

# THE WASHINGTON VOLUNTEER

PUGET SOUND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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**FEBRUARY 2022**

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**NEXT MEETING: Thursday,**

**FEBRUARY 10, 2022**

**ZOOM MEETING ONLY**

**Time:** Social hour at **6:45 p.m.**; Program at **7:00 p.m.**

## **ETHAN RAFUSE WILL SPEAK ON THE CIVIL WAR IN MISSOURI**

Ethan Rafuse, Professor of Military History at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, will give the February Zoom presentation on the Civil War in Missouri. He has given several dynamic and insightful presentations to PSCWRT including our last in person presentation before the Covid-19 Pandemic. He is the author of many books on the Civil War including *McClellan's War*, *Robert E. Lee and the Fall of the Confederacy 1863-1865* and *Antietam, South Mountain and Harpers Ferry: A Battlefield Guide*. He had taught at West Point earlier in his career.

## **ADDITIONAL READING ON THIS MONTH'S PRESENTATION**

One of my favorite interests on the Civil War has been the conflict in Missouri, a borderland slave state that remained loyal to the union. This may be because my great grandfather and two of his brothers were in the Union forces under General Lyon at the battle of Wilson's Creek in August 1861, while I had a great -great grandfather serve on Gen. John C. Fremont's staff in the Fall of 1861. While only a few "major" battles were fought in the state, the bitter guerrilla warfare between Union forces and Confederate partisans left a bitter legacy of destruction, death and exile that extended into the postwar period. Starting in 1861, Union leaders such as Frank Blair and General Nathaniel Lyon pushed pro Confederate forces out of the state leading to a bloody guerrilla warfare by ill regular partisans and raids into Missouri by regular confederate troops from Arkansas and Texas with the last incursion by Sterling in the late summer and fall of 1864. Here are some books that are worth reading about the regular military conflict in Missouri. [Guerrilla activities are not listed]

### General Background

PARRISH, WILLIAM E. ***Turbulent Partnership: Missouri and the Union 1861-1865***. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1963. Pp. xvi, 242.

Mainly a political history of Missouri during the conflict which saw the rise of a political faction of “radicals” which brought about “state emancipation” of slaves during the conflict

GERTEIS, LOUIS S. ***Civil War St. Louis***. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001. Xi, 210.

A very good history of this major city’s role during the Civil War. The large German immigrant population was key to retaining Missouri in the Union.

ROMBAUER, ROBERT J. ***The Union Cause in St. Louis in 1861: An Historical Sketch***. St. Louis: Press of Nixon-Jones Prtg. Co., 1909. Xiv, 475.

A participant in the events of 1861 relates the historical background that led to the civil war in Missouri as well as the military events as the Camp Jackson Affair, Wilson’s Creek and Lexington.

### Key Participants

PHILLIPS, CHRISTOPHER. ***Missouri’s Confederate: Clairborne Fox Jackson and the Creation of Southern Identity in the Border West***. Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2000. Cloth, Pp. Xv, 342

Jackson was the Governor of Missouri in 1861 and a pro Confederate sympathizer. His attempt to remove the state from the Union was thwarted by Lyon and Blair.

CASTEL, ALBERT. ***General Sterling Price and the Civil War in the West***. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968. Pp. xiii, 300.

Price was the head of the Missouri State Guard in 1861 who became a Confederate General and several times invaded Missouri to regain the state for the Confederacy.

PHILLIPS, CHRISTOPHER. ***Damned Yankee: The Life of General Nathaniel Lyon***. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1990. Pp. xvi, 287.

Long credited as the man who saved Missouri for the Union, Phillips in this biography instead sees the general’s inability to compromise start a war that may have been prevented.

PARRISH, WILLIAM E. ***Frank Blair: Lincoln’s Conservative***. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1998. Pp. xv. 318.

Blair, member of a famous political family, was a Congressman from Missouri at the start of the conflict. His actions in raising militia in St. Louis in the summer of 1861 help save the state for

the Union. He later became a Union general who fought at Vicksburg, Chattanooga and the Georgia Campaign.

NEVINS, ALLAN. ***Fremont: Pathmarker of the West***. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1955. Pp. xiv, 689.

Two chapters in this work cover the disastrous 100 days of Fremont's command as the U.S. commander of the department of the West.

### **Military Events**

GERTEIS, LOUIS S. ***The Civil War in Missouri: A Military History***. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2012. Pp. xiii, 237.

A modern summary of all the major military events in Missouri during the Civil War.

PISTON, WILLIAM GARRETT & HATCHER, RICHARD W. ***Wilson's Creek: The Second Battle of the Civil War and the Men who Fought It***. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000. Pp. xix, 408.

The most modern and best work on this early battle, the authors combine military history with "substantial social analysis" to give a fuller picture of the troops who fought in this battle.

LAUSE, MARK A. ***Price's Lost Campaign: The 1864 Invasion of Missouri***. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011. Pp. 264.

Price hoped to regain Missouri for the Confederacy and to help defeat Lincoln in the 1864 election when he invaded Missouri in the late summer. However as one critic put it the "raid" was "the stupidest, wildest, wantonness, wickedest march ever made by a general who had a voice like a lion and a spring like a guinea pig."

## **Civil War Naval Operations and Engagements**

**1863**



Currier & Ives, *Admiral Porter's fleet running the rebel blockade of the Mississippi at Vicksburg, April 16th. , 1863*, 1863, reproduction of original lithograph (NH 76557-KN).

*Note: This page currently contains only summaries of the individual battles as the complete studies for each engagement are in progress.*

## **Galveston II**

1 January 1863

On 1 January 1863, Major General John B. Magruder, C.S. Army, led his troops across the bridge into the island city of Galveston. At the same time, a makeshift fleet of “cotton-clads” confronted the U.S. Navy ships anchored in the harbor. Bales of cotton rather than iron protected each “cotton-clad” vessel. This coordinated attack caught Commander William B. Renshaw by surprise. After the destruction of Renshaw’s flagship, the Federal garrison on shore surrendered as the remaining Federal ships fled the harbor.

### **Fort Hindman**

9–11 January 1863

Admiral David Porter, U.S. Navy, and his Mississippi Squadron ascended the White and Arkansas Rivers to attack the Confederate-held Fort Hindman on 9 January 1863. Over the next two days, Federal gunboats fired upon the fort as 32,000 soldiers under command of Major General John A. McClernand advanced toward the fort. On 11 January, Brigadier General Thomas J. Churchill, C.S. Army, and his garrison surrendered and became prisoners of war.

### **Charleston Harbor**

7 April 1863

On 7 April 1863, Rear Admiral Samuel F. DuPont, U.S. Navy, attacked the fortifications at Charleston in response to pressure from Washington. The coastal artillery quickly repulsed the Federal ironclad fleet, and Major General P.G.T. Beauregard, C.S. Army, claimed an easy victory for the Confederacy. The land forces intended to support Du Pont’s fleet never disembarked from their transports. Du Pont quickly ordered a retreat, which ultimately led to his removal from his command shortly thereafter.

### **Vicksburg**

18 May - 4 July 1863

In April 1863, Acting Rear Admiral David Dixon Porter, U.S. Navy, took a joint convoy past the city of Vicksburg. The convoy landed Major General Ulysses S. Grant, U.S. Army, and his troops below the city. Marching back toward Vicksburg, Grant’s troops clashed with Confederate soldiers before they laid siege to the city. Forty-seven days later,

John B. Pemberton, C.S. Army, finally offered a conditional surrender. The cooperation between Porter and Grant in this campaign set a new precedent for joint operations.

### **Charleston Harbor II**

6–8 September 1863

After 60 days under siege from combined U.S. forces, General P.G.T. Beauregard, C.S. Army, ordered his troops to abandon Morris Island in Charleston Harbor. On the night of 6–7 September, his troops withdrew from Fort Wagner and Battery Gregg. Rear Admiral John A. Dahlgren, U.S. Navy, quickly reiterated his demand for the surrender of Fort Sumter. When the enemy refused, Dahlgren ordered an ill-fated amphibious assault on the night of 8–9 September. Fort Sumter and the city of Charleston remained under the control of its Confederate defenders until 1865.

### **Sabine Pass II**

8 September 1863

On 8 September 1863, Lieutenant Frederick Crocker, U.S. Navy, and General William B. Franklin, U.S. Army, attempted to launch an invasion of east Texas beginning with a joint assault of the fort at Sabine Pass. The Confederate garrison of Fort Griffin successfully defended the fort, and the U.S. joint forces were required to retreat to Louisiana and abandon their plans for this area of Texas.

### **Fort Brooke**

16–18 October 1863

On a mission to destroy Confederate blockade-runners, Lieutenant Commander Alexander A. Semmes, U.S. Navy, fired on Fort Brooke near Tampa, Florida. His goal was to distract their garrison from the landing party at nearly Ballast Point. The U.S. Navy sailors traveled inland on foot and successfully destroyed Confederate vessels hidden 14 miles inland on the Hillsborough River before they retreated to their ships.

### **PUGET SOUND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE AND COVID 19**

When I became President of PSCWRT for the third time in May 2020 my number one concern was for PSCWRT to continue as a viable place where the American Civil War could be studied and discussed in a safe manner by our membership until the Pandemic ended. Thanks to our past

president, Dick Miller, we started having Zoom Meetings instead of scheduled live in person meetings. This proved to work well and was getting about half of the amount of attendance before the Pandemic. If you attended some of these Zoom Meetings, you know that the presentations were excellent. On behalf of the Board of Directors and the Membership of PSCWRT I wish to express our eternal gratitude to Dick Miller for helping to keep our Roundtable alive and vibrant.

With the rise of the highly contagious Omicron Variant the Board still feels that at present it is still too early to have in person meetings at the China Harbor. Covid rates are starting to drop in the Greater Puget Sound area but are still way too high. No one really knows whether there will be more variants and , if so, whether they will be more contagious than Omnicron and more severe in its effect. It was decided that only who are fully vaccinated could attend our meetings. Also, it was decided that attendees of these in person meetings would be required to wear masks except when eating or drinking. In a recent vote the Board of directors has unaminously decided that members can attend live meeting if they are unvaccinated and provide a Covid 19 negative test result that is less than 72 hours before our meeting. At this point in time it is logistically impossible for there to be a simultaneous in person and Zoom meeting. In addition the China Harbor has been closed after the discovery of structural damage to it's building. The Board will vote again around the end of February as to whether or not to have a live in person meeting starting on March 10 when Ryan Booth is to be our presenter.

The Pandemic will be monitored by the Board of Directors. It is our sincere hope that we will be able to hold our in person meeting at the China Harbor on March 10. Stay tuned! Rick Solomon

### **SPEAKER SCHEDULE FOR 2021-2022**

**March 10, 2022 – Ryan Booth will talk about James Sanks Brisbin, a lawyer who enlisted as a private in April 1861 and ended the war as a brevet brigadier general. In the course of seeing significant action, Brisbin was wounded five times.**

**April 7, 2022 – Gordon Chang, author of *Ghosts of Gold Mountain: The Epic Story of the Chinese Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad*, is the Olive H. Palmer Professor in Humanities at Stanford University.**

**May 12, 2022 – Caroline Janney is the John L. Nau III Professor in the History of the American Civil War and the Director of the John L. Nau III Center for Civil War History at the University of Virginia. Professor Janney's latest book, *Ends of War: The Unfinished Fight of Lee's Army after Appomattox*, will be released by the University of North Carolina Press on September 21, 2021.**

## **FEBRUARY Birthdays**

Several members have birthdays in February and we'd like to acknowledge their special day!  
They are:

Louis Berquest  
Raqu Cardwell  
Patricia Clayton  
Gary Martin  
Mike Movius  
Lois Trickey  
Alexander Wells

## **PRESIDENT'S COLUMN: THE UNSUCCESSFUL SEARCH FOR A COMMANDER OF THE ARMY OF TENNESSEE PART FIVE**

Last month I discussed the High Command of the Army of Tennessee from the Battle of Chickamauga through the period shortly before the Battle of Chattanooga. In this column I shall cover the Army of Tennessee through the Death of Polk and his Replacement by Stewart.

The Battle of Chattanooga was an unmitigated disaster for the Confederacy. Within days of the conclusion of that battle Braxton Bragg reported in a letter about this defeat to Adjutant General Samuel Cooper stating, "I deem it due to the cause and to myself to ask for relief from command and an investigation. No satisfactory excuse can possibly be given for the shameful conduct of our troops on the left in allowing their line to be penetrated. The position was one which ought to have been held by a line of skirmishers against any assaulting column." That offer of resignation was quickly accepted by President Jefferson Davis the very next day, Nov. 30, 1863. As the only Lt. General present with the Army of Tennessee William Hardee was in temporary command of that army until the appointment of Joseph E. Johnston on Dec. 27, 1863. Robert E. Lee suggested Beauregard, but Davis preferred Lee himself. When Davis asked Lee if he would go to Dalton to take command of the army of Tennessee Lee replied no. Lee told Davis, "I also fear that I would not receive cordial co-operation. I have not that confidence wither in my strength or ability as would lead me of my own option to undertake the command in question." Lee had created a successful team in Virginia, knew the region and his opponents well, and was so alarmed at reports of dissent in the Army of Tennessee that the thought of changing commands was dubious.

Hardee was a competent corps commander, but nothing more than that. Hardee had made it clear to Davis that he had no interest in being the permanent commander of the Army of Tennessee. The other acting corps commander at the Battle of Chattanooga, Major General John C. Breckinridge, had disgraced himself by being falling down drunk at that battle and the subsequent retreat. Who would take over his corps? It would not be Benjamin Franklin

Cheatham who reportedly was drunk during the Battle of Stones River a year before. Even though he was drunk Cheatham performed splendidly at the battle of Stones River. It would not be Leonidas Polk, the Bishop General and close friend of President Davis, who had recently been transferred to Mississippi. In my opinion Polk was perhaps the worst corps commander in the Confederacy due to his propensity not to follow orders and to act on orders that he did obey with the speed of a turtle. It would not be James Longstreet who had led the mutiny against Bragg after Chickamauga and had performed poorly around Knoxville thereby losing the confidence of Jefferson Davis.

That new corps commander should have been Patrick Cleburne who had fought so well at Shiloh, Stones River and Chickamauga. At the Battle of Chattanooga Cleburne's Division had turned back the attacks of Sherman on the right flank of the Confederate Army and had covered the retreat of the Rebel army to Dalton in splendid fashion by defending Ringold Gap against 3-1 odds. So why didn't Davis appoint his finest division commander to the empty corps command in the Army of Tennessee? Here are five possible reasons: (1) Cleburne was foreign born. (2) Cleburne advocated freeing the slaves who served in the Confederate military in a written proposal delivered to the High command of the Army of Tennessee in Jan. 1864. WHT Walker notified Jefferson Davis about this proposal in a highly critical manner. (3) Cleburne was not a West Point graduate. This was very important to Jefferson Davis. Only three non-West Pointers were promoted as high as Lt. General in the Confederate Army during the Civil War and only one of those was so promoted before Cleburne was killed at the Battle of Franklin. (4) Cleburne was a long time member of the anti-Bragg group and this rubbed Davis the wrong way. (5) Perhaps most shocking of all, Cleburne's close friend and immediate superior officer, Hardee, failed to recommend Cleburne for promotion. It is my opinion that Cleburne was Hardee's "security blanket."

Instead of Cleburne, on Feb. 1, 1864 Davis appointed John Bell Hood to the corps command. Hood had been a spectacular brigade commander with the Army of Northern Virginia at Eltham Landing and the Peninsula campaign, especially at Gaines Mill. His leadership of a two brigade division at South Mountain and Antietam was first rate. After being promoted to Major General and put in command of a four brigade division Hood was lightly engaged at Fredericksburg, was not present at Chancellorsville, and was wounded in the left arm and put out of commission very early in the attack on the afternoon of July 2, 1863, at Gettysburg. Therefore he still wasn't a proven four brigade division commander after his first wound. At Chickamauga when Longstreet was moved by Bragg up to the command of the Left Wing. Hood was made an acting commander of a makeshift corps consisting of McLaws division (two brigades), Hood's division (three brigades) and Johnson's division (three brigades). On Sept. 20 when Longstreet made his attack Hood's men, by sheer luck, went right through the area that had just been vacated by Wood's Union division. Hood was wounded in his right thigh and off the field very early in the attack. I submit that Hood was still a very inexperienced commander of a four brigade division when Davis decided to promote him to Lt. General and corps command in the Army of Tennessee. During his recovery from his wounds in Richmond Hood, when he was not pursuing the lovely Sally Preston, was seen frequently in the company of Jefferson Davis. Shortly after

Hood's promotion and assignment to corps command in the Army of Tennessee, Bragg was resurrected as Military Adviser to Jefferson Davis. In the coming months Hood would be in communication with Bragg and Davis, acting as a spy on the actions of Joseph Johnston. In these communications Hood would constantly second guess Johnston's decisions. This contact with Bragg and Davis was outside of the normal chain of command. The actions of Bragg are particularly despicable since Johnston had supported Bragg's command of the Army of Tennessee after the battles of Stones River and Chickamauga. I think Cleburne would have been the better choice.

Once the Atlanta campaign was underway Johnston felt it was necessary to bring Polk's Mississippi corps back to the Army of Tennessee. On June 14, 1864 Polk was killed instantaneously by an artillery shell while surveying Union positions as he stood on top of Pine Mountain. A new Corps commander had to be found. Davis decided on Alexander P. Stewart. While Stewart was a fine division commander, having fought well at Chickamauga, Chattanooga and earlier in the Atlanta Campaign, once again, Cleburne would have been the better choice.

## **OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS POSITIONS NEED TO BE FILLED**

### **GREETERS**

We need motivated people who are outgoing who would be willing to meet and help visitors and new members, to answer questions and help them feel welcome to our group. This is currently a non-board position, but for this position "the more, the merrier". Everyone here was new at some point. Didn't you like being welcomed rather than ignored?

### **SECRETARY**

The main job of the Secretary is to take minutes at board meetings and to publish them for the board, the advisors and the general membership.

### **VICE-PRESIDENT RESERVATIONS**

This is the person that records the meal choices and reservations for each month's meeting as they come in. Once live in person meetings resume at the China Harbor we need someone regular in that position. Vice President-Successor Jim Dimond has stepped in temporarily.

### **VICE-PRESIDENT EDITOR**

This monthly newsletter, the Washington Volunteer, is edited and put together by the VP-Editor. The opening is immediate with Rick Solomon filling this position temporarily. Right now I have my plate overflowing with serving as President and trying to find speakers for 2022-2023. This is one of the most important positions in PSCWRT. If you volunteer, you can call on past Newsletter Editors Jeff Rombauer, Mark Terry and Rick Solomon for advise.

**Please note that anyone who volunteers will be given help and instruction for their role. For the most efficient and smooth operation of the PSCWRT, we need YOUR HELP to make it happen!**

## **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: \$25 per individual or 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: Chris McDonald, Treasurer, 34705 NE 14th Avenue, LaCenter, WA 98629. Call (503) 930-4940 or email: [alpacamomchris@gmail.com](mailto:alpacamomchris@gmail.com)

**We welcome your article or research submissions for the newsletter, but they may be edited for space. Note that the contents of each newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views of the PSCWRT. The deadline for the March 2022 Washington Volunteer is Monday, February 28, 2022. Please have it in Rick Solomon's hands via email or snailmail by then. Thank you!**

## **2021-2022 OFFICERS**

### **Elected:\***

President: Rick Solomon; [ricksolomon192@gmail.com](mailto:ricksolomon192@gmail.com)

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Past President: Jeff Rombauer; [jeffrombauer@foxinternet.org](mailto:jeffrombauer@foxinternet.org)

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Secretary: VACANT

Board Member: George Yocum;

*\*All, except for Past President, an automatic position.*