

THE WASHINGTON VOLUNTEER
PUGET SOUND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
HTTP://WWW.PSCWRT.ORG/
JANUARY 2014

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, January 9, 2014

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. See below.

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, January 7, 2014.

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

WALTER STAHR WILL DISCUSS WILLIAM HENRY SEWARD AND THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST.



Most people know about Seward's purchase of Alaska as well as his earlier service as Lincoln's Secretary of State during the Civil War. Few, however, know about his longstanding interest in the Pacific Northwest: Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, and Alaska. Seward not only purchased Alaska, but he also came close to acquiring British Columbia. Author of the acclaimed new biography *Seward: Lincoln's Indispensable Man*, Walter Stahr will discuss these and other aspects of Seward's life.

IMPORTANT DISPATCHES

Freeman's biography of Robert E. Lee to be auctioned- silently.

By Mark R. Terry

Given the fact that January 19 will be the anniversary of Confederate General Robert E. Lee's birthday, I felt it would be appropriate to have a silent auction at the January meeting of the PSCWRT for the monumental 4-volume biography written by Douglas Southall Freeman entitled "*R.E. LEE*". The set is a 1962 reprint of the winner of the 1935 Pulitzer Prize for Biography. The books are in good condition and ready for someone to give a home. Bidding will begin at \$30 for the set of four books. Please have your checkbook handy, if you are interested!

Another Mail Call from the Past

By Steve Raymond

A couple of months ago I reported about some of the letters I've received since publication of my book, "In the Very Thickest of the Fight: The Civil War Service of the 78th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment." The letters keep coming, mostly from descendants of men who served in the 78th.

One of the most interesting was from a man in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with family connections to five soldiers who served in the regiment. His great grandfather was Pvt. Lebbeus Allshouse of Company I, whose first name appears erroneously as Libeus in my book—one of several misspelled names reported by descendants, thanks mainly to mis-interpretation of handwritten records in the Illinois State Archives. Allshouse had the great misfortune to be among 51 men and four officers who were captured on Missionary Ridge the night following the Battle of Chickamauga. They were on picket duty when a staff officer failed to deliver a message that the picket line was being withdrawn, so they stayed where they were. Next morning they found themselves surrounded by Confederates, and all were captured.

Allshouse was imprisoned in Richmond, probably at Castle Thunder, and died there in February 1864. However, one of his daughters later married into the James family of Blandinsville, Illinois, which had four soldiers in Company C of the 78th. One, First Sgt. John E. James, was killed in the 78th's assault at Kennesaw Mountain. Another, Pvt. John W. James, was killed in the regiment's charge at Jonesboro. The others survived the war.

Sgt. Robert F. Wilburn of Company F also was killed at Jonesboro. An e-mail from his great-great grandnephew in Shreveport, Louisiana (of all places), brought the information that Wilburn's last name was actually spelled Welbourn, another casualty of the handwritten records in the Illinois State Archives. His name even appears as Wilburn on his gravestone at Marietta, Georgia. However, the National Park Service's Civil War Soldier database—which wasn't complete when I was working on the book—has his name spelled correctly, and when I communicated that information to Welbourn's descendant, he was greatly relieved to learn his great-great uncle's name was spelled correctly in at least one archive, giving him proper credit for his service and sacrifice.

The National Park database relies on records in the National Archives, which appear to be more accurate than those in the Illinois State Archives, and it has records for Confederate as well as Union soldiers. If you haven't used the database, check it out; it's a very easy way to trace a Civil War ancestor. The address: www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-soldiers.htm.

So far I've heard from 78th Illinois descendants living in Maine, New York, Maryland, Tennessee, Louisiana, Wisconsin and Minnesota. The odd thing is that I haven't yet heard from anyone in Illinois. Go figure.

CONFEDERATE MEDAL OF HONOR - WHO KNEW?

By Mike Movius

A week or so ago on our Facebook page, I asked for the names of the five Confederate soldiers who received the Confederate Medal of Honor at Gettysburg. The answers were astounding to me. For there didn't seem to be anyone who knew there was such an award. And, there certainly weren't any correct answers. (Sorry, but Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain was a Yankee.)

Actually, I didn't know a great deal about it either. But, this is what I learned. On October 13, 1862, the Confederate States Congress approved the awarding of the Southern Cross of Honor. It was supposed to be on par with the Union Army's Medal of Honor. But, as we all know, there were vast shortages of many things in the Confederate States. Gun powder, cannon, muskets, clothing and food were all in short supply. That made the medal that many of those items were made from in short supply. So, medals were on the first list of things that the CSA could do without.

But, even though honorees didn't receive a medal, their names and some facts about their deeds were recorded in an honor roll and preserved by the Adjutant Inspector General's records.

Now, there were actually two medals. The original wartime medal (known as the Confederate Medal of Honor), and a United Daughters of the Confederacy medal awarded to Confederate veterans who provided "loyal, honorable service to the South and given in recognition of this devotion." The UDC medal was conceived in 1898 during a Confederate soldier reunion.

It's interesting to note that the much maligned Captain Henry Wirz, the commandant of Andersonville Prison, who was the only Confederate soldier hung for his deeds during the Civil War, posthumously received the Southern Cross of Honor on November 10, 1865.

There you have it. For a listing of all those who received the original decoration, go to <http://thomaslegion.net/confederaterollofhonor.html>



The UDC Southern Cross of Honor

Editor: The following article was submitted by PSCWRT Life Member John Hinds. It was taken from the AARP website, dated April 12, 2012. Part one was published in the December, 2013 issue of the Washington Volunteer. Great discussion piece...

HOW THE CIVIL WAR CHANGED YOUR LIFE (PART TWO)

By Betsy Towner

5. We identify ourselves as Democrats and Republicans.

Before 1854, you might have been a Whig. Or a Free Soiler. But that year the Republican Party was founded by anti-slavery activists and refugees from other political parties to fight the iron grip of powerful southern Democrats.

As the name of their party suggests, these activists believed that the republic's interests should take precedence over the states'. In the years before the war, many northern Democrats defected to join the new party — and, in 1860, to elect Abraham Lincoln as the first Republican president — while southern Democrats led the march to secession.

The Democratic and Republican parties both survived the war and have held their spots

as the dominant U.S. political parties ever since. The "Solid South," as it was known, protected the interests of agrarian Southern whites and consistently elected Democrats to Congress from Reconstruction through the early 1960s, when the national Democratic Party's support of the civil rights movement allowed the Republican Party to begin making new political inroads below the Mason-Dixon Line.

Within a few years, North and South swapped party hats. Conservative southerners grew disenchanted with the Democratic Party's increasingly progressive platforms. Republicans capitalized on this with their "Southern Strategy," an organized plan to make headway there on a socially conservative, states' rights platform. In reverse, historically Republican strongholds in the Northeast began voting Democrat, establishing the pattern of red and blue that we see on election-night maps today.

6. We see war "up close and personal."

The Civil War was the first war in which people at home could absorb battle news before the smoke cleared. Eyewitness accounts by reporters and soldiers were relayed via telegraph to the country's 2,500 newspapers, printed almost immediately and then read voraciously by citizens desperate to know how their boys were faring. The Civil War created a tradition of intimate war reportage that is still with us today.

Take this excerpt from a dispatch from George Townsend, who was just 20 when he began to cover the war for the New York Herald: "In many wounds the balls still remained, and the discolored flesh was swollen unnaturally. There were some who had been shot in the bowels, and now and then they were frightfully convulsed, breaking into shrieks and shouts. Some of them iterated a single word, as, 'doctor,' or 'help,' or 'God,' or 'oh!' commencing with a loud spasmodic cry, and continuing the same word till it died away in cadence. The act of calling seemed to lull the pain. Many were unconscious and lethargic, moving their finger, and lips mechanically, but never more to open their eyes upon the light; they were already going through the valley and the shadow."

Tony Horwitz, a former war correspondent and the author of *Confederates in the Attic* and the forthcoming *Midnight Rising: John Brown and the Raid That Sparked the Civil War*, says that the front-line dispatches influenced his modern battlefield reporting. "Having been moved by soldiers' writing from the 1860s, I also sought them on foreign battlefields, even going through the pockets of the Iranian dead at Majnoon and getting a Farsi speaker to translate letters and diaries for me," he says. "This sounds ghoulish, I know, but I think you need to personalize the dead to bring home the shock and tragedy of it all. Otherwise, they're just statistics."

Photography, still in its infancy, was not yet a part of the daily news cycle. But the Civil War was the first such conflict recorded by photographers (the most famous of whom was Mathew Brady). Because the primitive wet-plate technology of the era required that subjects be still at the moment the camera's shutter snapped, images of the era depict virtually every aspect of the war but one: battle. But that in time would change, too.

7. We hold certain rights to be sacred.

Think of these three amendments to the U.S. Constitution, all ratified within five years of the end of the Civil War:

13th Amendment (1865). Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction. ...

14th Amendment (1868). Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. ...

15th Amendment (1870). Section 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. ...

Before the Civil War, the concept of liberty and justice for all meant little unless you were white and male. Going beyond the abolition of slavery, the 14th and 15th amendments were the first extensions of citizenship and voting rights to minority groups.

Of course, half of us — women — went without a voice until 1920, but the postwar laws set a precedent that eventually would lead to suffrage for all adults. Imperfect in practice over the next 100 years, voting rights finally gained protection through the 1964 Civil Rights Act, ensuring that bigotry could never again disenfranchise any U.S. citizen.

8. We're all Americans.

It took the War Between the States to make us one nation, indivisible. Before 1861, the United States were loosely tied entities and always described as a plural noun, as in, "The United States are in trade with France."

The war's bloodiest battle came at Gettysburg in 1863, with 51,000 casualties in just three days. Although the Union stopped Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's Northern invasion, young men's bodies littered the farms and gardens that had turned into a battleground. Was the preservation of these united states worth the cost in blood?

At a memorial for the dead, Lincoln intentionally called on the Union to persevere for a single national ideal: "[T]hat we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain — that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

The effect of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, just 272 words from beginning to end, was radical and immediate. "By accepting the Gettysburg Address, its concept of a single people dedicated to a proposition, we have been changed," Wills writes. "Because of it, we live in a different America."

But the shift was more than a statesman's creation. It was also forged in the experience of hunger, disease, blood and death shared for four years by the Union and Confederacy alike. Tellingly, the tradition of Civil War reenactments began even before the conflict had ended, as returning soldiers recreated battlefield scenes at home to educate the citizenry and pay tribute to their fallen comrades.

Ken and Ric Burns, in their introduction to the book *The Civil War*, write: "Some events so pervasively condition the life of a culture that they retain the power to fascinate permanently. They become the focus of myth and the anchor of meaning for a whole society."

The Civil War became our anchor. Ever since, whether big government or small government, whether doves or hawks, black or white, we have all been one thing: Americans. *Betsy Towner lives in California.*

CIVIL WAR TRIVIA QUIZ- 150 YEARS AGO

Most troops were in “Winter Quarters” in January of 1864, but still some things happened.

1. On January 2, 1864, what Confederate general proposed freeing slaves in exchange for their service fighting for the South?
2. On January 8, 1864, the Confederate Congress issued a Joint Resolution of thanks to whom or what?
3. Who succeeded General Grant of command of the armies in the West?

Plus a “bonus question” that will be revealed at the meeting...

THE LAST WORD

“How has the Civil War changed *your* life?”

By Mark R. Terry

Whether or not you agree with Betsey Towner’s points, her piece “*How the Civil War changed your life*” does make you ponder the ways in which our nation’s greatest struggle has made things different for us today. Most of Towner’s points are “big picture”, but there were other, more mundane ways in which our lives were changed.

For example, the clothes we wear are standard sizes. Prior to the War, clothes were made at home, or if you were rich enough, made by a tailor to fit you properly. In 1861, with thousands of soldiers volunteering, clothing manufacturers had to come up with standard sizes to try and fit them all. John Hinds pointed out it was the same with shoe sizes. Once the war was over, the standard sizing of clothes and shoes remained.

The game of baseball, our “national pastime”, was boosted by the Civil War. During the war, soldiers played or watched games of baseball in camps to escape the boredom and drudgery of camp life. When the veterans came home, they also brought home a love for the game. It is no coincidence that professional baseball started up in the years after the war. There are those who even speculate that the modern baseball cap evolved from the kepis soldiers wore while playing baseball, but that is uncertain.

How about you personally? I became hooked on the history of the Civil War at the age of seven, even though we lived far away from the battlefields. Somehow, the illustrations and the stories in books about the war took hold of me. Much later, finding a book called *Tracing Your Civil War Ancestor* propelled me into genealogy, which helped me learn about historical research. I connected with some Civil War reenactors about that same time, and so another avenue of passion about the war took hold. Then of course, I was introduced to the PSCWRT and my wife and I have been members ever since- twenty years ago this coming summer!

So, what is *your* story? [Tell me how the Civil War has affected your life, and I’ll include your responses in the February issue of the Washington Volunteer. My email address is \[markimlor@comcast.net\]\(mailto:markimlor@comcast.net\)](#)

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 February 2014 Washington Volunteer is Thursday, January 23, 2014. 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@ricksolo.com

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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

Even though we are right in the middle of our Round Table season, we are also on the brink of another year. On behalf of the officers and board members of the Puget Sound Civil War Round Table, may you and yours be blessed in the year 2014! God bless you and have a...

Happy New Year!!!