

GENERAL ORDERS



The Newsletter of the

**Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.
and The Iron Brigade Association**



December 11, 2014

Jim Ogden

The Fight at Reed's Bridge: A Chickamauga Story Enlarged by Preservation

Much like the opening rounds at Gettysburg, the fighting at Chickamauga began with a small Union cavalry force holding off a much larger Confederate advance. Col. Robert H. G. Minty and his 973 men successfully delayed Confederate Gen. Bushrod Johnson at Reed's Bridge, and in doing so, upset the entire time table of Braxton Bragg's plan to crush the Union army in northern Georgia.



Our December speaker, Jim Ogden, is a native of St. Mary's, Maryland. He attended Frostburg State College, where he fell in love with Civil War History. His career with the National Park Service began in 1982. He became the Chief Historian at Chickamauga Chattanooga National Military Park in 1988.

Since 1988, Jim has been an instructor for over four hundred groups of U. S. Army officers, conducting Staff Rides— in-depth analyses of the historical military events that took place on and around the Chickamauga Chattanooga National Military Park. He has led countless walking tours covering the history and the stories of the Civil War, spoken to multiple gatherings ever increasing their interest in Civil War history, and travels the country as one of the leading experts on the military events that took place in Chickamauga/Chattanooga region.

Jim is this year's recipient of the Nevins-Freeman Award, given annually by the Civil War Round Table of Chicago for distinguished scholarship in the Civil War field, and for the recipient's contribution to the Round Table movement.

**General Orders No. 12-14
December 2014**

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December Meeting at a Glance

**Country Club of the Wisconsin Club
6200 WEST GOOD HOPE ROAD
MILWAUKEE, WI 53223
[Jackets required for the dining room.]**

5:30 p.m. - staff meeting
[Open to all members]
6:15 p.m. - Registration/Social Hour
6:45 p.m. - Dinner
[\$25 by reservation, please]
Reservations are accepted until
Monday, December 8, 2014
7:30 p.m. - Program

**Speaker and topic are subject
to change. In case of inclement
weather, listen to WTMJ or WISN
for meeting status.**

milwaukeeecwrt.org

Civil War Round Table News

Annual Membership Renewal

Please note that your membership renewal form was included in the September issue of the *General Orders*. If you have not done so, please take a moment to fill out and return your renewal in the postage-paid envelope that was provided. Don't forget our Annual Fund, which enables us to add to what we do to support the Civil War community. Thank you, Paul Eilbes, Treasurer/Membership.

When Reservations are Cancelled

Please be aware that cancellations of dinner reservations within 48 hours of the meeting are subject to payment in full. The MCWRT is charged for these dinners whether they are used or not!

Your Cooperation is Appreciated

"Walk-in dinner" requests are sometimes difficult to honor. Remember, dinner reservations are to be made at least 48 hours prior to the meeting date. We are always happy to accommodate where possible, but we cannot always guarantee a dinner that evening if you have not called in or emailed your reservation. Thank you for your understanding.

MCWRT Annual Fund

The following members have made a generous commitment to the MCWRT by investing in that fund. The following list reflects those made from July-November 2014.

Major Contributor (\$500 and above)

Grant Johnson

Patron (\$200-\$499)

Crain Bliwas, Robert Parrish

Associate (\$100-\$199)

Paul Eilbes, David Jordan, Stephen Leopold,
Paul Sotirini, Bernard VanDinter

Contributor (up to \$99)

George Affeldt, Dale Bspalec, John Busch,
Cynthia Cooper, James DeValkenaere, Bob Dude,
Lori Duginski, Gary & Judith Ertel, Ted Fetting,
A. William Finke, Richard Gross, Douglas Haag,
Erwin Huston, Eugene & Jane Jamrozy,
Dr. Bob & Judy Karczewski, Ardis Kelling,
Jerome Kowalski, Rod Malinowski, Herbert Oechler,
James & Ann Reeve, David & Helga Sartori,

2 Jean Schwonek, Dennis Slater, Dan Tanty

The Muster Roll: NEW MEMBERS

NAME	RESIDENCE	PLACE OF BIRTH	EDUCATION	REMARKS
Scott Olson
Scott Rouse

2014-2015 Speaker Schedule

January 8, 2015 – Father Robert Miller

"The Most Christian Nation in the World: Religion in American Culture on the Eve of the Civil War"

February 12, 2015 – Leslie Goddard

"Gone with the Wind and Popular Culture"

March 12, 2015 – Thomas Huntington

"Searching for George Gordon Meade"

April 9, 2015 – Professor Michael Burlingame

"The Assassination of President Abraham Lincoln"

May 7, 2015 – Eric Leonard

"When We Held Each Other Prisoner: Civil War Military Prisons and Prisoners of War"

June 11, 2015 – Garry Adelman

"4-D Civil War Photography Extravaganza"

Speakers and topics are subject to change.

Please Notice This



The December 11, 2015 meeting
will be held at the Country Club
of the Wisconsin Club located at
6200 W. Brown Deer Road





In December 1951 Herbert A. Keller talked to the Round Table on "Rockingham County, Virginia, in the Civil War."

Donald Gerlinger was our Round Table speaker in December 1961 speaking on "Civil War Battlefields as They are Now."

Earl R. Hoover visited us in December 1971. His talk that evening was on "Benjamin R. Hanby and Darling Nettie Gray."

In December 1981 Patrick Pohn Hunter told us about "The Rambunctious Reporters of the Civil War."

"A Wisconsin Brigade in the Washington Camps" was the topic of Lance Herdegen's talk in December 1991.

In December 2011 Dr. James I. Robertson Jr. spoke to the assembled group on "The Untold Civil War."

At last year's December meeting we welcomed Col. Kevin Weddle (Retired Army) who spoke about "Lincoln's Forgotten Admiral."

ANNOUNCEMENTS – EVENTS – MEETINGS

December 6, 2014

Antietam Luminary Lighting, 6 pm – Midnight
Sharpsburg, Maryland
www.nps.gov/anti/planyouevent/luminary.htm

December 6-7 & 13-14, 2014

An Old World Christmas at Old World Wisconsin
A 19th century celebration complete with 1800s Santa and more

December 6-7, 2014

A Wade House Christmas in Greenbush, WI
A mid-19th century Christmas celebration at the Wade House Stagecoach Hotel

December 8, 2014

Manitowoc Civil War Round Table, 7 p.m.
Manitowoc Historical Society Heritage Center

December 9, 2014

Waukesha Civil War Round Table, 7 p.m.
Citizens Bank of Mukwonago Waukesha Branch
Speaker: Lance Herdegen

December 16, 2014

Prairieville Irregulars Civil War Round Table, 7 p.m.
Citizens Bank of Mukwonago Waukesha Branch
Speaker: A Visit with Lance Herdegen

KENOSHA CIVIL WAR MUSEUM

On The Way to War

Antaramian Gallery, 2nd floor

Through the watercolor paintings of Civil War soldier Cpl. John Gaddis, explore the universal experiences of soldiers on their way to war.

Sense the excitement, boredom, anxiety, bonding and realization of what war and combat is really about. Plus climb inside a Sibley Tent and see a full-size black bear like the 12th Wisconsin Regiment's mascot, Bruin.

Second Friday Lunchbox Series

The War in the West – Mini Seminar

Friday, December 12, 2014, Noon – 2 p.m.

In conjunction with the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop of Chicago, the museum offers this free program featuring distinguished Civil War authors, John Marszalek and Tim Smith.

Lincoln and the Military – Noon

Presented by: John Marszalek

Dr. Marszalek retired in 2002 as a professor at Canisius College, Gannon University becoming a Giles Distinguished Professor Emeritus. In July 2008, he became executive director and managing editor of the Ulysses S. Grant Association and "The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant" project.

Shiloh – Conquer or Perish – 1 p.m.

Presented by: Dr. Tim Smith

Dr. Smith served as a park ranger at Shiloh National Military Park for 6 years and currently teaches history at the University of Tennessee at Martin. He is the author of 11 books about the Civil War including *Corinth: Siege, Battle, Occupation*, which won the Fletcher Pratt Award and McLemore Prize.

Victorian Christmas

Saturday, December 13, 2014, 11 – 4 p.m.

An afternoon of songs, programs, crafts and activities exploring how soldiers and civilians celebrated the Christmas season during the Civil War.
A free family event.

Charles Dickens Festival

Sunday, December 14, 2014, 1 – 4 p.m.

- "A Christmas Carol" radio play by RG Productions
- "Dickens Women" performance by Jessica Michna
- Victorian chef demo by Ray Forgianni
- Caroling by Southeast Wisconsin Performing Arts

For further information visit: www.kenosha.org/wp-civilwar/ or call: 262-653-4141

milwaukeeecwrt.org

Civil War Round Table Dinner Reservation for December 11, 2014

Mail your reservations by Monday, December 8, 2014 to:

Paul Eilbes
1809 Washington Ave
Cedarburg, WI 53012-9730

ALSO, call in reservations to: Paul Eilbes (262) 376-0568
peilbes@gmail.com

Enclosed is \$ ____ (meal price \$25.00 per person) for ____ reservations for December 11, 2014, meeting of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee. (Please make checks payable to the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.)

Name of Member _____

AND SO IT CONTINUES: DECEMBER 1864 MARKING THE CIVIL WAR SESQUICENTENNIAL

DECEMBER 1864

The start of the month found the Petersburg-Richmond area quiet. Sherman was somewhere in Georgia, probably heading for Savannah, but even Washington had not heard from him and did not know his exact location or how he was faring. Hood and his battered Army of Tennessee were approaching Nashville from the south where George Thomas and his Federals waited. In Washington calls for negotiations with the Confederate government were still being heard. In Richmond, discontent loomed.

December 1, 1864 • John Schofield's Federal troops, having successfully withdrawn from Franklin, now joined the Nashville defense lines of General George H. Thomas. The Federals formed a semicircle with both flanks resting on the Cumberland River. Hood and his weary army moved upon Nashville. Hood had a choice: lie in front of the city in partial siege and wait for an attack or, bypass the city, leaving Thomas in his rear.

Sherman's troops were approaching Millen, Georgia, site of a prison camp for Union soldiers. Federals were also heading towards Andersonville to free the prisoners being held there.

December 2, 1864 • Advance units of Hood's army approach the Federal lines at Nashville, establishing their positions on this day and continuing into the next. Washington ordered Thomas to attack Hood soon. Sherman turned his columns from an eastward course towards Augusta to a southerly direction heading in six columns almost directly south. Sherman's advance was now on Savannah, down the peninsula formed by the Savannah and Ogeechee Rivers.

December 3, 1864 • Hood was now settled in around Nashville; Forrest's cavalry was sent to probe the Union line and attempt a blockade of the river downstream from the city. Thomas was pressured to attack. Sherman was at Millen, Georgia, with the Seventeenth Corps and ordered his cavalry commander Judson Kilpatrick to completely destroy the railroads around Millen.

President Lincoln worked on his annual message to Congress.

December 4, 1864 • Wheeler's cavalry attacked Union troops guarding the railroad wreckers at Waynesborough, Georgia. Kilpatrick's cavalry advance and charge Wheeler's Confederates. Kilpatrick's dismounted troops eventually drive the Confederates off.

At Nashville, Hood's cavalry, especially Forrest, were becoming more aggressive.

December 5, 1864 • In Tennessee, Hood sends Forrest's cavalry on a three day demonstration towards Murfreesboro. Forrest's cavalry could not capture the town and would return to Nashville.

Sherman wasn't getting much sleep on his march towards Savannah. Major Henry Hitchcock would report that he often saw Sherman around the camp in the early hours "poking around the campfire..."

In Washington the Congress of the United States gathered for the second session of the Thirty-eighth Congress.

December 6, 1864 • General Grant telegrams Thomas at Nashville: "Attack Hood at once and wait no longer for remount of your cavalry. There is great danger of delay resulting in a campaign back to the Ohio River." Thomas indicated that he would attack at once although it would be hazardous without cavalry.

In Washington, Lincoln nominated Salmon P. Chase, former Secretary of the Treasury, to be Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Lincoln's annual message to Congress was read.

At Ogeechee Church, Georgia, Major George W. Nichols, USA would write:

For two days past the army has been concentrated at this point, which is the narrowest part of the peninsula.

General Howard is still on the west side of the Ogeechee, but he is within supporting distance...

In the course of our march to-day, we came upon a fine stately mansion, situated in a pleasant region, and surrounded by beautiful grounds, which were carefully and tastefully arranged. On entering the house, we found the reverse of a beautiful picture. It was a scene of shocking confusion; articles of furniture, soiled and broken, were strewn about the floors; household utensils lay in ill-assorted heaps; crockery, shattered into pieces, was beyond the mender's art. This was the work, not of our soldiers, but of Wheeler's Rebel cavalry, who had been on picket duty at this place on the previous night...

December 7, 1864 • At Nashville, Thomas had still not attacked Hood. Grant informed Secretary of War Stanton that if Thomas did not attack promptly, he should be removed from command.

Sherman, edging closer to Savannah, engaged in skirmishing all along his advance. Major George W. Nichols outside of Savannah wrote:

From fifteen to twenty miles distant lies Savannah; a city which is probably in some perturbation at the certainty of our approach. If the Rebels intend fighting in defense of the city, the battle will be an assault of fortifications; for as yet we have only skirmished with parties of cavalry, and the enemy has not seen the head of our infantry column, and can only judge our strength through injudicious publications in the newspapers at the North...

December 8, 1864 • Sherman's army could hear the sea; the change in terrain and vegetation told them they were approaching their goal. The army had to deal with "land torpedoes" planted in the roads leading to Savannah. Sherman came upon a young lieutenant whose foot had been blown off by one of the torpedoes and went into a rage. Major General Blair ordered a group of Confederate prisoners to dig up the torpedoes; the prisoners begged Sherman to interfere – Sherman refused, indicating to the prisoners that their people had planted them to assassinate Union troops, and the prisoners must remove them.

An angry Grant told Halleck that if Thomas had not struck Hood yet, he should be replaced by Schofield. Halleck told Grant it was his decision. Grant, once again, urged Thomas to strike; Thomas indicated his cavalry would not be ready until December 11.

December 9, 1864 • Activity was increasing at Petersburg with skirmishing occurring at Hatcher's Run. Sherman was on the outskirts of Savannah with skirmishing taking place on the Ogeechee Canal at Cuyler's Plantation and the Monteith Swamp. Grant issued an order replacing Thomas at Nashville with Schofield but suspended the order when Thomas told him he had planned to attack on the tenth; a heavy storm with freezing rain made advance impossible.

December 10, 1864 • More action occurred around Petersburg and the Weldon Road.

In Nashville, the storm that had coated everything with ice was still around, preventing any movement.

Sherman was in front of Savannah. Hardee's forces were strongly entrenched and had flooded the rice fields, leaving only five narrow causeways as approaches to the city. Sherman decides not to assault but rather, to invest the city. The army had not made contact yet with supply vessels and the Federal navy offshore; stores were not yet too short for the men. The horses, however, were beginning to suffer; with the army stationary, all nearby feed was soon used up. The cavalry was ordered to investigate Fort McAllister guarding the Ogeechee as a potential path of contact between Sherman and the fleet.

December 11, 1864 • Sherman's forces were laying siege to Savannah and trying to obtain their link to the sea, where the fleet waited. The Confederates had destroyed the bridge across the Ogeechee River to Fort McAllister; Sherman's troops began rebuilding the 1000-foot bridge.

In Tennessee, the weather had not improved.

December 12, 1864 • Sherman prepared to assault Fort McAllister; the 1000-foot replacement bridge had been rebuilt. Rear Admiral John Dahlgren reported to Lincoln:

I have the great satisfaction of conveying to you information of the arrival of General Sherman near Savannah, with his army in fine spirits...This memorable event must be attended by still more memorable consequences, and I congratulate you most heartily on its occurrence.

Sherman would use naval ships to resupply his army now instead of relying on rail links.

Thomas at Nashville informed Halleck that he had his troops ready to attack Hood as soon as the sleet melted and allowed movement on the ground.

December 13, 1864 • Sherman reaches the sea. At about 5 p.m. Federal troops of W.B. Hazen's division of the Fifteenth Corps charged the earth fort from the land side, despite mines. The Confederate garrison under Major G.W. Anderson suffered 35 casualties out of their 230 men, while Hazen had 24 killed and 110 wounded.

Savannah was doomed. The *Charleston Mercury* would report:

We have no very full budget of intelligence from Savannah. Sherman seems, for the present, to have abandoned the direct attack on the city, and appears to be turning his attention to the reduction of the outerworks. We regret to announce the fall of Fort McAllister. That post was carried early yesterday morning by assault, in which a heavy column of Sherman's best troops participated. It is believed that the enemy will next make a desperate effort to gain possession of Genesis Point. The news given above is perfectly authentic; but we have heard no details of the assault or of the casualties...Along the line of the Charleston and Savannah Railroad all continues quiet.

At Nashville, the weather was still ice as everyone waited. Grant ordered General John Logan to Nashville to relieve Thomas if he did not attack when the weather cleared.

December 14, 1864 • Thomas decides to attack Hood on the following day and notifies Grant of his intent. President Davis deferred to Lee's judgment as to whether troops could be spared from Petersburg to operate against Sherman.

December 15, 1864 • The first day of the Battle of Nashville begins as Thomas's lines edge their way through heavy fog and, with about 35,000 men, strike Hood's left. Hood's right flank was held by more Union forces. The Federals drove the Confederates more than a mile to the rear where they held, barely, on the Franklin Pike. Both lines would adjust during the night. On the morning of the sixteenth the President wired his congratulations and urged Thomas to continue.

December 16, 1864 • At 6 a.m. in a morning filled with rain and snow, Federal troops move in to assault. The Confederate right is pressed back but hold at the line of its main entrenchments. Union cavalry gets behind Hood's left flank and the Confederates' rear is threatened. Late in the afternoon the Confederate left caves in first, then the center folds leaving the right to play rear guard. The rear guard would hold off the pursuing Federals until late in the afternoon, when the entire line gave way with the Rebels fleeing the field. Hood lost most of his artillery and many of his wagons. The Army of Tennessee was decimated and its effectiveness was at an end.

New York Herald correspondent D.P. Conygham described the final assault:

The roar of the Rebel artillery was becoming fainter, while the sound of our guns rang nearer and nearer. The Fourth Corps for a moment halted and lay down to have Smith connect. We could soon see the rebels breaking pell mell from their works. Infantry, cavalry and artillery were sweeping across the plain. What does it mean? A wild cheer rang from our lines, and the batteries redoubled their iron storm. Soon a column was seen emerging from the woods on the rebel flanks. Who are they? The Stars and Stripes float proudly in their front. They are our right, which has swung around their flank. Louder grow the huzzas – hats are flung in the air – civilians rush forward, helping the gunners. The Fourth Corps jump to their feet and sweep right on the flying enemy. Alas! Darkness was setting in. Oh, for a Joshua to command the sun to stand still! – just two hours! The battle was fought, the victory won; Nashville was saved and Hood was repulsed, shattered and broken.

December 17, 1864 • The cavalry under James H. Wilson, along with some infantry, pursue Hood from Nashville. Hood's rear guard skirmishes with the Federals enabling the rest of the Confederate troops to withdraw through Franklin.

Sherman demands surrender from Hardee and his troops in Savannah.

December 18, 1864 • Wilson's cavalry pursue Hood to Rutherford Creek near Columbia, where the pursuit is called off when Union forces found the stream flooded and impassable.

Sherman waits, resupplying his troops while Hardee, who refused Sherman's demands of the previous day, considered his next move.

At Hampton Roads, Butler's force to assault Fort Fisher at Wilmington, North Carolina, weighs anchor and sails.

December 19, 1864 • Federal cavalry and infantry are still unable to cross the flooded Rutherford Creek north of Columbia.

In the Valley, Sheridan follows Grant's order and sends 8000 cavalrymen under A.T.A. Torbert toward the Virginia Central Railroad and Gordonsville. Confederates manage to hold off Torbert's cavalry and they withdraw on the twenty-third.

In Washington, Lincoln issues a call for 300,000 more volunteers to replace casualties.

December 20, 1864 • Urged by Beauregard and others to evacuate Savannah, Hardee finally does so. Using a pontoon bridge of 30 rice flats, Hardee manages to evacuate all his 10,000 troops leaving behind 250 heavy guns and a large amount of cotton. Major George W. Nichols at Savannah would write of Hardee's escape:

The path by which Hardee escaped led through swamps which were previously considered impracticable...It was fortunate that our troops followed so quickly after the evacuation of the city by the enemy, for a mob had gathered in the streets, and were breaking into the stores and houses. They were with difficulty dispersed by the bayonets of our soldiers, and then, once more, order and confidence prevailed throughout the conquered city...

December 21, 1864 • Federal troops, under no opposition, occupy Savannah with John W. Geary's division of the Twentieth Corps leading the march. Hood's retreating Army of Tennessee continues its march southward from Columbia toward Pulaski, Tennessee, leaving a rear guard behind. Forces under Thomas, chasing Hood, were hampered by destroyed bridges, swollen streams, and weary troops.

Private Jackman, Orphan Brigade, writes from Fort Valley, Georgia:

Hard wind with rain last night. Today disagreeably cold. Lying in bed nearly all day to keep warm – to stand by a fire was to be smoked to death. Late in the evening the sun shone out white and cold. Masses of inky clouds about the heavens...

December 22, 1864 • Sherman telegraphs Lincoln: *I beg to present you as a Christmas gift, the city of Savannah, with one hundred and fifty heavy guns and plenty of ammunition, also about twenty-five thousand bales of cotton.*

December 23, 1864 • President Lincoln signs a bill authorizing the rank of Vice Admiral; it is conferred on Rear Admiral David G. Farragut who becomes the first Vice Admiral in U.S. history.

The Federal fleet arrives at Beaufort with David D. Porter in command.

December 24, 1864 • Lincoln receives Sherman's telegram from Savannah and gives the news to the country as a present. In Savannah, Sherman is besieged by women requesting protection from those "Yankees." Sherman follows his policy of allowing the ministers of the local churches to pray for Jefferson Davis, saying, "Yes, Jeff Davis and the devil both need it."

The Federal fleet opens fire on Fort Fisher, Wilmington, North Carolina. Despite expectations, little damage was done to either the fort or garrison. The transports were now ready to attempt a landing above the fort.

December 25, 1864 • Nearly 60 warships continue the Federal bombardment of Fort Fisher. Federal troops land two miles north, capture a battery, and push close to the fort. As darkness arrives, Confederate troops close in from the north. The assault is determined to be too costly in lives and the troops are taken off and the entire fleet returns to Hampton Roads. Fort Fisher remained in Confederate hands, active at the entrance to the Cape Fear River.

Hood's Army of Tennessee reaches Bainbridge on the Tennessee River.

December 26, 1864 • Hood's army crosses the Tennessee River ending the campaign.

A grateful Lincoln sends Sherman a letter via Major General John A. Logan, who was rejoining Sherman: *Many, many thanks for your Christmas gift – the capture of Savannah...Please make my grateful acknowledgements to your whole army, officers and men.*

December 27, 1864 • Hood's army goes into camp. Hood would shortly be relieved of command. Sherman, rested and refitted in Savannah, begins planning his trip north through the Carolinas.

December 28, 1864 • In Washington, Lincoln asks Grant "what you now know and understand of the Wilmington expedition, present & prospective." Grant replies that "The Wilmington expedition has proven a gross and culpable failure...Who is to blame I hope will be known."

December 30, 1864 • At Wilmington, Admiral David D. Porter, unhappy with Major General Butler's conduct during the attack on Fort Fisher wrote to Grant urging Butler's removal from command and urging that a new assault force be organized. Grant replied: "Please hold on where you are for a few days and I will endeavor to be back again with an increased force and without the former commander." At a Cabinet meeting, President Lincoln indicated that Butler would be removed from command of the Army of the James.

December 31, 1864 • The month and year would end with merchants in New York City presenting a gift of \$50,000 in government bonds to Vice Admiral Farragut in appreciation of service rendered to his country. Lt. Waddell, captain of the C.S.S. *Shenandoah* wrote in his journal:

Thirty-first of December closed the year, the third since the war began. And how many of my boon companions are gone to that bourne from whence no traveler returns. They were full of hope, but not without fears, when we last parted.

... *AND SO IT CONTINUES.*

FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

Alonzo H. Cushing Receives Medal of Honor



As our country struggled for its survival, President Lincoln dedicated the battlefield at Gettysburg as a final resting place for those who died here that the nation might live. Today, the nation that lived pauses to pay tribute to one of those who died there.

President Barack Obama

On November 6, 2014, more than 151 years after his stand at Gettysburg, Alonzo H. Cushing posthumously received the Medal of Honor in a White House ceremony.

Cushing, 22, stayed at his post and directed artillery fire at Confederate soldiers charging the center of the Union line at Cemetery Ridge during Pickett's Charge – despite suffering two severe wounds. Cushing was finally felled by a bullet to the head.

President Obama, noted that recognition for the event meriting the award usually takes place in a much briefer time span. In his remarks the president indicated that, "This Medal of Honor is a reminder that no matter how long it takes, it is never too late to do the right thing."

Helen Loring Ensign, 86, first cousin, two generations removed from Cushing, is the closest surviving blood relative and primary next of kin, as confirmed by the U.S. Army. Ensign received the medal from the president on behalf of Cushing's descendants, many of whom were present at the ceremony. The descendants indicated that they plan on loaning out the medal to several locations including West Point, where Cushing graduated, and Delafield, where he was born.

Margaret E. Zerwekh, 94, of Delafield, who was so instrumental in campaigning for Cushing to receive the medal, was also present at the ceremony.

Zerwekh, interviewed this summer, said of Cushing: "He saved the Union and he needs to have recognition for it. It is about time."



FROM THE FIELD

December 1864

Memphis, Tenn.

Dec. 18th, 1864

Friend Willard:

I have just received yours of the 20th. It was brought along in an old mail that we had passed when we came up the River. I wrote you a short time ago giving you an account of our New Organization. As a Reserve Corps. I liked the whole arrangement very well except our Brigadier General. The old fellow would never rise to the dignity of eight Corporal without the influence of outside friends.

We were notified in the Order Organizing the Corps that each Brigade was entirely separate, not under the command of any Division Corps or Department Commander, but to report directly to General Canby. Our exclusive duty being to patrol the Mississippi River. Well in the face of these Arrangements comes an Order from General Dana (Department Commander) to be ready to move at an hours notice with eight day rations, 100 rounds of ammunition, ½ Shelter tent per man, no baggage. (Light marching order). If it were good weather I shouldn't object much as I want to see as much Territory as possible, but it is going to be rather unpleasant, but then we can get along with that by growling a little.

I hope that we will never meet the enemy in force as long as we are under our present commander; if we ever do I have no hesitation in predicting defeat if it is any where within the range of possibilities. The man is decidedly under the average run of people as far as regards Intellect. He was formerly a one horse Boss Coal-heaver. And being an Irish Catholic he could control the votes of a certain portion of that "highly intelligent, moral, self-governing Class of Citizens."

From this cause he succeeded in getting some politicians for whom he had formerly worked to secure him a position in some of the Regiments then raising Egypt. He was appointed a Colonel, the same cause has kept him in the field God knows he is no ornament either to his old or new profession. He looks like a great overgrown cross between Stebbins and an Idiot this porcine mound is known as Brigadier General Michael K. Lawler, Com'dg 1st Brig. Reserve Corps. West Mississippi. May his tribe decrease.

The health of the Regiment is very good at present. Our new recruits stand it very good at present.

I was reckoning up the distance travelled by the Regiment since entering service and without counting the little trips I figured over 7500 miles. While individually I have covered over 13,200 miles, it costs Sam a trifle to pay his Orphans travelling expenses. We have just received a rumor of the capture of Savannah by Sherman, I hope the affair will turn out to be true. We have had news lately from men in Nashville, they don't seem to anticipate much danger from Prof. Hood.

I believe "Old Safety" is good for him with an ordinary chance. I understand that Curtis has formed a co-partnership with "Rods" brother-in-law and that they are driving things heavy up there. The Old One will teach him a few lessons which he will remember, while they are mutually engaged in cultivating a taste for the "Fine Arts" in the northwest.

While reading your letter where you were alluding to a strict enforcement of the Monroe doctrine I was just thinking that the action of the Canadian Authorities in the case of the St. Alban raiders, together with a number of nearly similar affairs would have a strong effect in moulding the public feeling to a proper form and state to back up any administration who felt included to attempt it. I see that there is a great stir being made over the Capture of the Pirate Florida, some denouncing the illegality, others pleading the legality of the act.

Well I suppose that the Confederate and Brazilian Governments won't be able to stand the crushing effect which my opinion must necessarily have on their claims, but I can't help "the eyes of the world being centered on me" – imploring my final judgement of this momentous question. The Oracle must give utterance, the thing WAS wrong, but IS right.

Webb and I have spoken let further discussion cease. But to be serious about the matter I believe that it was an infringement of Maritime law, yet the peculiarities of the case were such that I think the action morally right, and would back it up if it led to head breaking if I should ever get a similar opportunity I would repeat the dose unless specially ordered Not to by some one whom I felt bound to obey.

I would like very much to make a dash on your apple band nibble and chat for a while, but the Army now is like Arkansas States Prison, no discharge during good behavior.

John B. Scott

Co. F, 29th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry

Christmas

To all our readers we cordially wish a Merry Christmas. The fact that the Anniversary of our Lord's birth comes on Sunday, will make its religious observance more general than usual, but will check the boisterous mirth with which the day is often celebrated. It is generally agreed, we believe, to make a Christmas holiday of Monday, and the banks and many of the stores, will be closed a whole or part of the day.

In order to give all contacted with this office the rare opportunity of enjoying a holiday, we shall omit the publication of the Daily Journal on Monday. If any important news comes we shall issue it in an extra Monday morning.

Little News

Our night and morning dispatches today are meager and contain nothing worth of special mention and this afternoon we are with out any news owing to a break in the wires.

The Waupaca Spirit says Maj. Asa Worden of the 14th has arrived home after three years faithful service. The Advocate says poles for the new telegraph line, which is to be continued through to Lake Superior, have been put up in Green Bay.

A Christmas Drink

Billy Barlow the genial agent in this city of Messrs Reeves and Wadder, the Middleton brewers, has sent a keg of foaming beer to this office in worthy remembrance of this festive season and of us. The beer has been satisfactorily disposed of in hearty toasts to the whole souled donor and the season.

At Home Again

Just as we go to press, Capt. Nat. Rollins, of the old Second, who has been in rebel prisons since the battle of Gettysburg made his appearance in our sanctum. We most warmly welcome him home and warrant him a Merry Christmas.

The War in Tennessee

Nashville, Dec. 23

The latest accounts from the front, located Gen. Thomas' headquarters at Rutherford Hill yesterday morning, 8 miles this side of Columbia. Since that time our forces have crossed Duck river and have moved to a point south of Columbia. Our cavalry force crossed Hunter's Ford, below Columbia, and dashed into the town the enemy meanwhile retreating with out firing a shot. We captured about 50 stragglers. The rebel force was at last accounts (yesterday morning) at Pulaski, and are probably some distance south of that place today. They are closely followed by our cavalry. No particular damage was done to the town of Columbia by the passing throb of the two armies.

At least one third of Hood's army are without arms and equipment; everything which impeded their flight having been thrown away. Rebel deserters and prisoners report the only effective corps of Hood's army to be S.D. Lee's. Forrest effected a junction with Hood at Columbia on Tuesday evening.

The river is a stand with 15 feet on the shoals.

Gov. Brown of Georgia gives us the sequel of Sherman's march. He denounces the robberies, not of the Union army, but of squads of deserters from the rebel army, who are as he asserts, wandering over the state, impressing horses, mules and provisions without authority, and for their private use. The Governor authorizes anybody who can shoot these marauders, who number as he says, a large part of the rebel cavalry force, and are scattered over nearly half the territory of the state. A southern paper reported a few days ago the desertion of one entire regiment with a colonel at its head.

The Good News

Owing to a failure in the Milwaukee office to connect with Madison Sunday night, the cheering news of Sherman's success at Savannah did not reach us till the middle of the forenoon Monday.

It was received with great rejoicing. The faces of men and women were wreathed with smiles, the air rang with harrahs, the flags went up all over town and a salute was fired in good style on Fourth Lake ridge by Armorer McFarland and an efficient gun squad.

Correspondence of the State Journal
Beaufort, S.C., Dec. 14

The man we all have waited for anxiously and long has come at last, and brought his army with him. On Monday, the 12th inst., we heard at this place a heavy and incessant cannonade nearly all day long. Then we knew the rebels were waked up or Sherman was waking them. At night an official dispatch came to Gen. Saxton, in command of the post here, from Gen. Foster, stating that a member of Sherman's staff had come through to the latter, and that Sherman himself was close behind, marching upon Savannah. This evening a steamer has arrived from Ossabaw Sound, on board of which Gen. Sherman and Foster this morning had breakfast together.

She brings the report that last evening Sherman signaled the naval vessels in the Sound asking what force they could bring to bear on Fort McAllister. The reply was that the vessels then in the Sound were armed with nothing heavier than six pounders.

Sherman answered that the Fort must be taken immediately, and at once signaled an assault by three brigades of infantry. In twenty minutes the parapets of the Fort were swarming with blue coats and McAllister was taken. Seventy men were lost in the assault about half of them after the Fort had surrendered, from torpedoes planted by the rebels inside the works. Sherman came up in person and ordered the garrison some 250 in number, officers included, to lay hold of spades and shovels and unearth the infernal machines they had concealed, threatening in no gentle terms to thrust into the bombproof as many of them as had our men fallen victims to their diabolical devices, and blow them up together. After breakfast it is reported that the triumphant General, worn and weather beaten, wearing a slouched hat and covered more or less with the sacred soil of Georgia, visited Admiral Dahlgren on board his flag ship, where he apologized for the muddy tracks he made.

Dec. 23, 1864

The Richmond Examiner notices the invention and successful operation in the rebel laboratory in that city, of a machine capable of turning out 340,000 percussion caps in eight hours, complete.

milwaukeeecwrt.org

How a Brigadier General was Made

The following illustration of a wonderful effect of a "little story" upon the mind of Mr. Lincoln is worth the dignity of printing. I heard it related by a member of congress whose words I shall give as nearly as I can remember them.

Last summer two members of the house from Maine called upon the president to have a friend of theirs, a colonel in the army, promoted to a brigadiership. They entered the president's room and found his excellency in a humor not the most lively or agreeable. Something had evidently gone wrong with him, and he was not pleased to receive the distinguished visitors. Nevertheless he rose to greet them, took them by the hand, told them to be seated, and asked what he could do for them.

"We called" said one of the honorable, "to have Col. _____, a gallant officer and a worthy man, promoted to a Brigadier General."

The president crossed his legs, combed his hair with his fingers and replied as if a little irritated. "I'd rather see you on any other business than that. This brigadier business is getting to be a terrible bore. Every man wants to be promoted and the fact is I can't comply with one request in a hundred. I'm getting disgusted with such applications."

So the congressmen let the subject go for the present and rather than make any abrupt departure, which was the first impulse, one of them remarked: "What is the news from Kentucky Mr. Lincoln?"

"Well, it's not very good, said the president. "The fact is there are three kinds of people in Kentucky – first the unionists good and true, who will stand by the country all the time. Another is made up of secessionists, open and avowed rebels, who don't pretend to be anything else; and then there is a third that wavers between the two and is sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other."

"That reminds me," said one of the congressmen, "of an old worn out preacher who was going to retire from the ministry. In preaching his final sermon he said that there were three kinds of people in a congregation, good people who were sure to go to heaven, bad people, who were just as sure to go the other way and a large number who were too good to go to hell and too bad to be saved."

The president smiled and rubbed his hands and requested the congressman repeat it again which he did. He then pulled a card and pencil out and said: "Let me see what was the name of the man you wanted to promote." The name and regiment of the colonel were duly chronicled and the next day a brigadier commission was duly made and forwarded.



“Gettysburg “

This summer I decided to attend the Civil War Institute’s annual summer conference.

It is held at and sponsored by the Gettysburg College at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. This year’s conference was held from June 20th through June 24th and consisted of presentations, small group discussions, panel debates and battlefield tours.

The conference brings together noted historians and those interested in deeper exploration of Civil War topics. The focus of this year’s conference was in keeping with the sesquicentennial of the Civil War by looking at the war in 1864.

The conference’s purpose in bringing a fine group of historians together is to provide a forum which presents information and provides a platform to offer and discuss fresh perspectives and new angles on the Civil War as part of an exciting and engaging dialogue between the experts and the general audience.

Some of this year’s experts included Gordon Rhea, Ed Bearss, Caroline Janney, Barton Myers, Brooks Simpson, Anne Sarah Rubin, John Hennessey, Susannah Ural, and Scott Mingus to name a few.

One of the interesting features I found at the conference was the variety of breakout sessions offered that allowed the participants to pick and choose from a selection of more focused presentations; this affords the opportunity to attend sessions of personal interest to gain insight in areas you might be studying and obtain answers to specific questions you may have in a smaller group setting. I felt this was a great feature considering the conference had approximately 450 in attendance.

Another interesting feature of the conference is the wide selection of books offered at discounted prices that are available at the event. The books are offered by the college bookstore and discounted for attendees. Presenters are available for book signing as well. Needless to say I expanded my personal Civil War library as a result.

The conference also featured battlefield tours to different sites including Gettysburg. The tour guides were experts of the sites, so a lot of additional information was provided by the tour guide and the Q & A that occurred on the site. It really helps to see the battlefield rather than just read about a particular site and then be able to ask meaningful questions of an expert on the event to clear up any confusion gained through reading about it. Tours were offered for various parts of Gettysburg while another day of touring featured Fredericksburg, Monocacy, the Wilderness and Spotsylvania and Fisher’s Hill and Cedar Creek.

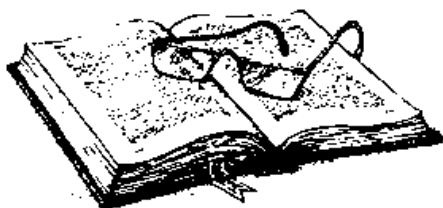
This was the first time I attended the Civil War Institute’s conference and I found that it fully met my expectations on information presented. I felt it provided me with additional avenues of information to explore and definitely held my interest. Additionally I met some fine people and made new friendships with people who shared a common interest.

Costs, I felt, were in keeping with this type of event. Tuition, room and board was \$865. While I chose to stay in one of the dorm rooms, there are a variety of options available. You can arrange your own room at one of the many hotels in the Gettysburg area or the Gettysburg Hotel has a block of rooms held for the event. The same holds true for meals. I opted for the meal plan and found the food provided at the college cafeteria to be quite good. But again you can provide your own or eat at various nearby restaurants. Attendees also have the option not to do tours which would bring down cost down to \$350.

The 2015 conference, which will focus on 1865 and topics of interest immediately at war’s end, is going to be split between Gettysburg and Richmond as the tours will be focused on the battles that were fought around Richmond and Appomattox. I recommend the conference to those with a high degree of interest in the subject – you will get a lot out of the information provided. I drove to Gettysburg from Kenosha and found the drive to be reasonable. I did it in 1½ days choosing to stop in Pittsburg after about 10 hours. If pushed you could make it in one day of straight driving in about 14 hours.

For additional information you can check out the Civil War Institute’s website on the 2015 conference and also see additional information on past conferences. Visit: <https://www.gettysburg.edu/cwi/conference/schedule.dot>

submitted by Bruce Klem



BETWEEN THE COVERS

The Battles for Spotsylvania Court House and the Road to Yellow Tavern, May 7-12, 1864

Gordon C. Rhea

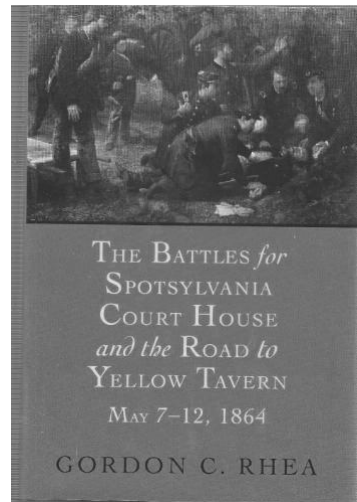
This is the second book of a four volume series by Gordon C. Rhea that covers Grant's Overland Campaign of 1864. This second book covers the movements and battles of Grant's forces from May 7 to May 12. Grant continues his drive to defeat Lee and get to Richmond. His objective is the destruction of Lee's army; the capture of Richmond is a secondary goal.

Rhea covers this second phase of Grant's campaign with great detail and provides excellent maps that help to explain and highlight the movement of the units and the combat that resulted from those movements.

Grant's standard tactic was a blending of movement, maneuver and hard hammering that had proved highly successful in his campaigns in the West. However, the opening phases of this campaign had only yielded stalemate against Lee in the Wilderness and would provide more of the same in this round of battles. The key in the East was that he was up against a better army.

Rhea points out that at this point in the war the Confederates were learning how to defend themselves from modern weaponry by developing extensive rifle pits and earthworks. These works were a forerunner of what the battle landscape would evolve to in World War I. The Federals, on the other hand, were teaching themselves how to attack such earthworks. The learning process was costly and ugly and contributed to Grant's reputation as a butcher. I believe if one looks at the casualty lists for both armies they will see that both sides lost considerable numbers of men. Rhea points out in his writing that some of these horrific losses were the result of poor command and control and failure of subordinates.

I think Rhea's approach and style make this very confusing campaign very understandable for the average student of the Civil War. I recommend this series of books for a much better understanding of the crucial campaign of 1864. It was perhaps the key phase of battles that helped bring the war to a close. I have read that Mr. Rhea is going to write an additional volume to close out the Overland Campaign with a book about Petersburg. At this point, there is no time frame for this additional book.



Submitted by Bruce Klem

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All address changes or problems receiving your *General Orders* should be directed through Membership Chairman Paul Eilbes.

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