasant restaurant with good food, but a very limited lunch menu.

The Visitor Center Museum is small and not worth much of a visit. Similarly the book store across the parking lot from the Visitor Center had a relatively small collection of books for sale although there were some interesting titles among the books.

Savannah, Tennessee is the only town of any size close to the battlefield – it is about twelve miles to the northeast. (Corinth, Mississippi is about 20 miles to the south). Savannah was the site of Grant's headquarters; it was from here that he took his steamboat to Pittsburg Landing on the morning of April 6. There are a number of motels in Savannah. I stayed at the Days Inn which filled the bill. The Bistro on Main Street has good food. Although I didn't visit it, the Tennessee River Museum also on Main Street has an exhibit about the role of the Tennessee River during the Civil War.

Finally, if you have the time and are driving north to pick up I-40 to go to either Memphis or Nashville, you can stop by the Parkers Crossroad battlefield at the intersection of Tennessee 22 and I-40. Parkers Crossroad is the December 31, 1862 battle between Nathan Bedford Forrest and his Federal pursuers as the Confederates attempted to cross the Tennessee River after raiding western Tennessee. There is a Visitor Center where you can purchase a 60 minute cassette driving tour of the battlefield.

THE ORIGINAL "MAGIC BULLET"?

It will be 50 years ago this month that President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. Many of the conspiracy theories surrounding his death focus on the almost pristine “magic bullet” which some say caused most of the wounds to both Texas Governor John Connally and JFK. PSCWRT Life Member John Hinds submitted the following article from the May 10th, 1863 issue of the Richmond Examiner with another example of a “magic bullet”...

SHOOTING AFFRAY AT THE LIBBY PRISON – THREE MEN SHOT. – About half past six o’clock on Friday evening, after the guard had been relieved at the Libby Prison, corner of Twentieth and Cary streets, private J. T. Newson, company C, Thirty-second North Carolina regiment, one of the relieved, started from his post for the barracks of the guard, corner of Twenty-fifth and Main streets. When Newson reached the corner of the encampment, opposite the prison, he met private Charles Johnson, company F, Twenty-fifth Virginia battalion. Johnson accosted Newson, and asked him what he cursed him for the day previous on the Castle guard posts.

Newson replied that he had his orders to keep all persons away from the walls and he would do it irrespective of persons. Some hot words passed, when Newson pulled the oil cover from his musket and cocked it. Johnson turned off and left, and Newson kept on. After going a few steps he was encountered by Private Martin Gripp, company F, Twenty-fifth Virginia, and the two had some words.

Gripp pulled off his overcoat and oil cloth, and told Newson to throw down his gun and he would fight him. Newson refused, and Gripp, walking up to him, slapped him in the face; whereupon, Newson ran back a few steps and, pulling up his gun, fired.

The ball, a Minie, struck Gripp in the right shoulder, tearing out the flesh and making a severe wound, and, passing on, took effect in the left arm of private Frey, company A, Twenty-fifth Virginia battalion, shattering the bone.

Private R. Morris, company D, Twenty-fifth Virginia battalion, was the next victim of the terribly effective bullet. Standing within range, nearer the prison, it struck him in the stomach, penetrating the intestines, and he too fell helpless and bleeding.

All three of the wounded were carried into the Libby Hospital, where Surgeon John Wilkins, in charge, examined their wounds. It was found necessary to amputate Frey’s arm. Probing failed to discover the ball in Morris’ stomach. He was removed on a stretcher to the boarding house of Mrs. Motley, in the upper part of the city, where he died on Saturday night.

As soon as Newson saw what he had done, he started and ran, but was pursued by some of the guard, and overtaken near the county court house, Main street. He was committed to Castle Thunder to await the result of the wounds upon his three companions, and a trial.

The tragedy was enacted in full view of all the prisoners confined in the Libby, and the next batch that goes North will furnish the Yankee press with a graphic account of a revolt among the guard at the prison, which ended in the shooting of a number of them, &c., &c

John Hinds comment: Dare we believe there was some Virginia red eye as a catalyst?

CIVIL WAR TRIVIA QUIZ

Here are some questions related to events 150 years ago, November 1863...

1. What two Corps from the Army of the Potomac was sent to help bolster operations in the western theater in the fall of 1863?
2. What occupied Southern city was put under siege by the Army of Tennessee following the Battle of Chickamauga?
3. What were the two sides fighting over in the "Battle Above the Clouds"?

THE LAST WORD

By Mark R. Terry

By the time you read this, it will be the month of November. One of my favorite holidays of the year falls on the last Thursday of this month- Thanksgiving! I always look forward to this holiday, because it is a time to reflect on our lives and thank God for His goodness and blessing, spending time celebrating with family and friends- and eating lots of good food...

This Thanksgiving will be a special one, because it will be the 150th Anniversary of President Abraham Lincoln proclaiming a day "*to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens.*" Ever since that day in 1863, Thanksgiving has been celebrated in the United States, though it didn't become an official national holiday until 1941.

May you and yours have a blessed Thanksgiving Day!

DUES & DONATIONS

The PSCWRT season goes from September to the following May. Dues should be paid in September. Dues are payable either at the meeting or by mail: \$20 per individual, \$25 for a couple. Also, donations are gratefully accepted. These will help secure speakers for our meetings. Please note that all donations are tax deductible as the PSCWRT is a 501(c)3 organization. Mail to: Jeff Rombauer, Treasurer, 22306 255th Ave. SE, Maple Valley, WA 98038-7626. Call 425-432-1346, or email: jeffrombauer@foxinternet.com.

We welcome your article or research submissions for the newsletter, but they may be edited. The deadline for the December 2013 Washington Volunteer is Thursday, November 21, 2013. Please have it in Mark Terry's hands via email or snailmail by then. Thank you!

2013-2014 OFFICERS

Elected:*

President: David Palmer: davidpalmer7@comcast.net

Vice-President-Successor: Rick Solomon, ricksolo@integraonline.com

Past-President: Richard Miller, 206-808-8506 or 206-236-5247, Milomiller882@msn.com

Vice-President-Programming: Pat Brady, 206-246-1603, patsbrady@comcast.net

Vice-President-Editor: Mark Terry, 425-337-6246, markimlor@comcast.net

Vice-President- Membership: VACANT

Vice President-Social Media: Michael Movius, webmaster@pscwr.org

Vice President-Reservations: Rod Cameron, 206-524-4434, rodcam@comcast.net

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Secretary, Larry Jilbert: 253-891-4022, ljjclj@comcast.net

Board of Directors: Jim Dimond: 253-277-3783, shinodad@gmail.com

**Except for Past President, an automatic position.*

Appointed:

Official Greeter, Larry Cenotto: cenottothe5th@yahoo.com