

Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table May 2020 Newsletter



To Inform and Educate Since 1993 Contents

Presidents Message **page 2**
2020 Member Honor Roll **page 3**

Announcements

Thursday 14, May Meeting Canceled

TVCWRT Field Trip Scheduled: October 31, 2020, The Tullahoma Campaign of 1863 **page 4**

Ft. Pillow, A Massacre? Toney Daly with Emil Posey comments **page 4**

2020 Speaker line up **page 6**

TVCWRT Features

Pathosis, Pathos, and Digits - Diseases in the War Between the States *By Ed Kennedy* **page 7**

TVCWRT Civil War Tutorial Part II;
The Slide into War: 1859-Fort Sumter, Politics *By Emil Posey* **page 10**

More on the war

May 17, 1861; (confederate diary) the editor **page 16**

May 1861: The Union Strategy Take Shape. *(the editor)* **page 16**

TVCWRT Little Round Table (Discussion and Schedule – 2020) The Vicksburg Campaign **page 19**



President's Message

No May Meeting; Memberships Extended

Mid-May marks nine weeks since the pandemic completely rearranged life for many of us. For me, the stay at home order has meant the end of a routine I've kept since college graduation—going to the office every morning. I have thought about how people who lived during the long Civil War must have felt as they awakened each day and dealt with the uncertainty and anxiety of wondering when war might end and when, or if, their lives might return to normal. Like our situation, there was no way to predict. Imagine how happy, but unsure, even suspicious, they must have felt when they learned the surrender had been signed!

There won't be a surrender day to signal the end of Covid-19. Rather, we are going to have to get used to living with the threat for a very long time. Hopeful signs of a return to a version of normal are beginning to appear. Restaurants are opening and limits on public gathering are being eased.

Our May Round Table meeting cannot be held because the Elks Club has not yet announced reopening plans. We are very optimistic that we will be able to **meet in person on June 11**. In the meantime, the Round Table board has been meeting online to sustain our organization's forward momentum. I am delighted to tell you that the board voted last week that all 2020 members will receive **a two-month membership extension to December 31**.

I want to thank Emil Posey and John Mason for their Civil War trivia quizzes, intended to keep us all sharp and provide a fun diversion while we're separated. If you haven't played, look for the quiz in your e-mail. A new one will be out very soon.

On two beautiful May days 155 years ago, President Andrew Johnson presided over a Grand Review of the Armies, a military procession and celebration in Washington, D.C. It was staged in part to help convince Americans that the war was really over and to help shake-off the melancholy that lingered following Abraham Lincoln's assassination a month earlier. There won't be a grand review to indicate the end of the pandemic, and no doubt, fears and worries will linger for a very long time, but we will resume our meetings as soon as possible.

We look forward to welcoming you back to the Round Table when circumstances permit, and as soon as you feel comfortable.

April L. Harris
President



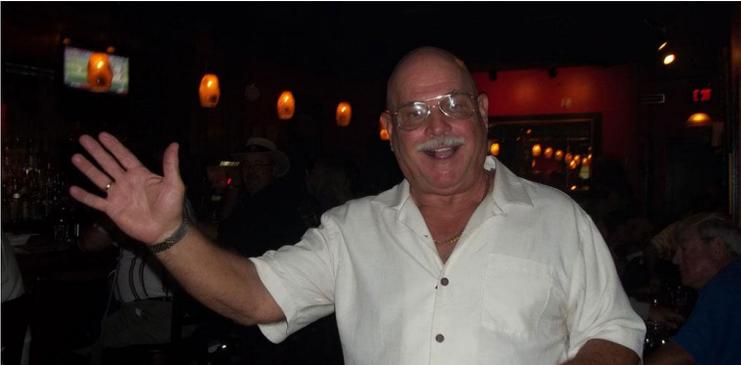
2020 Member Honor Roll

- PATRONS
 - **April Harris**
 - **Emil Posey**

- SUSTAINING MEMBERS
 - **Carol Codori**
 - **Jonathan Creekmore**

- SUPPORTING
 - **Beth Altenkirch**
 - **Terry & Keith Clevenger**
 - **Greg & Stephanie Cousins**
 - **Harry Gatzke**
 - **Alan & Dottie Markell**
 - **Kevin & Judy Rodriguez**
 - **Alan & Diana Ruzicka**
 - **John Scales**

Announcements:

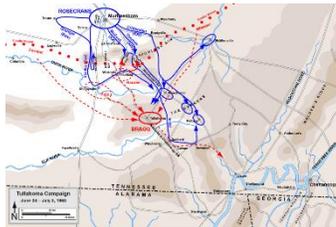


Say Hello to Nick, of Nick's Ristorante. It remains the #1 steakhouse in Northeast Alabama and has the Best Chef in the Valley as voted in the Planet.

News from Nick indicates he is able to keep all his staff on the payroll thanks to the kind support provided to his *go fund me* page and carry out service. A special thanks to all the TVCWRT members that supported Nick during this challenging time.

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TVCWRT Field Trip Scheduled: October 31, 2020, The Tullahoma Campaign of 1863

Hold Saturday, October 31, 2020, for our annual field trip. Tentative plans are to depart Huntsville at 7 a.m. on October 31st, travel by bus to Murfreesboro and pick up Greg Biggs, expert guide and friend of the RT. He will lead us to the various key sites of the Tullahoma Campaign of 1863. The route will primarily be along the back roads actually used but will parallel I-24, ending at Sewanee (university of the South). We'll then return to Murfreesboro, drop Greg off by 4, and return home. Cost is \$80 per person (goes up to \$100 for reservations submitted after October 9). This covers speaker, bus, water bottles on bus, and tip for Greg; lunch is on your own. Coordinator John Scales will provide further details as they develop. Questions or early interest? Call John at 256-337-1444.



Gregg Biggs, our guide and a long friend of the Round Table.

Greg Biggs is a Civil War flags historian and has consulted with a number of museums and authors and has presented flags programs to the Museum of the Confederacy and the National Civil War Museum among others. He has also assisted the Civil War Trust in securing flags for their web site. Greg has lectured across the country on Civil War topics primarily on flags and the Western Theater as well as the Revolutionary War. Greg leads tours for Civil War groups, individuals, and U.S. Army Staff Rides of the Fort Donelson Campaign, the Tullahoma Campaign, the Atlanta Campaign and where The River Campaigns Began: Cairo, IL to Columbus/Belmont, KY. He is the president of the Clarksville Civil War Roundtable and an officer of the Nashville CWRT.

Ft. Pillow, A Massacre?

The action at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864, is no stranger to controversy. It carries a reputation of a massacre of black Union troops by Confederates under the command of Nathan Bedford Forrest. Others contend it was no such thing. We have had discussions of this battle and the controversy in our regular general meetings and in the Little Round Table.

In *Crossfire*, the quarterly publication of a sister Round Table “across the pond”, the American Civil War Round Table (UK), its editor, Greg Bayne (some may remember him speaking to our RT a few years ago) decided to tackle the controversy once again based on an article included in the latest *Crossfire* (Spring 2020). He says,

[When Tony Daly submitted his Fort Pillow article, I nearly sent it back after the first run through. I disagreed and thought it was factually incorrect. In it he outlines the initial attack and then refutes the “massacre” theory. My understanding of the event is that there was a massacre. So, what are my choices? Shout “Fake News” and move on or seek more information? Of course, I chose the latter and in true editorial spirit, I leave the reader with a cliffhanger. Lack of time up to publication has not allowed me sufficient space to dig deep. And by digging, I mean further than Wikipedia and the NPS websites. I have the greatest respect for Tony, if he is right or wrong then research will tell, but whatever the outcome I will always support his right to comment within these pages. I haven’t “trod the ground” there nor have I “read the book” so until I am ready to comment I cannot. Time to ask the big-guns for their views. 500 to 1000 words will suffice if you don’t mind.]



I suggested and he readily accepted that some of our folks may have valuable opinions on this. Everyone willing to share their two cents should email me a short piece, some 500 to 1,000 words, no later than May 31. I'll batch and send them to Greg, as well as share them with our RT.

Tony Daly's article is reproduced below. Thanks. –Emil (emilposey@ardmore.net)

Lonesomepine

Fort Pillow by Tony Daly

Fifty miles north of Memphis, General Gideon Pillow surveyed a sand bar extending out into the Mississippi river. Opposite stands an elevation and he rightly perceived that to build a fort would funnel all shipping to within musket range and so control the waterborne traffic; thus, Fort Pillow was to enter history. Ceded to Union forces with the withdrawal of the confederate army, it fell into Federal hands and also appreciating its strategic position, was heavily garrisoned. The fort also served as a sanctuary for runaway slaves, a recruiting centre for federal sympathizers and a port for sutlers to import their goods for sale to the soldiers.

In 1864 Nathan Bedford Forrest planned to seize the men, their supplies and horseflesh for his own use. A feint on Memphis, by Colonel Neely of Forrest's 1st cavalry, using only 150 men, fixed Union forces in place as Forrest closed in on his prey. He assigned General James Chalmers to assault the outer works and bottle up the Fort's personnel. This consisted of the storming of the 2 miles of outer works and a middle set of defences that largely 'stood in the air'. As directed Chalmers paused, awaiting his superior to arrive. The actual fort was a horseshoe with an open side facing the river with rifle pits to each side. In addition, there were buildings external to the main fort for supplies and the accommodation of the white troops; the colored troops were in tents within the fort. A slope of 75 to 1000 yards led to the waterline. To the north was Cold creek, with some covered way to aid any attackers and the trees felled before the fort had not been removed, offering additional shelter to any assault.

The garrison consisted of 557 soldiers plus a number of civilians; 295 white, 262 black soldiers. The confederates had been aided by civilian W.J. Shaw who had been held in the fort until escaping and so providing detailed and up to date information on the target. When Forrest arrived he immediately increased the number of sharpshooters deploying them 'backwoodsmen style' in the shrubs and behind the undisturbed timber and brush. The snipers paid a heavy toll particularly amongst the opposing officers. Forrest then ordered the seizing of the external barracks which shielded the shooters and disallowed the 6 guns from firing at them, as the muzzles could not be sufficiently depressed. He then had to wait for the resupply of ammunition.

A flag of truce with the customary threats was presented to the fort's commander who had, unknown to the Rebels, been killed in the early assaults. A very inexperienced Major Bradford asked for time, but spying arriving troops on an approaching steamer, Forrest declined. He had also noted the steam of two vessels approaching from the south. In the river, the USN New Era had fired blindly at the original attack and a plan had been hatched between the navy and the fort. When the confederates attacked, the garrison would flee to



the waterside and the gunboats cannon would blast the invaders with canister. Bradford had ammunition placed on the beach awaiting any survivors; it was all planned.

1200 confederates assaulted in two waves. Cavalrymen unused to such work, stormed over the last parapet and having fired a volley into the greyback's faces, the defenders were ordered to fall back. Major Bradford had failed to strike the tents and after hand to hand fighting, the bluecoats were channeled through the avenues of tentage, being shot like fish in a barrel. Forrest had deployed sharpshooters in the rifle pits flanking the rear of the fort and they awaited events. The flag left flying, the garrison rallied round Bradford expecting the volleys of death from the gunboat; and nothing happened. It is possible the vessel had simply run out of ammunition to protect the soldiers who had ceded the vital advantage of the high ground.

From above, the confederates poured down fire. The Federals, now became a panic stricken mob. Fleeing south, they met the men in the rifle pits, turning, the same to the north, running the deadly gauntlet to their flank. Some tried to swim for the Arkansas shore opposite and were shot or drowned. 250 had died in the fort alone and one can imagine the terror. The splendid show by the senior officers in the assault was in bleak contrast to those in blue. And so we come to the aftermath; the alleged 'massacre'.

Some of the illustrations suggesting the victors manufactured frames to secure and then kill the black soldiers are laughable to modern readers; why go to all that trouble?

The suggestion Forrest broke the truce, occupying the rifle pits, when the steamer carrying reinforcements approached was disavowed by General George Shipley, who stated the intention was to land his men. Suggestions were made that the union troops were drunk, but that is impossible to verify. What is certain is that Federal troops buried their own dead and that if as stated, wounded were buried alive, then it was by their own side! Indeed, Forrest requested the New Era take off the wounded, which the ship's captain declined to do. It was the next day that a union officer was led to the river to negotiate the evacuation, assisted by southern fighters in their boarding. The hysterical words of absent journalists was good propaganda for this loss. It was a hard fight with few of Forrest's men killed for the many of the enemy, but it was never a massacre.

By Tony Daly

The 2020 TVCWRT Schedule of Speakers

Date/Speaker	Title of Presentation
14-May: Canceled and rescheduled for June:	
11-Jun: Phillip Wirey	James Longstreet: Local Boy Meets Gettysburg, PA
9-Jul: Judge (Ret) David Breland ...	Civil War Decatur and The Battle: How African American and White Citizens Coped
13-Aug: Curt Fields (US Grant)	Returns to Huntsville: From Early Years to Shiloh
11-Sept: Mauriel Joslyn	Battle of Chickamauga, Before and After
8-Oct: Dakota Cotton	Athens, AL: The Siege and Historic Beaty House
12-Nov: Eric Whittenberg	U.S. Cavalry at Brandy Station, VA

Note that we are keeping the June meeting on the schedule, but stay loose and stay tuned.

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TVCWRT Features

Pathosis, Pathos, and Digits - Diseases in the War Between the States

By Ed Kennedy

In 1861 armies mobilized on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line with such rapidity that little thought was initially given to medical care for the soldiers. The war was projected to be over quickly. The U.S. Army, only 16,000 strong, had no more than twenty clinical thermometers at the outset of the war. The Confederate Army, composed virtually exclusively of volunteer units and no regular army in the beginning, had none. Both sides were tremendously unprepared for a large, conventional conflict.

The U.S. Army Medical Department was certainly not designed for the huge number of soldiers entering the army in the massive mobilization that occurred. Doctors (referred to as “surgeons” by the Army whether they were, or not) were supposed to be assigned to the regimental level. However, there was a shortage of trained doctors and it was years before official board certifications came into use. This resulted in the induction of both competent and incompetent “surgeons” ---- some of whom would be classified as no better than ‘quacks’. Most of those who were trained and educated as doctors had never dealt with trauma wounds such as those inflicted by large, lead bullets or shell fragments and shrapnel that smashed and shattered bones. The large numbers of seriously wounded could easily overwhelm the medical resources of each army ----- and often did. What was dangerous many times was the treatment in which “cross-contamination” occurred.

Surgeons conducting the treatment of open wounds, or, removing limbs, failed to sanitize any of the instruments. They were commonly re-used by wiping them on the surgeon’s smock. In fact, of those who suffered from amputation (the common treatment for gunshot wounds to the limbs), about half of the men subsequently died of gangrene infection. For those who have seen the fictional movie, “*Dances With Wolves*”, the opening scene demonstrates the fear of having a limb amputated. Soldiers knew that the chances of survival were not good and Lieutenant Dunbar escaped the surgeon to take his chances.

On top of these issues fell the problem of masses of men who were given only the most rudimentary medical examinations upon enlistment. These soldiers brought all types of medical issues with them from civilian service that were likely undetected since the primary concerns were only the obvious symptoms of disease, or illness. Missing appendages and teeth were the focus of the recruiting physicals since both were needed to handle a firearm (opposing teeth needed to bite the end-off of the paper cartridges). Those with tuberculosis could usually be gleaned (a common ailment among many immigrants seeking induction into the armies, especially in the north). Many were inducted with preexisting conditions that were exacerbated in camps and on campaign.

In an age of “modern medicine”, it is difficult to believe that *two out of every three soldiers who died* in the War Between the States did not die as a result of combat but of medically related reasons, mostly disease. General ignorance of bacteria and their effects meant that age-old, sometimes horrible diseases, flourished in the cramped conditions of camps and barracks. Some, like Joseph Lister were aware of “germ theory” but it wasn’t until 1867 that his findings were widely published...too late for the soldiers of the American armies.



According to author, Christopher McFadden, the death rate for infection dropped from 60 to 4 percent with Lister's techniques of disinfecting. How many lives this might have saved during the war would have been very significant.

However, Lister concentrated on infection from surgeries and medical care. Much of what he discovered had the ancillary effect on other issues such as field sanitation and the prevention of diseases caused by terrible hygiene. Most of the medically related deaths occurred from pathogens (germs and viruses). How could this happen?

Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch began serious experiments regarding germ theory in 1860 to validate their theories. Of course, the war in America was in full-bloom while they were experimenting. The results of their experiments were not published until near the end of the war and afterwards, thereby having little, to no effect on American war-time medicine. What Pasteur and Koch determined though is that the prevailing medical theories regarding the causes of diseases were wrong.

While it may seem somewhat humorous today, many educated people believed that "bad air", or "miasma" caused disease. One explanation was that rotting organic matter produced "poisonous" or "foul" air which directly led to diseases. Odors were considered bad vapors. It seems silly to us today but this theory lasted until the 1880s when scientific results of germ theory finally predominated. With this line of reasoning, it is easy to understand how armies suffered from massive disease casualties. If the effect of "bad air" is disease ---- including vector borne disease like malaria ---- then the "cure" was to avoid the "bad air" or the rotting matter. It seems reasonable enough for the times but it failed to answer the causes of diseases when no "miasma" was present.

Confederate surgeons accidentally discovered that germs were killed by boiling although they never were able to directly connect the cause and effect. Silk, used in the pre-war times (and in the north during the war) to suture wounds was done with thread imported from China. With the imposition of the blockade, silk became very difficult to obtain in the South. Instead, surgeons substituted horse hair. Boiling the otherwise stiff hair made it soft enough to use as medical sutures. *Voilà*, it also resulted in few cases of gangrene! Therefore, horse hair must be the reason for the positive results. It wasn't until later that the connection to boiling and killing the bacteria was made.

So, what diseases did soldiers die from? ANSWER: Those caused by lack of proper sanitation.

Amazingly, many of the soldiers had absolutely no educational background or information on the linkage between sanitation, germs, and diseases. None. Officers of the Regular Army had a modicum of knowledge. However, with the rapid build-up of the armies, it was difficult to transfer the knowledge effectively. Examining army manuals of the period show no instructions on the establishment of camps. In fact, in my collection of army manuals going back to the 1840s, it is only those from the Spanish-American War forward that instructions for the lay-out of camps are illustrated and discussed. The result is that many camps were established with the "sinks" (latrines) and animal corrals and picket lines upstream from the water source for the soldiers. The result is predictable with our 20/20 hindsight.

Despite movies like "Glory" that show soldiers being served in mess lines, soldiers did not receive their rations in that fashion. Rations were issued individually and the soldiers prepared their own meals. Generally, they formed a "mess" ---- a small group of tent or squad mates who cooked together. Cleaning utensils and cookware was then up to the soldiers who used their own mess gear. Inadequate means to clean food off of utensils due to lack of water



and soap meant that intestinal issues were common though not always fatal. It was not until WWI that this issue was addressed regarding the cleaning of mess equipment.

Contaminated water caused the major disease killers in the armies. Water was contaminated by fecal matter that found its way into the drinking water. Both human and animal waste upstream from water sources used to fill canteens and cook-with was rife with bacteria. The leading causes of Dysentery and Typhoid Fever were related to dirty water. According to the author of "Civil War Diseases" (Civil War Academy), diseases that were the primary killers were:

- Dysentery ("Quick Step") – An intestinal infection passed mostly by those who already have the disease. Swimming or bathing in contaminated water was also a method of acquiring the disease. Lack of hygiene such as washing hands allowed the bacteria to be passed and ingested. It was the most common disease in the armies. 45k U.S. Army soldiers and 50k Confederate soldiers died of Dysentery.
- Typhoid Fever ("Camp Fever") – Caused by contaminated water. One-third of those who contracted it, died.
- Pneumonia – One in six died. Approximately 20k U.S. soldiers and 17k C.S. soldiers died of pneumonia.
- Measles – A highly contagious viral infection. One in twenty died during the war due to complications. It was a major killer at the beginning of the war when soldiers in crowded camps and no immunities passed it from person-to-person. More than 11k cases reported.
- Malaria – 3 million cases in both the U.S. and C.S. armies. Passed by mosquitoes. 30,000 deaths were reported. This is the only disease they figured-out how to successfully treat with quinine.
- Tuberculosis – Both armies suffered about 14k deaths from Tuberculosis.
- Typhus - Bacterial infection passed by lice, ticks, mites, and fleas. Only a relatively small number of soldiers died of Typhus --- about three times the amount that died with Custer at the Little Bighorn, estimated to be no more than 1k.

According to Dr. Bonnie B. Dorwart, diarrhea and other intestinal problems caused deaths that were attributed to Dysentery. ("Disease in the Civil War" by Dr. Bonnie Brice Dorwart, <https://www.essentialcivilwarcurriculum.com/disease-in-the-civil-war.html>).

Interestingly, measles have largely been eradicated today although many of us who grew up in the 1940s-1970s had the disease when young. U.S. Army records from 1976 to 1979 show that measles led to 3% of soldiers developing pneumonia. Another 17% developed bronchitis. 29% developed middle ear infection, 25% developed sinusitis, and 31% developed hepatitis. It would be fair to infer that measles caused the same, exact problems in the War Between the States even though the statistics have not been located by me.

Medical issues not directly related to diseases included rheumatism, abscesses, and arthritis which drained units of troop strength. These were not classified as necessarily preventable and were largely incident to active duty in the field or, were pre-existing conditions not discovered during enlistment.

Beginning with WWI, the U.S. military for the first time in its history, suffered fewer casualties to disease than to battle casualties if one discounts the influenza pandemic that



struck in 1917-1919 (a whole subject of its own). Sanitation and much improved medical care to include vaccinations made a huge difference in maintaining the health of the force.

As a last note, when I joined the Army in 1971, our medical instruction included the mantra of “Fingers, flies, feces, and food” (4-Fs of Sanitation). Our mess kits were washed in large, heated garbage cans (mess kits are no longer used) insuring that we cleaned them properly. The 4-Fs were the elements of good sanitation and reminders to pay attention to each of them to prevent sickness. We were told to memorize these factors and use the four fingers on our left hand --- one finger for each factor (discounting the thumb). Not to be outdone, our tactics instruction included the four rules of offensive tactics, to wit: “Find ‘em, fix ‘em, fight ‘em, finish ‘em” (4-Fs of Offensive Combat). We were instructed that we were to use our right hand fingers so we did not confuse them with the medical sanitation factors which might result in interesting permutations like: “Flies, find ‘em, feces, fight ‘em”. That might have led to battlefield confusion, if not defeat. I have never forgotten those rules. And I’ve never gotten Dysentery.

Ed Kennedy is the TVCWRT Communications Officer and also secured the moniker; Master of the Screen and General Roustabout.

The Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table Civil War Tutorial: On the Web

The Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table introduces a tutorial for those interested in understanding the origin, conduct, and impact of the American Civil War i.e., officially “the War Between the States.” Our intent is to address key elements relevant to understanding the era that redefined America. For everyone wanting a better understanding of the Civil War, this tutorial is a framework for that understanding and further study.

The American Civil War was a momentous event in our history. It changed America. Discover the causes, the political compromises, the economic impact, the military impact, and the impact of war on the American home.

The TVCWRT Tutorial, a work in process, is divided into nine parts. Each part addresses key elements of friction that impacted the result, politics, economy, military, and people that experienced the turmoil. The tutorial is an overview that will prepare any student of the era for participation in a course in any college or university. For additional information we refer you to our website, <https://www.tvcwrt.org>, under Education.

Part I: The Slide into Disunity; 1776 – 1859 (see it on the website www.tvcwrt.org)

Part II: The Slide into War; 1859 – 1861

Part III: First Encounters; 1861

Part IV: Reality Sets In; 1862

Part V: Turning Points; 1863

Part VI: Victory Is Decided; 1864

Part VII: Combat Ends; 1865

Part VIII: Reshaping the Conflict; 1865 – 1877

Epilogue: The Legacy

For additional reading and resource material, visit the Recommended Reading List, Nooks & Crannies, our newsletters, and our Book Reviews.

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Part II
The Slide into War: 1859-Fort Sumter

Politics
By Emil Posey

The 1850s marked our inexorable slide into Civil War. While his predecessor, Franklin Pierce, was no great shakes of a president, James Buchanan was the wrong person at the wrong time if there ever was one. He was fated to become judged as one of the worst presidents in the nation's history. Ironically, his successor, Abraham Lincoln, was the right person at the right time. His election in 1860 triggered Secession, but Buchanan's term was the bridal walk.

President Buchanan was a lifelong bachelor. Some characterize him as our first gay president, arising from his long-time relationship with William Rufus DeVane King of Alabama. King's niece, Catherine Margaret Ellis, fulfilled the role of First Lady in the Buchanan White House, which marked the beginning of the use of that term. We need not concern ourselves here with this controversy other than to point out that it is a matter debated upon for the past 175 years.

For a good discussion, see <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/175-year-history-examining-bachelor-president-james-buchanans-close-friendship-william-rufus-king-180972992/>

The actions Buchanan took during his presidency hastened the coming of the Civil War. He presided over a nation rapidly dividing. His decision to endorse the Constitution written by the pro-slavery settlers in Kansas made him appear to be a supporter of the South and a traitor to the North. According to Dr. Jean H. Baker (Professor of History, Goucher College), "He should be maligned for 'near treason' ... Everything [he did] during the last part of his Administration is so pro-Southern that he does not do in the classic Presidential oath 'preserve and defend and protect the United'." Dr. Eric Foner (Professor of History, Columbia University) observed, "The idea that the president would try to force slavery into a territory where it is clear the majority of the settlers don't want it completely discredits his Administration in the eyes of Northerners, including northern Democrats, not just Republicans."

Buchanan had come to Washington as a northern Democrat who, through training, background and conviction, believed himself well positioned to solve the sectional crisis. During his term, he came to believe that the fault rested with the extremists in the north who refused to allow southern slaveholders their constitutional right to take slaves into the territories – the aggressive northern Republicans who refused to protect the rights of Southerners. ("Learning from Buchanan", Jean H. Baker, New York Times, February 26, 2011). Newly elected, he thought the crisis would disappear if he maintained a sectional balance in his appointments and could persuade the people to accept constitutional law as the Supreme Court interpreted it.

In his victory speech, President-Elect Buchanan denounced Republicans as a "dangerous" and "geographical" party that had unfairly attacked the South. He declared his intent to destroy sectional parties, North or South, and to restore harmony to the Union under a national, conservative government. To begin the healing process, he filled his cabinet with four Southerners and three Northerners, the latter considered to be *doughfaces* (Northerners with Southern sympathies).

President Buchanan was inaugurated on March 4, 1857. In his inaugural address, he committed himself to serving only one term. He said Congress should play no role in determining the status of slavery in the states or territories, urged popular sovereignty, and argued that a federal slave code should protect the rights of slave-owners in every federal territory. He advocated that people accept constitutional law as the Supreme Court interpreted it.

On March 6, 1857, two days after the inauguration, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney (who had administered the oath of office to President Buchanan) delivered the *Dred Scott* decision. The decision held that African Americans were not and never could become US citizens and asserted that



Congress had no constitutional power to deprive persons of their property rights in slaves in the territories.

This was the solution to the nation's divisions that President Buchanan had sought, thinking it would permanently put the slavery issue to rest. Not everyone agreed, of course. Southerners were delighted, but the decision created a furor in the North, and the country grew more divided. Then came "Bleeding Kansas", so called because of the extreme amount of sectional violence that went on in the state, perpetrated mostly by outsiders, but certainly with local participants.

The Missouri Compromise of 1820 had prohibited slavery north of the 36°30' parallel (Missouri's southern border). Missouri, though, had been admitted as a slave state in 1821. Kansas was above the slave parallel but was next to the slave state of Missouri. In an era that would come to be known as "Bleeding Kansas," the territory would become a battleground over the slavery question – in effect, a dress rehearsal for the Civil War. Rumors had spread through the South that 20,000 Northerners (an exaggerated number) were descending on Kansas, and in November 1854, thousands of armed Southerners, mostly from Missouri, poured over the line to vote for a proslavery congressional delegate. Only half the ballots were cast by registered voters, and at one location, only 20 of over 600 voters were legal residents. The proslavery forces won the election. On March 30, 1855, another election was held to choose members of the territorial legislature. The Missourians, or "Border Ruffians," again poured over the line. This time, they swelled the numbers from 2,905 registered voters to 6,307 actual ballots cast. Only 791 voted against slavery.

President Buchanan divided the Democrats with his support for the ensuing, pro-slavery Lecompton Constitution, which supported the admission of Kansas as a slave state. However, voters in the territory ultimately rejected the document, and Kansas finally entered the Union as a free state on January 20, 1861. President Buchanan's management of the controversy in Kansas did nothing to settle the slavery issue. It only made it worse. Slavery, couched in the mantra of states' rights, would be the defining issue of the 1860 election.

When Republicans won a plurality in the House in 1858, every significant bill they passed fell before southern votes in the Senate or a Presidential veto. Legislation ground to a stalemated halt.

This period saw the famed Lincoln-Douglas debates. In 1858, the one-term former congressman and Springfield, Illinois attorney, Abraham Lincoln, ran as a Republican against the incumbent Illinois Democrat Stephen Douglas in an effort to unseat him in the Senate. From August to October of that year, they held a series of seven face-to-face debates, with most of the discussion focused on the issue of slavery. Attention grew as the debates continued. Before they were over, the forums were being covered by newspapers across the nation.

Douglas repeatedly tried to brand Lincoln as a dangerous radical who advocated racial equality and disruption of the Union. Lincoln emphasized the moral iniquity of slavery and attacked popular sovereignty for the bloody results it had produced in Kansas and forced Douglas to defend the doctrine of popular sovereignty in the context of slavery. Douglas's position, while acceptable to many Northern Democrats, angered the South and led to the division of the Democratic Party.

Although he retained his seat in the Senate, narrowly defeating Lincoln when the Illinois state legislature (which then elected US senators) voted 54 to 46 in his favor, Douglas's stature as a national leader of the Democratic Party was greatly diminished. Lincoln, on the other hand, lost the election but gained national recognition, the Lincoln-Douglas Debates often being cited as the instrument that thrust Lincoln into national prominence.

Sectional and pro- and antislavery animosities were deepening and threatening to get out of control. Then, on October 16, 1859, came John Brown's raid on the United States Armory and Arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia to capture and confiscate the arms located there, distribute them among local slaves, and begin armed insurrection. The raid failed, and Brown was captured, subsequently tried, and hanged. The raid, trial, and execution were covered extensively in the press, were the subject of countless heated discussions and debates, and escalated fear throughout the South. With the Haitian Revolution (1791), the German Coast Uprising near Louisiana (1811), and Nat Turner's Rebellion



(1831) strong in their minds, many slaveowners feared this latest episode of aggressive violence – initiated, led, and supported by white abolitionists no less – was the harbinger of things to come.

By 1860, it was apparent that Buchanan was not going to be a candidate for re-election. At the Democratic convention, he managed to derail Douglas' campaign to be the sole nominee who would take on Lincoln. (Douglas had defeated Lincoln in the 1858 Senate election in Illinois.) The Democrats were left with two presidential nominees (Douglas and John Breckinridge).

Sectional strife rose to such a pitch by 1860 that national politics were an acrimonious swirl. There was a protracted debate over the House leadership for nearly two months (December 1859 and January 1860). On February 1, the Republicans finally managed the election of a Speaker with 119 votes, the exact number needed to win. The debates in Congress during this period were heated and many members carried weapons. Southern Congressmen talked openly of secession in the event of a Republican presidential victory in the coming November. On February 2, Mississippi Senator Jefferson Davis introduced a series of resolutions calling for a federal law protecting slavery in the territories. The resolutions were passed by the Senate Democratic caucus, an action that further divided the party along sectional lines. On February 27, Lincoln delivered his famous Cooper Union Address in New York City, which presented a compelling case on the Founding Fathers' objections to the spread of slavery. The speech was widely reprinted in northern newspapers and helped Lincoln secure his party's presidential nomination.

In January, the Democratic Party of Alabama adopted a resolution instructing the state's delegates to the Convention in Charleston (to be held April 23 -May 3) to "insist" on a clause in the national platform calling for a law to protect slavery in the territories, and to withdraw from the convention if such a clause is rejected. They, along with other disgruntled delegates, did just this on April 30.

On May 9, the newly formed Constitutional Union Party opened its convention in Baltimore. John Bell of Tennessee became its presidential nominee. Comprised mainly of conservative Whigs and Know-Nothings concerned about the gathering crisis, the party advertised itself as an alternative to "Black Republicanism" and Democratic demagoguery. The delegates refused to adopt a platform, instead pledging themselves solely to the preservation of the Union and the Constitution. The following week, on May 16, the Republican convention opened in Chicago. William Seward lost on the third ballot to Lincoln, considered by most members as a political moderate. The party platform called for a higher tariff, a ban on slavery in the territories, federal money for internal improvement projects, and a homestead act. Seward later described Lincoln as "a soldier on the side of freedom in their irrepressible conflict between freedom and slavery".

On June 18, the Democratic national convention reconvened in Baltimore after the Charleston impasse. Anti-Douglas delegates from Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Maryland, California, Oregon, Kentucky, Missouri, and Arkansas withdrew from the meeting in order to protest the assembly's decision to seat newly elected, pro-Douglas state delegations. Douglas was nominated as

"Radical" was an inappropriate moniker for Lincoln. Radical Republicans, strictly speaking, were members of the newly formed Republican Party committed to the emancipation of slaves. Even though the whole of the party was looked upon by many as Radical Republicans, Lincoln was not there yet. He believed slavery was wrong, but it was allowed by the Constitution. In a speech in Peoria, Illinois in 1854 he admitted he did not know exactly what should be done about slavery within the current political system. Nor did he believe blacks should have the same social and political rights as whites. In their fourth debate, at Charleston, Illinois, on September 18, 1858, Lincoln made his position clear, "I will say then that I am not, nor ever have been, in favor of bringing about in any way the social and political equality of the white and black races." It was not until mid-1862 that he finally embraced the idea of emancipation.

<https://www.history.com/news/5->



the Democratic Party's candidate by the remaining delegates. Shortly thereafter, a group of disgruntled delegates assembled a competing convention in Baltimore which nominated John C. Breckinridge, a federal slave law supporter, for president. Thus, the Democratic Party split into northern and southern wings, each with its own candidate for the Presidency.

When the Republicans nominated Lincoln, it seemed to them a foregone conclusion that he would be elected even

"... John Brown, [a] very important person in history. Important though for only one episode. Failure in everything in life. Except he becomes the single most important factor, in my opinion, in bringing on the war. This man seized Harper's Ferry on the night of the 16th and 17th of October. Failure of his operation completely. Think how much safer they would have been if they had sensed him as a madman. But they brought him to trial. He used his trial to indict a system. In the South, Southerners began to look, began to feel that too many in the North were looking upon Brown as a hero. The militia system in the South which had been a joke before this ... becomes a viable instrument as the Southern militias begin to take a true form and the South begins to worry about Northerners educating the blacks to murder them in their beds."

"The Civil War, Interview with Ed Bearss"

though his name appeared on no southern ballot. President Buchanan hoped for compromise, but secessionist leaders did not want compromise. Rather than accept a Republican administration, the southern "Fire-Eaters" advocated secession.

The Fire-Eaters were part of the group that walked out of the Democratic

convention in Charleston back in April. They were a pro-slavery group led by Robert Barnwell Rhett of South Carolina, Edmund Ruffin of Virginia, Louis T. Wigfall of Texas, and William Yancey of Alabama, that strongly urged secession. They helped to unleash a chain reaction that eventually led to the formation of the Confederate States of America.

On November 6, Lincoln was elected the sixteenth president of the United States, receiving 1,866,452 popular votes and 180 electoral votes from 17 of the 33 states. Not a single slave state endorsed him. Stephen Douglas received 1,376,957 popular votes and 12 electoral votes; John Breckinridge 849,781 popular votes and 72 electoral votes; and John Bell 588,879 popular votes and 39 electoral votes.

Events became grim. President Buchanan's administration virtually crumbled. On November 10, both of South Carolina's senators resigned their seats. The legislature of South Carolina ordered a convention to meet on December 17 to decide whether the state should remain in the Union, and on November 13 authorized the raising of ten thousand men for the state's defense. The Georgia legislature followed on November 18 by authorizing one million dollars for weapons purchases. On November 23, US Army Major Robert Anderson issued a report from Charleston identifying Fort Sumter as the key to the defense of the city's harbor, adding that secession was a fait accompli in South Carolina. In December, President Buchanan's cabinet all but disintegrated. On December 8, a group of South Carolina Congressmen urged President Buchanan to relinquish federal property in their state. On December 13, 23 House members and 7 Senators from the South made a public announcement calling for the creation of a Southern Confederacy.

On December 20, the hammer dropped: South Carolina formally seceded. As a lame duck, President Buchanan denied the legality of slavery but did nothing to stop it. Within weeks, six more states left

Robert Barnwell Rhett had been a six-term member of the US House of Representatives from South Carolina (1837-1849) and a US Senator from South Carolina (December 1850 – May 1852, completing the term of John C. Calhoun). Edmund Ruffin was a politically active, wealthy Virginia planter and slaveholder. Louis Wigfall was a political activist and US Senator from Texas (December 1859 – March 1861, completing the term of James Pinckney Henderson). William Yancey was a political activities and one-term member of the US House of Representatives from Alabama (1844-1846).



the Union (Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas). Eight slaveholding states sat on the fence, becoming Border States (Missouri, Arkansas, Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware). In late December, Major Anderson moved his small force from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter, both in Charleston harbor.

On February 4, 1861, a convention of the seceded states opened in Montgomery, Alabama as a Peace Convention called by Virginia got underway in Washington. On February 8, the seceded states adopted a provisional constitution for the Confederate States of America. It contained only a few variations from the US Constitution, among which were a clause protecting slavery and one that prohibited tariffs designed to protect domestic industry.

On February 10, 1861, Jefferson Davis was elected president of the Confederacy and was inaugurated eight days later in Montgomery, Alabama. One month after that, on March 4, President Lincoln, after having slipped into Washington in an unmarked train in the dead of night back on February 23, was inaugurated. Buchanan's presidency finally came to an end. On his last day, Buchanan said to Lincoln, "If you are as happy to be entering the presidency as I am of leaving it, you must be a very happy man."

"Happy" surely was not how President Lincoln felt. He was confronted with a nation breaking apart. In his inauguration address, he told the crowd he had no intention of interfering with slavery, but that secession was illegal and the Union perpetual.

The day after his inauguration, President Lincoln learned from Major Anderson that Fort Sumter must either be re-supplied or abandoned within a matter of weeks. The president understood that surrendering the fort would mean a loss of federal sovereignty but sending supplies would likely start a war. He lost sleep over the situation. On March 29, he decided to resupply it (along with Fort Pickens in Pensacola, Florida).

President Lincoln notified South Carolina Governor Francis Pickens on April 6 that he would re-provision Fort Sumter, making it clear that no additional troops would be sent to the fort if supply ships were allowed to land. On April 10, though, Confederate Secretary of War LeRoy Walker authorized Beauregard to use force if the federal government attempted to re-supply Fort Sumter. On April 11, Major Anderson refused a request from the Confederate government to surrender Fort Sumter. The next morning, the Confederate bombardment began.

The crystalizing issue in the sectional turmoil was whether the states individually had the discretionary right to leave (to secede from) the Union. Exacerbating this was the occasional federal law and policy that would benefit one section of the country at the expense of another. Governing was a difficult balancing act often not done well despite the best of intentions (and intentions were not always pristine). Imbalances led to disputes that were, in turn, inflamed by public oratory within and between states and the print media, between regional and national political groups, and in Congress. The states' rights controversy (focusing on secession) was the political underpinning of the North-South dispute – a power struggle to see which part of the country would have control. Slavery was its social and economic underpinnings (albeit this is a contentious view).

The notion of secession — the right of states to secede from the Union — has a long and deep history in this country, but more as a threat rather than as an actual dissolution of the Union. Pro-secessionists found philosophical justification for altering or abolishing a government and instituting a new one in the Declaration of Independence. Those who held that the Union was simply a compact among the states argued that states could secede from that compact just as they had earlier acceded to it.

With President-Elect Lincoln's victory, talk of secession and disunion reached a boiling point, and President Buchanan was forced to address it in his final message to Congress. In it, he denied the legal right of states to secede but opined the federal government legally could not prevent them. He placed the blame for the crisis solely on "intemperate interference of the Northern people with the question of slavery in the Southern States," and suggested that if they did not "repeal their unconstitutional and obnoxious enactments ... the injured States, after having first used all peaceful



and constitutional means to obtain redress, would be justified in revolutionary resistance to the Government of the Union.” His address satisfied no one.



May 17, 1861; Difficulty Getting Volunteers *(from confederate soldier letter)*

Not all Georgians were wildly enthusiastic about the outbreak of the Civil War. From Jackson County, where he was trying to raise a volunteer company, A. H. Mitchell wrote to his father:

“I am ashamed for the people of Jackson County, more especially in the upper portion of it. They are dead in ignorance and sloth. They have neither energy or patriotism... The only way to get men in this part of Jackson is to draft them. It is discouraging to ride day after day and have men to render such frivolous excuses, as having had broke arms, legs and ribs and fingers and toes cut off, &c., &c... I have my doubts as to getting a company made up, though I keep trying and expect to for some weeks yet. Even [among] those who are inclined to volunteer, there is always someone ready to dissuade them from it... I have, in several cases, solicited for volunteers and the excuse was, ‘If I had someone to take care of my family I would readily do so.’ ... What else but a draft would make such men serve their country? Nothing, nothing!”

May 1861: The Union Strategy Take Shape. *(the editor)*

The Union and Confederate governments expanded their military leadership base and spare on land and water. Each government introduced leaders that will inspire the nation or represent cowardice or greed. Whichever the case, they will stimulate the imagination of historians and writers forever. It was a month that defined a strategy for the North, introduced a concept that would redefine the Union war aims, and expanded the number of stars on the bars of the Confederate battle flag.

Union Brigadier Generals Appointed

Robert Anderson

Don Carlos Buell

James Cooper

Darius Nash Couch

Jacob Dolson Cox

Samuel Ryan Curtis

William Buel Franklin

Ulysses Simson Grant

Charles Smith Hamilton

Samuel Peter Heintzelman

Joseph Hooker

Philip Kearney

Benjamin Franklin Kelly

Erasmus Darwin Keyes

Rufus Ring

Frederick West Lander

Nathaniel Lyon

Joseph King Fenno Mansfield

George Archibald McCall

John Alexander McClernand

Irving McDowell

Montgomery Cunningham Meigs

William Reding Montgomery

John Walcot Phelps

John Pope

Andrew Porter



Fitz John Porter
Benjamin Mayberry Prentiss
Joseph Jones Reynolds
William Stark Rosecrans
Robert Cumming Schenck
Thomas West Sherman

William Tecumsch Sherman
Franz Siegel
Charles Pomeroy Stone
Erastus Barnard Tyler
Alpheus Starkey Williams

Union Major Generals Appointed

John Charles Fremont
Benjamin Franklin Butler
John Adams Dix

Confederate Generals Appointed

Samuel Cooper, CSA,
commissioned a full General
Albert Sidney Johnston, CSA,
commissioned a full General
BG Charles Clark
BG John Buchanan Floyd

BG Joseph Eggleston Johnston
BG Ben McCulloch
BG Robert Edward Lee
BG William Wing Loring
BG David Emanuel Twiggs

The Confederacy experienced both political and military change. Arkansas seceded from the Union, followed by Tennessee, and pro-Union supporters rioted in Knoxville, TN. North Carolina became the 11th State to join the Confederacy and was followed by Virginia. In the midst of forming a government, the Confederate Provisional Congress voted to move from Montgomery, AL to Richmond, VA.

Col Thomas J. Jackson, VA Militia, was ordered to remove equipment from Harpers Ferry, and he seized a train of railroad cars and locomotives while Colonel G.A. Porterfield, CSA, took command of state forces in Northwestern Virginia (soon to become West Virginia). Alexandria, VA was abandoned and BG Joseph Eggleston Johnston, who was assigned to command troops near Harpers' Ferry, VA. Colonel John B. Magruder, Provisional Army of VA, was assigned to command Yorktown, VA. BG M.L. Bonham, CSA, was assigned to command the "Alexandria Line" in Virginia and quickly replaced by BG Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard.

Unionists observed while the Confederates raised the scuttled USS Merrimack.

The Union established a new region to support command and control, defined as the Department of the Ohio (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio), and there were pro-Union demonstrations in Wheeling, VA. MG George B. McClellan, USA, assumed command of the Department of the Ohio and it was expanded to include a portion of Western Virginia and he advanced to occupy Grafton, WV.

BG Irving McDowell, USA, was assigned to command the Department of Northeastern Virginia when Baltimore, Md, was occupied, without Brevet LTG Winfield Scott's official authorization, by Massachusetts Militia BG Benjamin F. Butler. Brevet MG George Cadwalader, PA Militia, replaced BG Butler in the Department of Annapolis. Butler took over Fortress Monroe at Hampton Roads, VA, and quickly initiated action to occupy Newport News, VA.



One result of the Union Army advance to occupy Arlington Heights and Alexandria, VA, was the killing by Mr. James Jackson of Col. Elmer Ephraim Ellsworth while he was removing a Confederate flag from an inn. Jackson was subsequently killed by private Francis E. Brownell.

Lincoln attended Col Ellsworth's funeral and directed:

- Major Robert Anderson to aid the Kentucky Unionists even though the state claimed neutrality.
- The Naval Academy to move from Baltimore to Newport, RI, due to unrest in Maryland.
- Bvt. MG George Cadwalader to arrest any person under certain circumstances in MD.
- The suspension of the US Postal service to the Confederate States.

He also supported Secretary of War Simon Cameron's acceptance of Miss Dorothea Dix's offer to establish federal military hospitals.

President Lincoln was disappointed when US Supreme Court Chief Justice Roger B. Taney upheld the writ of habeas corpus in the matter of a prisoner, John Merryman of Maryland, who was arrested by MG George Cadwalder for recruiting Confederate soldiers. Taney ordered Mr. Merryman be set free.

Funeral Services were held in Boston, MA, for the Union soldiers killed in the Baltimore, MD, riots.

Brevet Lieutenant General Winfield Scott advocated what became known as the Anaconda plan. The Union took immediate action to blockade the mouth of the James River with an assortment of US Navy vessels and engaged CSA shore batteries with the USS Yankee at Gloucester Point, across from Yorktown, VA, on the York River. They also engaged CSA forces on Aquia Creek, VA. The US steamer Monticello engaged a CSA battery at Sewell's Point, VA. The US Navy sealed off Northern Virginia by blockading the Rappahannock River and initiated the first blockade of Charleston Harbor, SC, with the USS Niagara. The blockades continued with Savanna, GA, being controlled by the USS Union and New Orleans, LA, with the USS Brooklyn. Orders were issued to US Navy Commander John Rodgers to take charge of the naval operations in the rivers in the West, most importantly the Mississippi River.

Action in the West was principally abandoning forts, relocating troops, and accommodating a border state. The last Union forts in Texas were abandoned and Col Van Dorn, CSA, took over and watched the Texas militia occupy Fort Washita, Indian Territory. Forts Arbuckle and Cobb in Indian Territory (Choctaw Indian Nation) were abandoned by 1st US Cavalry and they march to Fort Leavenworth, KS, guided by Mr. Jesse Chisholm on a route remembered as the "Chisholm Trail".

The Missouri State Militia established a camp of instruction near Saint Louis and Captain Nathaniel Lyon, 2nd Infantry, with US Volunteers, comprising the 1st, 3rd, and 4th Missouri Reserves took General Daniel Marsh Frost and his entire command (625 men) of the Missouri Militia prisoner. Riots continued for days and incurred injuries and a death.

BG Nathaniel Lyon (formally Captain Lyon), USA, replaced BG William Selby Harney in Missouri. BG Lyon launched a Federal expedition from Saint Louis to Potosi, MO, to assist pro-Union supporters and arrested a number of anti-Union citizens. BG Harney, USA,



commanding the Department of the West, and MG Sterling Price, the Missouri State Guard, agreed that if Price could maintain law and order, Federal troops would not be called into the neutral State. It effectively gave control of the state to a pro-Southern force as Ordnance Stores in Kansas City were seized. The Nebraska Territorial Governor called for volunteers to support the Union, and pro-Union demonstrations were held in San Francisco, CA, even as the Union skirmished against the Indians on Mad Creek, on the South fork of the Eel River, and on Keatuck Creek, CA.

BG Ben McCulloch, CSA, was assigned to Command the Indian Territory.

The contraband controversy was created on May 24 by MG Butler, USA, when he reported his decision to employ for the Federal cause fugitive slaves of disloyal owners to President Lincoln. It caused a political stir because Butler defined the slaves as contraband (property of the Confederacy) and refused to release three Negro slaves.

Reference: The Chronological Tracing of the American Civil War per the Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, by Ronald A. Mosocco, 1995, James River Publications, Williamsburg, Virginia.

TVCWRT Little Round Table (LRT) Discussion and Schedule - 2020

The Vicksburg Campaign

The US Army Center of Military History lists the Vicksburg Campaign as 29 March - 4 July 1863. The Center lists operations against Vicksburg in December of 1862 through January 1863 as separate from the Campaign.

This month we will address the operations of December 1862 and January 1863. The principle combatant Generals are LTG John G. Pemberton (CSA), MG Earl Van Dorn (CSA) and MG William T. Sherman (USA). In 1862, major operations began in the Western Theater with the principal objective; gain control of the Mississippi. To do that it was necessary to reduce Vicksburg and Port Hudson. Admiral Farragut made an attempt as early as May 1862. Ulysses S. Grant was in charge by October 1862 and began with 45,000 men organized into three corps. General Grant modified his plans as events on the ground dictated. After the events of December 1862 and January 1863 he received two more corps', bringing his total strength to 75,000.

Grant's plan for the Vicksburg Campaign in 1863 included XV Army Corps under MG William T. Sherman demonstrating north of Vicksburg late in March, and another two corps', the XIII Army Corps under MG John A. McClernand and the XVII Army Corps under James B. McPherson, making a wide swing southward on the west side of the Mississippi River and then back to the river at Bruinsburg, about 30 miles below Vicksburg. Sherman's corps followed the same route, joining Grant early in May. Flag Officer David D. Porter sailed his river fleet down the Mississippi River on 16-17 April, survived a heavy bombardment as he passed Vicksburg and ferried Grant's troops across the river on 30 April. They were joined by the IX Corps, commanded by MG John G. Parke. MG Steven A. Hurlbut's XVI Corps was an enabler holding the line from Memphis to Corinth and resourcing faints to focus LTG Pemberton (CSA) on Northern Mississippi rather than events in the south. MG Hurlbut was replaced by MG Cadwallader C. Washburn later in the campaign.

Vicksburg was defended by 30,000 Confederates under LTG John G. Pemberton. Other Confederate forces under MG Joseph E. Johnston were concentrated in the vicinity of Jackson, MS, 40 miles east of Vicksburg. Grant's plan was to interpose his army between Pemberton and Johnston and fend off Johnston while taking Vicksburg. Grant fought his way northeastward taking Raymond on 12 May, driving Confederate forces out of Jackson

19

*The TVCWRT is a 501c3 organization that provides a forum for non-partisan study, education, and discussion regarding the American Civil War. It supports the preservation of Civil War battlefields and landmarks. It meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm, the Elks lodge on Franklin Street Huntsville, Al. TVCWRT will **never** sell your email address. Address: P.O. Box 2872 Huntsville, Alabama 35804. Questions/Comments: Newsletter Editor; arleymccormick@comcast.net*



on 14 May. While Sherman's corps contained Johnston, Grant advanced on Vicksburg, winning engagements at Champion's Hill (16 May) and Black River Bridge (17 May), and driving Pemberton's forces into the city. Assaults on 18 and 22 May failed to breach Vicksburg's defenses. The Federals thereupon settled down to a siege, which ended with Pemberton's surrender on 4 July 1863. Pemberton's 29,396 officers and enlisted men were granted parole under the terms of the surrender. Federal losses during the campaign were about 3,500; Confederate losses were more than 8,000 killed, wounded, and missing.

While Grant was laying siege to Vicksburg, a 15,000-man force under MG Nathaniel P. Banks (who had replaced MG Benjamin F. Butler) moved north from New Orleans and attacked Port Hudson, which fell on 8 July 1863. Thusly, the Mississippi River came under Union control and the Confederacy was cut in two.

On 28 May, pandemic permitting, the Little Round Table will launch our study of the Vicksburg Campaign beginning with General Van Dorn's successful raid on Holly Springs and MG Sherman's defeat at Chickasaw Bayou, north of Vicksburg, in December 1862. We end the night with the Confederate defeat at Arkansas Post in early January 1863. The discussion will be led by Arley McCormick.

Through the course of our study there are questions regarding the campaign that beg to be addressed and consideration regarding facts, e.g. depending what author you read, the number of combatants may differ. Several things may impact the number of combatants on the field. It may not be universally understood, but nevertheless noteworthy, that official sources estimate up to 25% of the armies were incapacitated because of disease. Plus, nearly all numbers related to the strength of units are rounded to 000s. The present for duty strength is seldom specified, but it is understood that troop strength is calculated almost daily, and those counts are not necessarily recorded when in contact with the enemy.

Questions to Ponder:

- Was Vicksburg a political objective or a military objective?
- What risk did Vicksburg present to the Union?
- What would be the impact if Vicksburg were lost to Confederacy?
- What would be the impact if Vicksburg remained an active Confederate fort?
- Was there a better choice to Command Vicksburg than LTG John Clifford Pemberton?
- What was the scope of LTG Pemberton's responsibility and how well was he supported?
- How well did LTG Pemberton do in organizing and defending Vicksburg?
- What was General Joseph E. Johnston's role and how well did he play it?
- What impacted the defense and the Confederacy's support of Vicksburg?
- Was Vicksburg abandoned by the Confederacy?
- In its entirety Grant employed complex maneuvers in the campaign, taking a lot of time. Why?
- What Confederate general contributed the most to the successful defense of Vicksburg?
- What Confederate General stole away and abandoned Vicksburg?
- What innovative technology was implemented during the Vicksburg Campaign that affected future wars?

May 28 – (Assuming authority to meet) Vicksburg Campaign 1 - Holly Springs, Chickasaw Bayou, and Arkansas Post; Led by Arley McCormick

June 25 - Vicksburg Campaign 2 - Bayou and Canal Operations; Led by Fred Forst

20

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July 23 - Vicksburg Campaign 3 - Porter Moves South – Grand Gulf - Snyder's Bluff; Led by Kent Wright

August 27 – Vicksburg Campaign 4 - Grierson's Raid; Led by Arley McCormick

September 24 – Vicksburg Campaign 5 - Port Gibson to Jackson; Led by Jeff Ewing

October 22 - Vicksburg Campaign 6 - Champion Hill and Big Black; Led by John Allen

December 10 - Vicksburg Campaign 7 - Siege Operations; Led by Emil Posey

TBD - Armistead and Garnet - Parallel Lives; Led by Emil Posey

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