NEXT MEETING: Thursday, December 13, 2018
China Harbor, 2040 Westlake Avenue North, Seattle, Washington
Time: Social hour at 6 p.m.; Dinner served at 6:45 p.m.; Program at 8 p.m.

MENU CHOICES: Mongolian Beef, Chicken, Salmon or Vegetarian
Dinner includes: salad, vegetable delight, General Tso’s chicken, fried rice and fresh fruit.
Cost: $24 for adults; $10 for minors and college students. See below for reservations. Payable at the door. Opting out of dinner? $5 fee for non-members, $1 fee for members.

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 Steve Murphy at: steve@adaptech.us
Or lastly, call Steve Murphy at (206) 522-2268
Reservations are MANDATORY and be in by 12 NOON on Tuesday, December 11, 2018.

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

STUART STREICHLER WILL DISCUSS THE IMPEACHMENT OF ANDREW JOHNSON. He is the author of Justice Curtis in the Civil War Era: At the Crossroads of American Constitutionalism (Curtis was defense counsel for Johnson at the impeachment trial). Professor Streichler’s articles have appeared in many law reviews, newspapers, and other periodicals, and he has been interviewed by the BBC, CBC The National, Fox News, NHK, and local television news programs. He teaches at the University of Washington, Bothell, School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences.

IMPORTANT DISPATCHES

December Birthday
Several members have birthdays in December and we’d like to acknowledge their special day! They are:

Brad Barr  James M. Landerdahl  Craig Miller  Meg Wilkinson
Rod Cameron  Christopher Miller  Allen Suter
NEWS AND PROJECTS

Granville Haller House Saved!
By Mark R. Terry

On the day after Thanksgiving, Mike Movius shared some wonderful news with the membership- the Granville Haller House has been saved from destruction! Here’s the link to the Everett Herald article of Sunday, November 11, 2018: https://www.heraldnet.com/life/this-very-old-house-whidbey-group-seals-a-purchase-deal/

As some of you may recall, on June 11, 2016, a group of members from our CWRT took a day trip to the town of Coupeville on Whidbey Island to be given a tour of the Haller House [see photo]. At the time, the group that had control of the house, Historic Whidbey, were working feverishly to raise funds to purchase the property to preserve it for future generations. In the article written for the September 2016 Washington Volunteer, it was reported that on August 26, 2018, Lynn Hyde of Historic Whidbey reported that their efforts in raising enough funds had sadly failed.

So, it was with joy and relief that we learned the property had been saved! Apparently, the cost to purchase the property was $265,000. Several large donations came in, the largest of which was $110,000 from the National Park Service. This put them over the top! If you were part of the tour two years ago, you may recall that the place was in pretty bad shape. I am looking forward to the day that we can make a return visit to a cleaned up and restored landmark that the community will be proud of.

Granville Haller led an amazing life, fighting in the Seminole War & Mexican War before being stationed in Washington Territory in 1852. When the Civil War began, he was called back east and became part of Gen. George McClellan’s Headquarters. Falsely accused of treachery against Lincoln, Haller was dismissed from the service. That is when he and his wife moved back to Washington Territory and settled in Coupeville. There he built the house in 1866 which remains to this day.

FEATURED ARTICLES

Veterans In Our Back Yard: For The Greater Good
by Loretta-Marie Dimond

Shirland Harris Hitchcock was eighteen years old when he enlisted in the 15th Connecticut Infantry at Milford, New Haven County, on August 11, 1862. He was rapidly promoted from private to corporal, reaching full corporal of Company E on December 1, 1864. He was honorably mustered out on June 27, 1865. The regiment shipped out first to the Military District of Washington, Casey's Division, and was soon attached to the Army of the Potomac in the Ninth Corps. Battle names such as Arlington Heights, Fairfax Seminary, Fredericksburg, and the “Mud March” filled their letters home until early 1863. A word about Fredericksburg: the boys of the 15th were in the thick of it, as part of the left flank of the
Union right (under Sumner) at the Sunken Road. The battlefield location of the regiment was very near today's Fredericksburg National Park visitor's center.

Following depletion of their ranks, the regiment transferred to the Department of Virginia and North Carolina, performing provost duty and reconnaissance on the Chickahominy, participating in the siege of Suffolk, then going on expedition to the South Anna, Portsmouth, New Bern, Plymouth, and Roanoke River. The regiment's tracks covered the same real estate as our recent Hurricane Florence. A yellow fever epidemic caught up with them in 1864; many more died. What was left of the regiment was taken POW at Wyse Fork, North Carolina in the last week of the war, but was released and finished service in the occupation of Kinston and New Bern.

Shirland led a largely uneventful postwar life. He filed for his pension when it was extended for service, on August 10, 1891; he was then residing in Cincinnati, Ohio with his wife of thirty years, Elira Ann Bouton, and his three children, Bertha, Arline, and Edgar. He was in Chicago in time for the 1910 census enumeration. The family spread out to Colorado, Wisconsin, California, and, for whatever reason, White Bluffs in Benton County, Washington. In 1920 his son in law Ulysses Simpson Grant Agnew, Arline's second husband, ran a fruit farm on the Columbia River.

There we'll pick up the story. The veteran and his wife came west to live with their daughter. Elira died in Monterey County, California on April 6, 1923; she was reportedly brought home and buried in White Bluffs. It's possible her grave was never marked. Shirland followed her in death on June 21, 1923, and was certainly buried at the White Bluffs Cemetery. A Late Modified Belknap "US Shield" marker indicated his service, and the records of the QM General show it was issued to be installed at White Bluffs on April 15, 1936. The daughter and son in law moved to Wyoming in the late 1920s.

World War Two. The Manhattan Project. White Bluffs was in the way. The whole town was condemned and taken.

In a top-secret operation, the entire cemetery and its "contents" were moved by government contract on May 6, 1943. Portions of the old town are now a tourist site within the Hanford Reservation. For 75 years, the site of the former cemetery has been off limits. Shirland's grave is now located in Block 45, Section 5 of the Prosser Cemetery. Elira, however, is lost. She may have been left behind. So, a century after his birth, Shirland Harris Hitchcock became one of the three Civil War veterans of White Bluffs to be directly impacted by the coming of the atomic age.

Nearby in the Prosser Cemetery is Edwin Wallace Craig, a New York native, who had died in 1914 in White Bluffs and who was also relocated. Craig was in two units of the Missouri Infantry, the 13th and 25th, and also served a tour in the Missouri Engineers and Mechanics. Research on his exploits during the war is ongoing. He was in receipt of pension from 1883, so was wounded during the war. He is buried beneath a civilian marker alongside his third wife, Ida May Randall Craig, who lived until 1954 and is one of the last Civil War widows of Benton County.

The third comrade from White Bluffs now at the Prosser Cemetery is James E Wade of Company E, 13th Wisconsin Infantry. He served from 1861 to 1865 out of Fort Leavenworth, and in Missouri, Tennessee, and Alabama against CSA guerrillas. He was involved with defense of Forts Henry and Donelson. He died in Ellensburg on 1 December 1928. His Late Modified Belknap marker was issued to the American Legion in 1929.
Recommendations for additional reading on the Speaker’s Topic: The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson.
By Jeff Rombauer

When I was a teenager in the mid 1960’s, I remember watching a program on NBC television based on President John F. Kennedy’s book *Profiles in Courage*. One of the episodes which most stood out in my mind was that of Senator Edmund Ross, one of seven Republican Senators who voted against impeaching President Andrew Johnson in the spring of 1868. As a result of his vote, Ross and the other Republican senators who voted no on impeachment, had their political careers ruined. [The vote to convict Johnson failed by only one vote] But is Kennedy’s account true? How did this constitutional crisis happen?

When Johnson first became President after Lincoln’s assassination, Radical Republicans in Congress assumed that they had at last a man in the White House who agreed to their views of a harsh reconstruction of the former Confederate States. After all Johnson been the only Southern Senator not to resign his seat and go with his state into the Confederacy. He had served on the Committee to Conduct the War with such Radicals as Senator Benjamin Wade. Johnson had served for almost two years as the Military Governor of Tennessee, before being chosen as Lincoln’s second Vice President. As Senator, Governor and Vice President, Andrew Johnson has constantly castigated Southern Traitors.

But as 1865 turned into 1866 under Presidential Reconstruction, southern state after southern state, enacted “black codes” to control the newly emancipated freedmen and voted into Congress many former Confederates. Congressional Republicans became alarmed. This alarm grew when Johnson vetoed numerous acts of Congress designed to protect and extend the rights of blacks in the South. While Republicans in Congress refused to admit the newly elected representatives from the South, there was nothing they could do about Johnson’s vetoes. However, the election of 1866 gave them 2/3’s control of both houses of Congress which allowed them to pass a harsher reconstruction policy on the former confederate states as well as laws to hamper Johnson’s control of the military. One of these laws, The Tenure of Office Act {which required Senate approval of any dismissal of government personnel approved by vote of the Senate} brought about the constitutional crisis in the winter of 1868, when President Johnson attempted to fire Secretary of War Edward Stanton.

It was not until the early 20th century that the first historical accounts of the impeachment written. For those seeking to read more on the impeachment of President Andrew Johnson the following books are recommended.


1600 pages covers the trial record of Johnson’s impeachment in the spring of 1868. Volume 3 reprints the opinions of all U.S. Senators on the trial. The basic source, but not light reading


Despite its age, this remains a valuable account of the impeachment. Dewitt was allowed access to Johnson’s private papers and letters to write this account. According to one historian “DeWitt’s study was concerned primarily with the injustice of impeachment rather than with Johnson's policy”


The title says it all. This slim volume is more a general biography of Johnson than a study of the impeachment trial. The author views Johnson as being misunderstood due to his dominating strength of character.

This well researched monography believes that the impeachment of Johnson was justified because his activities threatened Congressional reconstruction.


Another well researched monograph on the impeachment trial. Trefousse believes that Johnson despite being tried for “high crimes and misdemeanors” achieved his goal of retarding radical reconstruction and maintaining the social order of white rule in the former confederacy.


A lawyer, who defended a Federal judge from impeachment charges in 1989, Steward brings a unique perspective to Johnson’s impeachment trial. Stewart believes that Johnson’s impeachment “allowed passions to cool” and allowed a political process to prevent violence. The author challenges many previous “truths” about the results of Johnson’s trial.

**Sherman’s Andersonville Dilemma**

By Gary Alan Dorris

In April, 1864, Union General William Tecumseh Sherman had been given a mission by his superior officers; to take his over 60,000 Union troops out of Tennessee, into Georgia. Once there, he was to conquer Atlanta, move southeast through Macon (a strategic rail center) and then march to the sea to take Savannah. The strategy behind the Georgia campaign was not to just capture important Southern cities, but to split the diminishing Confederate forces and to demoralize the population so that they would seek an earlier end to the Civil War. An ancillary mission was to, hopefully, weaken the Confederate resistance against General Grant’s forces in Virginia by Robert E. Lee’s army; as Sherman moved his troops further south and around those battlefields.

General Sherman completed his mission, but under a historical cloud. The Georgia campaign is forever marked in history for the burning of Atlanta and for the widespread (and some say unnecessary) destruction of homes and farms during his army’s “March to the Sea” toward Savannah.

But, during that same time-period, there was another immense human tragedy taking place in Georgia, near a town called Andersonville, in a prison named Camp Sumter. The Union soldiers, held there as prisoners-of-war, suffered under inhumane conditions; a situation, at least in part, known to many Northern civilian and military officials. By the time Sherman was preparing to leave Tennessee for Georgia, he was aware of the existence of Camp Sumter, if not of the full scope of the unfolding tragedy. In spite of that knowledge, Sherman’s Georgia campaign strategy did not include the liberation of the lightly defended prison complex; and some critics suggest that it should have.

The prison had been started in December 1863, with a plan to house 10,000 Union prisoners, but was still unfinished when the first prisoners began to arrive in February 1864. In only a few months the prison population swelled to over 33,000 and conditions deteriorated rapidly. Sherman was at least somewhat aware of the deplorable conditions within the prison since a few men had escaped and told of the many prisoners who had died, and were dying, of starvation and disease. His large army would be within about
140 miles of Andersonville during his two-month siege of Atlanta (from early July-September 3rd), and even closer, about 50 miles, as the army marched through Macon, Georgia; on the way to Savannah. However, Sherman decided to not veer the army off course to liberate the thousands of Union prisoners suffering at Camp Sumter. By most estimates, at least 13,000 prisoners died there with many succumbing from the time Sherman entered Georgia in April 1864 until their liberation in April 1865.

Why did Sherman not prioritize the liberation of the Andersonville prisoners? Certainly, many more would have survived if they had been rescued anytime during Sherman’s nine-month campaign in Georgia.

Sherman gave various reasons for his decision. After he completed his march to the sea in December 1864 he said he had been given a mission that was never altered. Then, just after the war, he said that he could not justify dividing his forces since he could not be sure of the size and capabilities of Confederate General John Bell Hood’s forces which were in the area. Later, he said that, while it would have been a humanitarian mission to relieve the suffering of the prisoners, if he had divided his forces to essentially begin a second and separate campaign, it would have put the remaining soldiers under his command at greater risk in battle against the enemy. He also explained that he could not have cared for the prisoners without halting his campaign; which was probably a fact, since he had organized his force to travel quickly, (read lightly), from Atlanta and obtained most of his food supplies by foraging off the land. Therefore, Sherman believed that he could not have fed and cared for another 30,000 sick soldiers.

What is often lost is that he did permit a voluntary, but limited, attempt at liberating Andersonville in July 1864 when he agreed that General George Stoneman could undertake a rescue mission after his 2,200 men destroyed railroad tracks near Atlanta and otherwise disrupted General Hood’s supply lines. General Stoneman had requested that Sherman grant permission for the liberation effort after completing his primary mission; and General Sherman agreed that Stoneman’s idea might work. In his memoirs, Sherman wrote, “There was something most captivating in the idea, and the execution was within the bounds of probable success.” Sherman recalled that, in his orders to Stoneman, he wrote, “If you can bring back to the army any or all of those prisoners of war, it will be an achievement that will entitle you, and your command, to the love and admiration of the whole country.”

But, it was not to be!

The attempt ended in a disaster for the Union Army when Stoneman was caught in a pincer action between two Confederate forces. Stoneman decided that he and 700 of his troops would remain in place to provide withering cover fire for 1,500 of his men who would attempt an escape through enemy lines. The larger group did break out; however, soon afterward, Stoneman and the 700 remaining troops ran out of ammunition, were captured, and became prisoners themselves. Fortunately for Stoneman and his men, they were not taken to Andersonville, and were exchanged a few months later for a like number of Confederate soldiers in Union hands.

A few weeks after Stoneman’s failed attempt at liberation of Andersonville, on September 1, 1864, Confederate forces under General John Bell Hood pulled out of Atlanta and the city was surrendered the next day. Sherman sent a famous message to Abraham Lincoln writing, “Atlanta is ours, and fairly won.” During the siege, the Union Army had fired thousands of artillery shells into the city, some of which caused fires. Then when Confederate General Hood abandoned the city, he ordered the destruction of military facilities, equipment, and supplies which he could not carry; some by setting more fires. Because Hood’s army remained in the area, Sherman chose to extend his stay in Atlanta to defend the city, and did not leave for Macon and then Savannah until mid-November. But then, before he set off on his famous “March to the Sea” on November 15, Sherman had his forces set fire, or otherwise destroy, any remaining
facilities that might be of future use to Confederate troops, including warehouses, factories, and railroad facilities.

When those later fires became uncontrollable, the result was the infamous “Burning of Atlanta.”

Sherman left the devastated city in the hands of a small defensive unit, and took his remaining 60,000 troops toward Savannah, Georgia, about 250 miles to the southeast. As he passed within about fifty miles of Andersonville, we do not know if he considered a second attempt to liberate the prisoners held at Camp Sumter; we only know that no attempt was made.

Moving generally in front of Sherman’s advance, Confederate troops foraged their way across Georgia taking food, horses, mules and equipment from local farmers, many of whom, but not all, willingly shared what little they had with the Southern soldiers. Sherman’s troops followed the Confederate troops through the countryside, also foraging, but in their case, they often stole any remaining food and livestock they found, leaving the families destitute; and often burned the houses and barns of the farmers who resisted.

When Sherman arrived in Savannah on December 21, 1864, Confederate troops had already abandoned the city, and the citizens quickly surrendered. Therefore, unlike Atlanta, their town was spared. Sherman remained near Savannah for a few weeks to rebuild his supplies and rest his army. With Bell’s Confederate troops scattered, some critics of Sherman argue that he could have then sent a contingent from Savannah back to liberate the Andersonville prisoners because his primary “mission” was complete; but, by that time Sherman had other plans. In January 1865, ten months after he entered Georgia, he turned his troops northward towards the Carolinas; where he would engage Confederate troops and forage off the small farms on his way back to established Union lines.

As time went on, General Sherman continued to reflect on his decision to not make further attempts to liberate Andersonville. After Stoneman’s capture, Sherman wrote, “Nothing but natural and intense desire to accomplish an end so inviting to one’s feelings would have drawn me to commit a military mistake at such a crisis, as that of dividing and risking my cavalry so necessary to the success of my campaign.” It appears Sherman’s only regret was that he divided his forces (no matter how small the contingent) to allow Stoneman’s liberation attempt. After the Stoneman debacle, Sherman wrote to his wife, “I have already lost Stoneman & near 2,000 Cavalry in attempting to rescue the Prisoners at Macon (Andersonville). I get one hundred letters a day to effect the exchange or release of these Prisoners.” But Sherman would not yield to those hundreds of appeals. In his memoirs, Sherman wrote, “(There were)…more than twenty-five thousand prisoners confined in a stockade designed for only ten thousand; debarred of the privilege of gathering wood out of which to make huts; deprived of sufficient healthy food, and the little stream that ran though their prison-pen poisoned and polluted by the offal from their cooking and butchering houses above.”

Some historians blame much of the suffering at Andersonville on the Union decision, in early 1864, to stop permitting most prisoner exchanges, which had been a common practice until that time. Union leaders including Edwin Stanton, Secretary of War, and General Ulysses S. Grant, did not support additional prisoner exchanges with the Confederacy because they did not want to help re-enforce the diminishing Southern armies. There was some logic to the decision as it was common for released Confederates to be pressed back into service, while the Union army did not necessarily need the additional troops gained from any exchange. General Grant wrote in a letter “It is hard on our men held in Southern prisons not to exchange them, but it is humanity to those left in the ranks to fight our battles. Every man (Confederate soldier) released on parole or otherwise, becomes an active soldier against us at once, either directly or indirectly. If we commence a system of exchange which liberates all prisoners taken, we will have to fight on until the whole South is exterminated.”
General Sherman had to live with his decisions to never again attempt to liberate Andersonville and to cause such destruction throughout Georgia. But his mission was to conquer Atlanta and destroy the city’s ability to provide supplies to the Confederate armies, to then drive across Georgia to cut the Confederacy in half, and to take Savannah. He accomplished his mission, and, for most Generals, despite other collateral suffering, that is their sufficient reward; it evidently was for General William Tecumseh Sherman. To him, he did his job!

The prisoners at Andersonville just had to wait.

Contact the author at gadorris2@gmail.com or view other articles at the web-site www.alincolnbygadorris.com

THE LAST WORD

“Drill” Part Two: Anatomy of a Company
By Mark R. Terry

When discussing Civil War tactical manuals, the “devil is in the details”. That is, for the general reader, how much detail is necessary? Too much and the reader goes to sleep. Too little and it becomes meaningless. Hopefully I can find that balance…

When the war began, cities, towns and villages supplied “companies” of volunteers. For the soldiers, a company was like a home away from home, since relatives and friends often enlisted together in the same company. But obviously individual companies were also the bedrock of Civil War infantry tactics.

Company Formation

Commanded by a Captain, supported by Lieutenants and NCOs, Companies were the cornerstone of the armies. Companies were where the soldiers learned to drill and any larger organization was worthless if the companies within it could not stay in formation, keep their alignments, maneuver and fire with competence. Here is a Company in formation with the positions of the officers and NCOs:

[This diagram was copied from a reprint of an 1861 version of Hardee’s Tactics. I found it to be very accurate, although the positions of the corporals had been left out- I added them!]
As you can see, the privates formed two ranks—front and rear. Note that if done correctly, each file (a front-rank man plus the rear rank man immediately behind him) would have the taller man to the rear and thus allow both ranks to fire simultaneously. I believe it would be safe to say this is where the term “rank and file” had its start.

The Captain’s position was in the front rank to the right of the first corporal, with the First Sergeant immediately behind him in the rear rank. The rest of the Sergeants, 2nd through 5th, were positioned left to right in the “file closer” rank, two paces behind the rear rank. The Lieutenants also lined up in that rank as shown. Note that the company could be divided into two platoons or four sections, with corporals as bookends for each section.

What was stressed?
1. The importance of keeping ranks straight in proper alignment without gaps.
2. Employ maximum firepower using both ranks.
3. Care for the flanks. While private soldiers are the bulk of the company, NCOs are positioned on the flanks and behind the formation to supervise maneuvers.

Doubling and Marching by the Flank

While movements could be done in the line formation above, for companies or battalions, a more efficient method of marching was “by the flank”. Doing this necessitated “doubling” the formation. At a halt, the officer in charge of the company would command “in each rank, count TWOs”. Starting from the right, each file would alternate calling out “One” and “Two” until the left file of the company was reached. Then, at the command “right FACE”, the files numbered “one” would simply face to the right in place, while the files numbered “two” would face to the right, then step diagonally forward and to the right of the man now in front of him. The result would be that the entire company would be faced to the right, with each file “doubled” into four men instead of two:

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  1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2
  1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1
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In this example, there are 12 files of soldiers. At the command, the Captain steps forward and is replaced by the First Sergeant and they also face right. When marching, the formation is kept straight by the front rank men following exactly behind the sergeant, who is guided by the Captain on his left. The rest of the men keep the intervals open in front of them, but also dress towards the front rank. Note that if marching by the left flank, the “two’s” face to the left, while the “one’s” double. The Captain moves to the left of the company, next to his Second Sergeant.

Now the entire unit—whether it is a company, battalion or an entire brigade—has space for each man to step off at the same instant at the command of “march” and keep the formation’s original size.

It must also be noted that marching by the flank was NOT to be used in combat. The company would have to change back into a line to fight.
At the Battle of Bristoe Station, Virginia, October 14, 1863, Confederate General Henry Walker’s Brigade of Tennessee, Alabama and Virginia troops were supposed to support the North Carolinians of General Kirkland. In his report, Walker wrote “Kirkland’s Brigade soon got into an open field, and commenced gaining ground to the right by a wheel, while mine, already behind and on the circumference, had a dense woods to march through for half a mile. This distance brought my brigade on Broad Run. While crossing this in line of battle, Kirkland became hotly engaged. See his left gaining ground so fast to the front and right, I marched my brigade by the right flank, again crossed Broad Run and double-quicked my brigade to try and catch up with Kirkland’s left.” [underline mine]

Walker, realizing he needed to support Kirkland quickly, gave up moving his brigade in line. He halted his brigade, gave orders to “Right FACE”, then marched at the “double quick”, a slightly faster pace than the normal “quick time”. In the end, the brigade arrived just as Kirkland was falling back.

In Part Three, we will cover the Firings!

On behalf of the board members of the PSCWRT, we…
Wish you and yours a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year!!!