

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

**NEXT MEETING: Thursday, November 13, 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 listed first):

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

Email **Rod Cameron** at: [rodcam@comcast.net](mailto:rodcam@comcast.net)

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

**Deadline for reservations is 12 NOON on Tuesday, November 11, 2014.**

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

**NICK K. ADAMS WILL RELATE THE HISTORY OF THE 2ND MINNESOTA REGIMENT OF**

**VOLUNTEERS** from its origin at Ft. Snelling, MN in September, 1861 through its significant involvement in the Battle of Chattanooga, in November, 1863. Adams is a member of the PSCWRT and his talk is based on Nick's new book, *My Dear Wife and Children: Civil War Letters from a 2nd Minnesota Volunteer*. These annotated Civil War letters provide interesting insight into the daily activities, the fighting experiences, and the thoughts and emotions of a common Union soldier in the Western Theater. These letters also form the basis of Adams' first book, *The Uncivil War*, and of his forthcoming third book.

**IMPORTANT DISPATCHES**

**BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION MONTH!**

Over the years, the PSCWRT has supported battlefield preservation, giving a token amount each season. However, a few years back, our board decided that it really wasn't enough. Ever since then, we've promoted the month of November each season to be the time dedicated for us to help the **Civil War Trust** in their efforts to purchase historically significant property and sites that pertain to the Civil War. As you may know, the CWT has a very good record of finding and preserving places that are important to all Americans, but especially to those of us who have a special attachment to where the boys in Blue and Gray fought 150 years ago.

We encourage you first to join the CWT if you haven't already done so, but beyond that we also ask that you bring a donation to give at the meeting. Mike Movius will be bringing a few items to auction off and also the "Preservation Bucket" to pass around to each table. Remember that what you give is tax-deductible, and the tax season is closer than you think...  
THANK YOU in advance for your generosity!

## **PSCWRT MEMBERSHIP/MARKETING PLAN**

By Mike Movius

You may already know that we've developed a membership/marketing plan, but the details haven't been explained. Fear not...that's what this article is all about. We began by looking at the membership trends of Civil War roundtables around the country. Most are having a difficult time attracting new members, especially those who are younger. Our RT isn't much different. Unless that trend changes in Seattle, there may not be a PSCWRT in the future. So, we developed an approach that seems pretty sound – do a better job of what seems to have worked in the immediate past.

What has worked, you ask? The truth is that we have had a Facebook page for over a year- [www.facebook.com/pscwrts](http://www.facebook.com/pscwrts) - and many of you are following us. And, so have others who are not members. In fact, there are over 60 people in the Puget Sound region who "Like" our page. So, we decided upon a three-prong strategy. The first is to become friendlier to visitors. Our new member survey has revealed that we do a poor job of welcoming new members, despite the intentions of our members. That's why Ed Malles has established the Rangers. [see below] Second, the Board has decided to advertise on Facebook. It seems that there are 1.9 million people in the Puget Sound region who have Facebook accounts. By creating ad campaigns that target them, we can fill our "pipeline" with prospective members when they "like" our event or post on Facebook. The board has authorized expending \$300 on the first round of ad campaigns. The third prong is that Jim Dimond (VP Membership) has agreed to contact those who like our Facebook page and ask them to visit PSCWRT. He will be doing this through the Facebook messaging feature. We estimate that the ratio of people who like us to new members will be 10:1. So, with the 60 who already are in the pipeline, we should expect 6 new members. Much of this is theory at this point, but we will be monitoring progress to adjust ad campaigns and our assumptions. None of this precludes us from advertising at libraries, in newspapers or other such outlets. It's just that their effectiveness hasn't proven to be consistent at this point. So, when you see an unfamiliar face sitting at your table, engage them. You may just be talking to a future PSCWRT president.

## **JOIN THE "RANGERS"!**

The PSCWRT board has been working on ways to not only increase membership, but also to retain members and guests who come to our meetings. At the October 2014 meeting, Ed Malles introduced a plan to help welcome guests and new members to our Round Table. He is calling the new group "The Rangers", much like Mosby's Rangers. Ed is looking for members motivated to help welcome new people to our group who have often felt ignored at our meetings. So far members Dick Miller, and Geof and Cheryl Nunn have stepped forward to be the first members of our "Ranger Company". But we need YOU to come and help us. Since this is a new

venture, plans are ongoing, but will be put into effect soon. If you have any questions or want to join up, please feel free to contact Ed, Dick, Geof or Cheryl.

## **NEW SOUND SYSTEM IS A HIT**

By Dick Miller

Hearing our speakers easily has been a challenge from time to time. Sometimes it is difficult to hear the speaker because of background noise from other diners at China Harbor. Other times, the speaker doesn't want to use China Harbor's cumbersome hand-held microphone. And even when the speaker uses the microphone, the China Harbor system is inadequate. We solved the first problem by moving our meetings upstairs to a room where we do not have to compete with other diners' conversations or music from the bar. But the change did not solve the problem for some of our members with hearing impairments.

After extensive research by Richard Kerr and Dick Miller into cost-effective solutions, we tested a new sound system at our October meeting. Members unanimously said that the system enabled them to hear the speaker without a problem. Additionally, Richard Kerr took sound levels throughout the upstairs room and determined that the sound was equally good everywhere in the room. Based on those test results, our Board voted to buy the sound system utilized during the meeting.

The system has been purchased from the Guitar Center on Westlake and will be in use starting with the November meeting. Because the purchase committee, composed of Richard Kerr, Dick Miller, and Jeff Rombauer, were able to negotiate a discounted price within the Board's budget, the system includes a wireless headset microphone that will enable the speaker to move about the room. Additionally, this wireless system will allow the addition of a handheld microphone, which can be used for audience questions, and will be purchased in the future.

The Board hopes that this new system will allow every member to hear every word of our speakers' presentations. If you have any questions or comments after hearing the new system, please see Dick Miller.

*The following article is the first of a series of five stories about Civil War veterans buried in Saar Pioneer Cemetery in Kent, King County, Washington*

### **William W. Button, Private, Company M, 1<sup>st</sup> Connecticut Heavy Artillery** By Sylva J. Coppock

William Pollard Button and Jerusha (Pelton) Button of Glastonbury, Connecticut had five children, all born in that town and state. The first born was Lucy Ann, who was born about 1830 and died 6 July 1852. Next came Lovinia Matilda, born about 1832 and died 13 July 1856. There were two unidentified children who were born and died between 1830 and 1838, then came William W. Button, the youngest child and subject of this history. He was born 18 August 1839 and died in June of 1893 in King County, Washington.

Census records for 1830 and 1840 list the William Pollard Button family, living in Glastonbury. By the time of the 1850 census the father is 45 years old and making his living as a

shoemaker, his wife Jerusha was age 44. Their children living at home were: daughter Lucy A., age 20; daughter Lovenia, age 18; and their son William W. Button, age 11. William P. Button had an estimated worth of \$1,000, a goodly sum in 1850.

At the time of the 1860 census, the subject of our story William W. Button was 20 years old, working as a farm hand, and living on his own in Glastonbury. His estimated worth was \$800.

William W. Button did not enlist in the Civil War until late in the conflict. He was a single man when he enlisted in the Union Army at Portland in Hartford County, Connecticut, on 1 August 1864. He was mustered in to the service 4 August 1864, as a private in Company M of the First Connecticut Heavy Artillery. He was with the regiment when it repulsed a rebel fleet at Fort Brady on the James River on 23 and 24 January 1865, and participated in several assaults and in the fall of Petersburg, Virginia on 2 April 1865. His regiment was assigned to duty in the Department of Virginia until 11 July and then moved back to Washington D.C.

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### **A Brief History of the First Connecticut Regiment of Heavy Artillery**

Organized at Washington, D.C. on 2 January 1862, the First Connecticut Regiment of Heavy Artillery was first attached to the Military District of Washington. The regiment was defending Washington, D.C., until April of 1862, assigned to the Army of the Potomac, under Union Major-General George B. McClellan.

The regiment, reassigned numerous times during Civil War, participated in many military operations in the east, including the Peninsula Campaign; Siege of Yorktown; operations at Hanover Court House; the Battle of Gaines' Mill; and Malvern Hill.

After the campaigns and battles listed both Company M and Company B went on to military operations at Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and the Battle of Gettysburg.

The First Connecticut Regiment returned to the defense of Washington in January 1864, was ordered to Bermuda Hundred in Virginia; engaged in fatigue duty and provided a garrison for batteries and forts on the Bermuda front and lines during siege operations against Petersburg and Richmond, Virginia from May 1864 to April, 1865 The regiment was then assigned to the defense of Washington until the men of the regiment were mustered out 25 September 1865.

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Charges of desertion were posted in William W. Button's record when he was away without leave in Virginia on 5 August 1865. He returned for duty on or about 8 August 1865 and received his discharge on that date. His records were later corrected when the charges for desertion were dropped, and he became eligible for a veteran's pension.

After the Civil War, sometime between 1865 and 1870, William W. Button moved from Connecticut to Wisconsin, The 1870 census for Pewaukee, Waukesha County, Wisconsin showed William Button, age 30, a day laborer, living in the household of W. H. Pelton, age 30,

born in Pennsylvania, who worked as a lime manufacturer. Also in the household was W.H. Pelton's wife Ann Eliza, age 24, and a daughter Julia, age seven months, born in October 1869; both were born in Wisconsin. Also in the home was Ida McDougal, age 14, a domestic servant born in Wisconsin; Halsey Pelton, age 70, born in Connecticut, also a lime manufacturer; Julia A. Pelton, age 64, born in Massachusetts; Milo A. Pelton, age 23, a bookkeeper; Julia Pelton, age 24, both born in Pennsylvania.

*[W. H., Milo C., and Julia Pelton were William Button's cousins, and Halsey Pelton was his uncle.]*

A search of "U.S. Civil War Soldiers, 1861-1865," and "American Civil War Soldiers", on [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) shows William W. Button, of Portland, Connecticut, with details of his enlistment, muster dates, and desertion information. A search of the "General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934" also lists William W. Button, and his wife Cynthia J. Button. An index card listing his pension application number and certificate are available on microfilm at the National Archives and Records Administration in Seattle.

Cynthia J. Button applied for a pension based on William W. Button's Civil War Service on March 14, 1898, on Application No. 672 594; Certificate No. 482 457. She was living in California at the time.

On the website: <http://www.civilwararchive.com/Unreght/unctarty.html> there is "A Regimental History of the First Connecticut Regiment of Heavy Artillery" and an "Index to Connecticut Volunteers" that lists William W. Button on Page 170; "Roster of the First Regiment of Connecticut Volunteers" lists William W. Button, of Portland, mustered in August 1, 1864; Deserted on August 8, 1865, on the list of Recruits for Company M, First Artillery, on Page 190.

The full Civil War Pension files from the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration indicate that William W. Button was granted a pension on Certificate No. 482 857. Copies of these records, purchased from NARA, are now housed at the Greater Kent Historical Museum.

In an affidavit filed with William W. Button's full pension files, Milo C. Pelton testified that from 1858 until 1861 William W. Button was a partner with William H. Pelton in the grocery business. Milo also asserts that he lived in the same house with him, both in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, for some years after the close of the Civil War.

On 5 May 1872 in Pewaukee, William W. Button married Cynthia J. Brown (b. 1840-d. 1910), daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Brown. William and Cynthia relocated, this time from Wisconsin to Iowa.

The 1880 census for Shenandoah, Page County, Iowa listed W. W. Button, age 40 years old, a shoemaker, born in Connecticut. Living with William Button was his wife C. J., age 39, who was keeping house. She was born in Pennsylvania according to the census; her father was born in Massachusetts and her mother in New York. Also living in the household was Cynthia's father Thomas Brown, age 65, listed as a boarder and a carpenter.

Sometime about 1886, William and Cynthia joined the western migration and the 1889 Washington Territorial Census showed William Button, age 49, living in Kent, King County. He

was again making his living as a shoemaker and was living with his wife C. J., age 48.

The “1890 Special Veterans Schedule of Surviving Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines, and Widows,” etc. showed William W. Button is living in Kent, Washington. This verifies his rank as private in Company M., of the First Connecticut Heavy Artillery.

William died in June of 1893, in Kent. He was buried in the Saar Pioneer Cemetery and for many years there was no stone to mark his grave site. The Department of Veterans Affairs provided a new military stone to mark the approximate location of Mr. Button’s grave at the request of the South King County Genealogical Society and it was installed near one of the other Civil War Veterans, Elias Clark, whose story will be forthcoming in this series.

The *White River Journal*, dated 15 June 1893, summarizes the life and death of William W. Button, who was indeed, according to his obituary, born 18 August 1839 in South Glastonbury, Connecticut. He died at his home in Kent, King County, Washington, “late Saturday night,” at the age of 53 years and 10 months. He was buried in “O’Brien Cemetery,” which was just one of the many names used to identify the Saar Pioneer Cemetery. He was survived by his widow. This source noted that William was the youngest of three children, and the last remaining member of his father’s family. The account mentioned that he was a soldier in the Union Army, that he was married to Cynthia Brown in May of 1873, and that he came to Washington in 1886.

William W. Button’s service during the Civil War earned him veteran status. After his death his wife, Cynthia J. Button, moved to San Jose, Santa Clara County, California, and subsequently applied for a widow’s pension in 1898, based on his service in the Civil War. The full pension file for this soldier, acquired from the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, included many documents in support of Cynthia Button’s application for a widow’s pension. She first filed for the pension on Application No. 672 495 on 17 February 1898. The government was not quick to award the pension, and over the course of many months there were a great many affidavits filed in support of Cynthia Button’s application; a gold mine of information for the researcher.

Some of the legal papers filed with the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Pensions, between 26 January 1898 and 25 August 1911 include: enlistment information, the desertion charge and subsequent removal of that charge, and discharge date for Private Button based on his service in Company M, First Connecticut Heavy Infantry. The pension files also offer copies of the widow’s application for a pension, a transcription of her marriage records, and affidavits signed by friends, neighbors, and medical professionals on behalf of Cynthia Button’s claim for pension. She was awarded \$8 per month dating from March 1898, and the pension was subsequently raised to \$12 per month.

On the 1900 census for California, Cynthia Button was an inmate at the Women Relief Township, Santa Clara County. This record indicated that Cynthia was born in May of 1840; she was 60 years old and a widow, born in Ohio.

This record varies somewhat from what is shown on the 1910 census for California, which lists Cynthia Button as an inmate at the same facility, age 68, born in Pennsylvania (which agrees with previous records). According to this census Cynthia had borne six children, none of which were still living. This was the first reference in any of the records researched for this history that indicates that there were children born into this Button family; thus one is tempted to surmise

that perhaps they all died in infancy. According to the Widow's Pension Application, included in the Pension files for this soldier, there were no surviving children. Also living in the Women's Relief Corp Home in 1910 was an Ida M. Pelton, who may or may not be related to William W. Button.

Cynthia Button was listed in the "Index to the William Funeral Home Books," for Santa Clara County, California. She died 13 December 1910, at the age of 70. Also listed in the same record were George O. Button who died at the age of 68, on 14 July 1933; and William F. Button who died at the age of 56. William was born 4 June 1883 and died 19 September 1939. No relationship have yet been established.

On the 15 August 1911 Cynthia Button was dropped from the payroll by the United States Pension Agency in San Francisco, California due to her death.

**SOURCES:** The book "A History of Saar Pioneer Cemetery and Its Inhabitants," Researched and Compiled by Members of the South King County Genealogical Society, and online resources and documents referenced in the text.

**NOTE:** Much of the history on the five Civil War veterans buried in this cemetery was researched and written by Sylva Jean Coppock. Permission was received from the owners of the copyright to reproduce sections of the book to share with the Puget Sound Civil War Roundtable, but should not be used for any other purpose.

## **PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

### **"The Mystery of Spring Hill"**

By Rick Solomon

*In Xanadu did Kubla Khan a stately pleasure dome decree, where Alph the sacred river ran, in caverns measureless to man, down to a sunless sea.* (from "Kubla Khan" by Samuel Taylor Coleridge). On the evening of the last day of November 1864 the bodies of Hiram Granbury, Otto Strahl, John Adams and Patrick Cleburne lied dead on the lower gallery of Carnton, the mansion owned by John McGavock. Two other Confederate generals of the Army of Tennessee, States Rights Gist and John C. Carter, also suffered mortal wounds that day on the frontal assaults launched on the plains of the Battle of Franklin. Were these deaths the result of a laudanum addled brain of their commander, John Bell Hood? Perhaps.

Why did Hood order these almost suicidal attacks which cost the Army of Tennessee about 6,252 casualties out of an army of about 34,000? Confederate deaths totaled about 1,750 in just *Five Tragic Hours* as James Lee McDonough and Thomas Connelly entitled their book about the Battle of Franklin. There is no doubt that Hood was extremely pissed off at the events, or lack thereof, the previous evening at Spring Hill. The Army of Tennessee had the chance of destroying a significant part of the Union forces under John Schofield, but let this opportunity slip through their fingers. What Rebel generals were to blame? This is a mystery that can never definitively be solved among lies, misinformation or silence from the dead or the surviving Confederate generals.

On November 28, George Thomas ordered Schofield to retreat from Columbia on the Duck River to Franklin on the Harpeth River. Meanwhile, early on the morning of November

29, Hood sent Cheatham's and Stewart's corps north on a flanking march to the east of the Union retreat. At the same time two divisions of Lee's corps and most of the southern artillery remained on the southern bank of the Duck to deceive Schofield into thinking a general assault was planned against Columbia. Meanwhile it was Hood's intent to cut off the retreating Federals on the Columbia Turnpike south of Spring Hill. Hood personally led Cleburne's division which was the lead division of Cheatham's corps most of the way and ordered Cleburne to attack. Hood awaited the two other divisions of Cheatham's corps were directed by Hood for Bates to go to the left and Brown to go to the right. However in the gathering darkness confusion reigned. Cleburne claimed that he received orders from Cheatham to delay the attack. Meanwhile Cheatham altered the orders to Bate and Brown and Cheatham failed to inform Hood of the change in orders. Cheatham was planning a full scale assault by his entire corps upon Spring Hill itself rather than the turnpike south of Spring Hill. Furthermore, an exhausted Hood failed to remain on the field and retired to his headquarters on the Thompson Farm, over two miles distant from Cheatham's position. When Brown reported to Cheatham that he was badly outflanked on his right, Cheatham cancelled all orders for an advance. Stewart's corps was halted by Hood several miles south of Cheatham and was not sent forward by Hood until after dark. When Stewart was sent forward by Hood, Stewart soon got lost because it was too dark. There have been some allegations that Brown and Cheatham were drunk and/or that Hood had taken a dose of laudanum after the rigors of riding a horse all day on his stump of a leg.

The next day at the battle of Franklin Hood was so furious at the Union escape that he ordered an attack of almost 20,000 men two miles across a flat open field without substantial artillery support on the strong Union position. The result of this impulsive attack was Confederate casualties of 6,252 including 1,750 killed and about 3,800 wounded. The military leadership of the Army of Tennessee was decimated with the previously mentioned six generals killed, seven generals wounded and one captured. In addition 55 regimental commanders were casualties. With all of the contradictions between the top Confederate brass it will probably never be determined who was responsible for the Union troops not being cut off at Spring Hill. The mystery of Spring Hill is obscured by possibly laudanum, alcohol, darkness, and animosity between Confederate generals.

I look forward to seeing and talking with you at our November 13, 2014 meeting.

Rick Solomon, President

## **CIVIL WAR TRIVIA QUIZ- 150 YEARS AGO**

*The "main event" of November 1864 was Abraham Lincoln's reelection on November 8. However the war dragged on...*

1. On November 15 & 16, General Sherman's army destroyed much of Atlanta, Georgia and proceeded to "March to the Sea". What was the main difference between this campaign and most others of the Civil War?
2. What northern city did Confederate agents attempt to burn on November 25?



3. The Confederate Army of Tennessee under the command of Gen. John B. Hood moved north to threaten Nashville. Hood actually was able to flank a Federal force under Gen. Schofield, but Schofield bypassed Hood's army in a night march at what location?

Bonus Question: On the following day, November 30, Hood ordered a charge against dug in Union troops at Franklin, Tennessee. It was a disaster. In addition to over 6,000 casualties, how many Confederate generals were killed in action?

**NOTE:** Life Member John Hinds of Texas has been paring down his Civil War book collection and sending them to the Round Table. We have been giving them as prizes for correct answers to these quiz questions. Dick Miller said these are the last books from Hinds' collection. We hope you do your homework and win one of them!

Bearss, Fields of Honor: Pivotal Battles of the Civil War

Donald, Charles Sumner and the Coming of the Civil War

Ciardi, A Brower's Dictionary: A Compendium of Curious Expressions & Intriguing Facts

Waugh, The Class of 1846: From West Point to Appomatox: Stonewall Jackson, George McClellan, and their Brothers

## THE LAST WORD

### Battlefield Preservation Month

By Mark R. Terry

If you were at last month's meeting, you probably got a laugh from our speaker Hampton Newsome, who said something to the effect that for many of us we need a "12-step program" for our obsession over the Civil War! Some years back, I saw a quote from the late Civil War historian Bruce Catton, which I've always felt summed this up. The trouble was there was never a source given for it. I finally found it in Bruce Catton's *America Goes To War*, on page 68:

*"We are people to whom the past is forever speaking. We listen to it because we cannot help ourselves, for the past speaks to us with many voices. Far out of that dark nowhere which is the time before we were born, men who were flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone went through fire and storm to break a path to the future. We are part of the future they died for; they are part of the past that bought the future. What they did- the lives they lived, the sacrifices they made, the stories they told and the songs they sang and, finally, the deaths they died- make up a part of our experience. We cannot cut ourselves off from it. It is as real to us as something that happened last week. It is a basic part of our heritage as Americans."*

November is "Battlefield Preservation Month". What better way to honor those who fought than to preserve the land and the properties they fought and died on? Yes, what the Civil War veterans passed down to us in their lives and their stories is a "basic part of our heritage", but so is the soil upon which they spilt their blood. I hope you will give generously to the cause of Civil War battlefield preservation this month...

**THE PSCWRT BOARD WISHES YOU ALL A BLESSED AND HAPPY  
THANKSGIVING!!!**

## **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 255<sup>th</sup> Ave. SE, Maple Valley, WA 98038-7626. Call 425-432-1346 or email: [jeffrombauer@foxinternet.com](mailto:jeffrombauer@foxinternet.com).

**We welcome your article or research submissions for the newsletter, but they may be edited. The deadline for the December 2014 Washington Volunteer is Monday, November 24, 2014. Please have it in Mark Terry's hands via email or snailmail by then. Thank you!**

## **2014-2015 OFFICERS**

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