

**Tennessee Valley Civil  
War Round Table  
January 2021 Newsletter**



**To Inform and Educate  
Since 1993  
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## **Alabama Archive's Faces Its Legacy as Confederate 'Attic'**

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) – Hundreds of memorials glorifying the Confederacy had been erected by the time Marie Bankhead Owen built what may have been the grandest: The Alabama Department of Archives and History, which cataloged a version of the past that was favored by many Southern whites and all but excluded Black people.

Owen used taxpayer money to turn the department into an overstuffed Confederate attic promoting the idea that the South's role in the Civil War was noble rather than a fight to maintain slavery. Now, amid a national reckoning over racial injustice, the agency is confronting that legacy in the state where the civil rights movement was born. In June, leaders formally acknowledged

the department's past role in perpetuating racism and so-called lost cause ideals.

"If history is to serve the present, it must offer an honest assessment of the past" Director Steve Murray and trustees said in a "statement of commitment." Confederate relics have come under renewed scrutiny since the police killing of George Floyd in May sparked outrage about the history of racism in the U.S. The wave of protests that followed toppled some monuments and cities removed others as schools decided to part ways with their Confederate names.

Murray said the department wanted to offer more educational resources after Floyd's killing in Minneapolis and issued the statement after realizing it had to acknowledge that our agency was responsible in many ways for some of the intellectual underpinnings of the development of systemic raceism in Alabama."

"The response has been overwhelmingly positive" said Murray. Aside from acknowledging its racist past, the agency recommitted itself to recruiting additional minority staff and telling a more complete history is the state in the future.

Self-taught genealogist True Lewis, who is Black and was born in Pennsylvania, was apprehensive when she first visited the agency about two decades ago to search plantation records for information about her ancestors, who were enslaved in southeast Alabama. Workers were helpful, she said, but the only other people in the building who looked like her were on the janitorial staff.

"You always had that feeling of, 'You aren't supposed to be in this space,'" Lewis said.

The agency's recommitment was meaningful to her because it acknowledged sins of the past.

"It was like they heard my whisper when they said that," she said. Founded in 1901, the year Alabama adopted a white supremacist constitution that's still in effect, Archives and History opened with Owen's husband, Thomas Owen, as its first director. Located in the state Capitol, where Southern delegates formed the Confederacy in 1861, the department focused on gathering Confederate records and artifacts.

With the country's first publicly funded, independent archive, Alabama soon became a national model for collecting public records, according to retired Auburn University historian Robert J. Jakeman, who wrote about Marie Owen. Other states of the old Confederacy followed suit.

"What Owen did definitely started a chain reaction across the Southern states," said Daniel Cone, who teaches at Auburn and wrote about Tom Owen.

Marie Owen took over the department in 1920 after her husband's death. The agency already had amassed far more items than it could safely store or catalog, and the problem got worse under "Miss Marie." In a more spacious, white-columned building dedicated in 1940, Owen led the agency even more in the direction of becoming a storehouse of cultural items and Confederate relics that excluded the history of the Black people enslaved on Southern plantations, following her pattern of extolling the Confederacy and disregarding minorities.

The Ivy League-educated historian John Hope Franklin, an African American, wrote of meeting Owen during his first research visit to Montgomery in the mid-1940s in his autobiography "Mirror to America" published in 2005. Owen used a racial slur in asking whether he'd seen a Black man from Harvard who was supposed to be in the building.

"Before I could recover myself sufficiently for a reply, a voice reached us from the outer room. It was the secretary, who could hear everything, since the door was open. "That's him, Mrs. Own, that's him." Franklin wrote.

The agency, which includes a museum, began changing after Owen retired in 1955. But generations of schoolchildren remember it in large part for its Civil War displays, which included old weapons, flags and uniforms.

Edwin Bridges took over as director in 1982 and began shifting the department's focus away from the "lost cause." Today, its museum displays tell more a complete history that includes Native Americans, the horrors of slavery, the Civil War and the modern civil rights movement, which began with the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955 and 1956.

Some have questioned whether the department would jettison its Confederate holdings, considered among the most extensive in the nation, but Murry said that won't happen.

"We see the process as being one of broadening the scope of our effort and our work, telling a full story of Alabama's history." He said.

A bust of Marie Owen is located prominently in the Archives and History building, and Bridges said she and her husband deserve credit for what they built, even with its flaws.

"They were driven to focus on Southern history, Confederate history, because that is what white leadership, the white voters of Alabama, cared about from the 1920's through the 1970's." Bridges said.

Historians are watching to see whether the department further breaks with the legacy of Owen and pro-Confederate narratives or falls back toward the long-accepted path in a mostly white, Republican controlled state.

Frazine K. Taylor, a former employee of the department and the first Black president of the Alabama Historical Association, said making the statement "took courage," but Archives and History still needs a more diverse staff and additional collections to tell the "complete story" of Alabama.

"In the next year, we'll look back and see if some of that has been accomplished or it was just something that was said at the time, at the heat of the moment," Taylor said.

## The Last Visit

*submitted by John Allen and Ed Kennedy*



This painting, by Roderick D. MacKenzie (1865-1941), called "The Last Visit" depicts a Confederate veteran's reunion on the Alabama Capitol steps. MacKenzie was born in London, England, but spent most of his youth and later years in Mobile. The piece was completed in 1931, the same year he finished installing the eight murals inside the Alabama Capitol dome. This piece became part of the Archives collection in 1945.



**Mr. Dan Winsett, Bugler; a black Confederate resident of the Little Rock, Arkansas Old Confederates Home.**

Notice that a US Army officer is escorting an old veteran in the painting. The US Army supported veterans' organizations of both sides at reunions and other events. The US Army held ceremonies such as wreath laying on the General Henry Benning grave at Fort Benning. The last one I am personally aware of occurred in the mid-1970s. Ed Kennedy

Mr. Dan Winsett, left, is demonstrating bugle calls to a Boy Scout. Winsett served as a bugler during the Civil War and was residing in the Old Confederates Home in Little Rock, Arkansas.

The 1938 Gettysburg encampment was the last major gathering of the Civil War veterans. Boy Scouts escorted and assisted veterans of the G.A.R. and U.C.V. at the encampment. The average age of the veterans was 94 and just

over 8,000 veterans of the war were still living in 1938. The Boy Scouts were actively involved in the reunion of soldiers from both the South and the North. They participated by escorting the old gentlemen and performing chores for them at the encampments until the last reunion.



*Dual Destiny Monument, Double Springs, Alabama*

**Dual Destiny** *Gould Hagler, October 12, 2020*  
[blueandgrayeducation.org](http://blueandgrayeducation.org)

The seat of Alabama’s Winston County is Double Springs, a small town where about 1,000 of the county’s 24,000 people reside. Both highways leading into Double Springs, U.S. 278 and Alabama 195, are but two-lane roads as they approach and pass through the community. Located here are some government offices, a few shops and other businesses, a post office, four churches (by my count), and, of course, a courthouse.

Before 1877, when Cullman County was formed from Winston’s eastern side, the county encompassed approximately double its current territory. During the Civil War the county held a population of about 3,500 souls.

Outside the courthouse stands a bronze statue of a soldier, built in 1987, sculpted by Branko Medenica of Birmingham. This work of art is entitled “Dual Destiny.” The plaques around the statue recount Winston County’s experience in the Civil War.

According to one tablet, 351 Winston County men fought in the war, two-thirds of whom fought for the Union.

“The Civil War was not fought between the North and South,” reads one inscription, “but between the Union and Confederate armies. Perhaps as many as 300,000 Southerners served in the Union army. The majority of the Appalachian South from West Virginia to Winston County was pro-Union.”

The monument does not pay homage to the Confederate cause that was lost, nor does it praise the Union cause that prevailed. It does not recount their brave deeds on the battlefield or extol their martial virtues. There is no passage lauding the fidelity and courage of the women. There is no Latin motto explaining how sweet it is to die for one’s country.



**The Gaylesville, Alabama, monument**

Instead, we are presented with an image of the exhausted, even broken, men who made it home. It honors the ordinary soldiers who filled the ranks, men who had little or no say in the political decisions that split their country, their state, their community, and their families. It honors them, but does not attempt to glorify them.

“This Civil War soldier, one-half Union and one-half Confederate, symbolizes the war within a war and honors the Winstonians in both armies. Their shiny new swords of 1861 were by 1865 as broken as the spirits of the men who bore them, and their uniforms of blue and gray, once fresh and clean, were now as worn and patched as the bodies and souls they contained. Johnny Reb and Billy Yank, disillusioned by the realities of war, shared dual destinies as pragmatic Americans in a reunited nation.”

It is odd, perhaps, that nothing is said about the many men who did not survive. For those who did, healing would not be easy or certain.

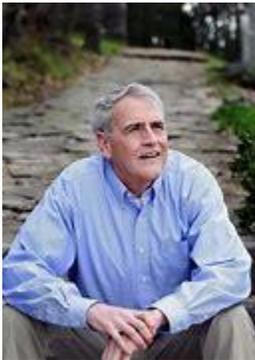
Some Winston County men served in the First Alabama Cavalry, U.S.A., which was part of Col. Abel Streight’s raiding force that was pursued by Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest and captured in May 1863.

When Streight surrendered, he asked for and received Forrest’s assurance that all his men would be treated as prisoners of war, a significant assurance considering the Alabamians were subject to the Confederate draft and could be considered deserters.

A monument in Gaylesville, Alabama, was built in 1939 to commemorate this event.

*All photos courtesy of the author.*

**Announcements:**



**BG (R) John Scales  
former President of  
the TVCWRT**

Thursday, January 14, **14 January**, John Scales, former President and Field Trip Coordinator presents; **Forrest at Donelson, 1862**. The first time the name “Forrest” came to widespread attention during the Civil War was as a result of the siege of Fort Donelson on the Cumberland River in February 1862. What was going on there and why was Forrest involved in a siege? What did he do there and why did it cause a mere lieutenant colonel to become famous across the South? Find out next Thursday night as the Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table presents John Scales and his talk on “Forrest at Donelson”.

**Let’s go to Nick’s**



Carol Cadori; the last winner of Nicks Certificate.

Nicks is still Nicks but with new ownership. Nick’s is open for business with dining room service. Check out the website for details and reservations.

[www.nicksristorante.com](http://www.nicksristorante.com)

## Board Reports; **Join the Board and help sustain our Round Table.**

**Technology Officer:** Michael Acosta, Live streaming of our Round Table sessions to our members via internet is in the future with no charge. All dues paying members who are interested please email our new Tech/Website rep, Michael Acosta at [michaelacosta1836@gmail.com](mailto:michaelacosta1836@gmail.com) so that he can send you instructions on how to set up an account on Discord and get rolling. It will server as an option to those who cannot attend presentations in person due to work, travel, family obligations, or covid-19 concerns.

**Membership Chair:** Kevin Rodriguez, As of 31 December 2020, we have 135 members on the rolls with an additional 49 spouses/significant others for a total of 184 members. We have 12 premium memberships included in the count and there were 4 new members and 2 renewals.

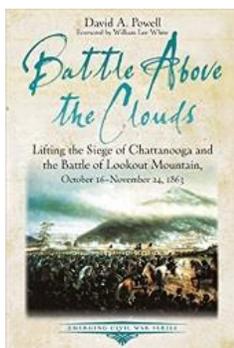
We are moving to a new membership period of 1 January through 31 December. We currently have 16 members paid up through the end of 2021.

### **2021 Schedule for Speakers** (*subject to change*)

- 11 February**, Mike Acosta, Palmito Ranch: Last Battle of the War
- 11 March**, Barbara Snow, Flames Along the Tennessee: Gunter'sville Burns
- 8 April**, Kellee Blake, The Eastern Shore: Virginia Goes to War
- 13 May**, Whitney Snow, Williamson R. W. Cobb: Unsung War Time Congressman
- 10 June**, Delores Hydock, Soldiers in Hoop Skirts: Nursing, Spying, Serving
- 8 July**, John Thompson, Sgt. Gilbert Henderson Bates: The March that Ended the War
- 12 August**, Scott Mingus, Targeted Tracks: Cumberland Rail Road at War
- 9 September**, John Scales, Hood's Retreat from Nashville (preview field trip)
- 14 October**, Ken Rutherford, Landmines: The Hidden Horrors of War
- 11 November**, Thomas Flagel, War, Memory, and the 1913 Gettysburg Reunion

### **TVCWRT Features**

#### **Book Review;**



**Battle Above the Clouds: Lifting the Siege of Chattanooga and the Battle Of Lookout Mountain October 16 – November 24, 1863**, David A. Powell, Savas Beatie, California, 2017, 170 pages, a Tennessee Valley Civil War Round Table Review by Edwin Kennedy USA (Retired)

When Maj Gen William S. Rosecran's Army of the Cumberland was tactically defeated on Chickamauga battlefield on 20 September 1863, the Union Army streamed back into Chattanooga on its line of communication to Nashville. Confederate General Bragg, having no branch or sequel plan for tactical battlefield success, surrendered the operational initiative by allowing the Union Army to escape and re-form in Chattanooga. A month

later, Maj Gen Rosecrans was relieved of command and Maj Gen Grant assumed command. In another month the newly formed Military Division of the Mississippi was on the offensive again.

David Powell has produced another superlative book about the campaigns around Chattanooga. Powell explains how the Union Army was surrounded in Chattanooga and had to rely on cross-river supply routes to its major depot in Stevenson, Alabama, yet managed to reinforce the garrison and then break-out two months after the debacle at Chickamauga.

I really like the fact that Powell's explanation of the "Battle Above The Clouds" incorporated details usually missing in other histories. The maps are outstanding and add greatly to the battle descriptions. I wish there were more. I'm not sure why editors refuse to use more maps but they are extremely helpful to readers and researchers. Powell's 2009 book, "The Maps of Chickamauga" sets the "gold standard" for battle books and is chocked-full of outstanding information and very good analyses.

Powell's analysis of Rosecrans' actions when the Army of the Cumberland moves into Chattanooga goes against the grain of typical histories. Powell cites author Frank Varney's outstanding key study of Grant, "General Grant and the Rewriting of History: How the Destruction of General William S. Rosecrans Influenced Our Understanding of the Civil War". He adds new details to Varney's outstanding analyses of Grant's actions. Like Varney, Powell gives much more credit to Rosecrans and backs it with substantive evidence from the Official Records, letters and diaries rather than Grant's subjective and biased memoirs. What I believe that Powell shows is that the same actions can be viewed from two diametrically opposing directions and produce very different explanations. For too long, researchers have depended solely on Grant's view without considering evidence from other reliable sources. It doesn't necessarily make Grant a liar, only mis-informed and subject to his own biases. Rosecrans emerges with a much better reputation, seen more empathetically with information surely known at Grant's time but not considered, perhaps for reasons of ego or politics.

The explanation of the battle on 24 November on the side of Lookout Mountain is carefully set by an explanation of how the armies positioned their units and why they were arrayed the way they were. The increasing Union troop strength and decreasing Confederate troop strength established a situation that even an amateur could easily understand made General Bragg's position completely untenable. Unable to effectively man the entire siege ring around Chattanooga due to Longstreet's corps' departure, Bragg was forced to try and attempt an economy of force action. He lacked forces to conduct an offensive and barely had enough to maintain a siege around Chattanooga. He was at a major disadvantage trying to supply his dispersed forces with an inadequate logistics system. The Union Army had the advantage of "internal lines" and they were able to mass their forces inside the Confederate ring. By the end of November, this proved to be the undoing of Bragg's Army of Tennessee.

Powell ends his book with a great piece of investigative critical thinking. The appendices address interesting trivia and myths. One such persistent myth that has gained traction over the years is that the Union Army was starving in Chattanooga and that Grant saved them by establishing the "Cracker Line". Powell deftly unravels the starvation myth and traces its origins. He uses first-person accounts to show that the

Union soldiers were adequately fed but the animals were not as forage could not be gotten in adequate amounts until the siege was broken.

The book is not without minor faults. The first is mis-used military terminology. Powell relates that soldiers “entrenched” in places where they did not. Powell is in good company as other authors make the same error. In the specific circumstances described, the soldiers could not “entrench” for two reasons:

- 1) they did not have enough implements with which to “entrench” and,
- 2) time was not available.

“Entrenching” requires digging. Soldiers were not issued individual entrenching tools (small shovels) until 1906. Using organic picks and shovels in the regimental wagons would have taken many hours to days due the small number of picks, spades and shovels.....leading to the second point. To dig even a small trench was very time consuming and the units just did not have that time under the described circumstances, especially in rocky soil. What they commonly did is build above the ground. Using stones and tree trunks, they fabricated “breastworks” which did not have to be dug, but piled. The other term that is commonly misused is “strategy” when “operational” is what is actually meant. In military parlance, “strategy” consists of national-level political-military actions. “Operational” denotes major campaigns and operations that tie tactical actions (battles and engagements) to the national-level strategy.

The lack of citations is bothersome since the book is an excellent source for researchers. It would be extremely nice to know where some of the information came from.

Overall, I rate this book as an “A+” for scholarship and analysis. For those of us in northern Alabama, Chattanooga and the related battle sites are an easy day-trip. Any visit there ought to be with this book. David Powell continues to make substantial additions to our knowledge of the War Between the States. His writing is clear, logical and easy to read. His directions and GPS coordinates to all of the sites associated with this battle are a boon to both tourists and staff ride advocates. I look forward to reading his continued works

### **TVCWRT Civil War Digest, Commanders Update; January 1862:**

Corruption in the War Department plagued President Lincoln and President Davis intervened in the Eastern Tennessee bridge burner trials. Lincoln’s impatience with General McClellan resulted in General Order #1 as combatants traded ground in Kentucky, Missouri, and West Virginia and the cooperation between the Federal Army and Navy conducting operations in North Carolina, Florida, and Tennessee resulted in tragic results, particularly in Tennessee, to the Confederacy as the Navy realized success with the blockade.

### **Political:**

President Abraham Lincoln is plagued with rumors of corruption in the War Department and Mr, Simon Cameron resigned allowing the President to appoint Edwin Stanton as the new Federal Secretary of War.

Frustrated with Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan's continued delay, President Lincoln drafts and issues General War Order Number 1, ordering an advance on Manassas before February 22, 1862.

The Honorable William G. Brownlow states his case to President Jefferson Davis, regarding his involvement with Union sympathizers and asks leave to withdraw from the Confederacy and in East Tennessee a Writ of habeas corpus is issued in the case of Daniel Smith and six other bridge-burners in East Tennessee.

The Trent affair is finally resolved when Confederate Commissioners, James Mason and John Slidell, arrive at Southampton, England, after being captured and released by the Federal authorities.

### **United States Army Major General Appointments:**

NONE

### **United States Army Brigadier General Appointments**

Lewis Golding Arnold  
James Abram Garfield, receives battlefield promotion.  
Frederick Steele

### **Confederate Major General Appointments:**

John Clifford Pemberton

### **Confederate Brigadier General Appointments:**

Johnson Kelly Duncan	Bushrod Rust Johnson
Richard Stoddert Ewell	James McQueen McIntosh
Henry Heth	George Edward Pickett
John Ring Jackson	John George Walker

### **Changes in Districts and Commands:**

#### **Union Actions;**

Brig. Gen. Schuyler Hamilton, assumes command of the Saint Louis District in Missouri and the Department of North Carolina is constituted and commanded by Brig. Gen. Ambrose Everett Burnside.

The Department of Key West, Florida, is constituted, under the command of Brig. Gen. John Milton Brannan.

#### **Confederate Actions;**

The Confederate Territory of Arizona is formed from the southern portion of the Territory of New Mexico and the Confederate Trans-Mississippi District of Dept. No. 2, is organized, under the command of Maj. Gen. Earl Van Dorn.

Maj. Gen. Sterling Price, Missouri State Guard, writes Maj. Gen. Henry Wager commanding the Dept. of the Missouri, to protest the capital punishment of his soldiers for burning seven small bridges confounding Union operations.

Brig. Gen. Henry Alexander Wise is assigned to the Confederate command at Roanoke Island while Gen. Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard is ordered from the Potomac District, Virginia, to Columbus, Kentucky to assist Gen. Albert Sidney Johnston,

Brig. Gen. Jones Mitchell Withers is assigned to the command the Army of Mobile, Alabama and Brig. Gen. Samuel Jones is assigned to command the Army of Pensacola, Florida.

### **California;**

Col. Francis J. Lippitt, 2nd California Infantry assumes command of the Humboldt Military District, CA.

### **Georgia;**

The Federals conduct a reconnaissance of the Wilmington Narrows, or Freeborn's Cut causing a naval engagement.

### **Kansas;**

The Federals conduct operations in and about Atchison with Capt. Irving W. Fuller, 1st MO Cavalry.

### **Kentucky;**

There were skirmishes at Jennie's Creek or Paintsville and at Fishing Creek, near Somerset.

A Federal expedition into Kentucky from Cairo, IL, was led by Brig. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant and Brig. Gen. John McClelland with an engagement at Middle Creek, near Prestonburg and Col. James Abram Garfield received a battlefield promotion to Brig. Gen. the following day due to his perceived victory over Brig. Gen. Humphrey Marshall, CSA.

An engagement at Logan's Cross-Roads, or Beech Grove, (Battle) on Fishing Creek, near Mill Springs resulted in Brig. Gen. George H. Thomas whipping Brig. Gens. Felix Zollicoffer, CSA. Brig. Gen. Zollicoffer was surprised and died instantly from a Federal volley at Mill Springs and George B. Crittenden's Confederates retreated across the Cumberland River causing irreparable damage to the Confederate defensive line.

There was a Federal expedition to the Little Sandy and Picketon and operations near Greensburg and Lebanon by Col. John Hunt Morgan, CSA, against Lieut. Col. T. C. H. Smith, USA, 1st OH Cavalry.

### **Florida**

There was a Federal bombardment of Forts McRee and Barranacas, Pensacola Harbor, against Maj. Gen. Braxton Bragg commanding the Confederate Army of Pensacola.

### **Maryland;**

Maj. Gen. Thomas J. Jackson's Confederate artillery batteries bombarded Hancock, MD, from across the Potomac River.

## **Missouri;**

Lieut. Col. D. R. Anthony's, 1st KS Cavalry conducted an expedition from Morristown with a skirmish en route destroying Dayton and they continued to Rose Hill. Lieut. Col. Anthony also conducted operations in Johnson and La Fayette Counties with a skirmish at Columbus. The Federals also conducted operations to Benton, Bloomfield, and Dallas and there was skirmishing at Hunnewell and Charleston, or Silver Creek, resulting in the rout of the Confederate camp there and at Roan's Tan-yard.

Brig. Gen. John Alexander McClernand, USA, returned to his base of operations at Columbus, Ky.

There was a skirmish at Knobnoster and the Federals occupied Lebanon while another expedition to Blue Springs by Capt. William S. Oliver, 7th MO Infantry, searched for the notorious guerrilla, William Clarke Quantrill.

## **North Carolina;**

The Burnside Expedition, with about 100 ships, sailed from Fort Monroe, VA, for the North Carolina Coast, Roanoke Island. The fleet arrived off Hatteras Inlet and troops began crossing into Pamlico Sound but struggled to cross the sand bar.

Burnside assumed command of the Dept. of North Carolina.

## **South Carolina**

An engagement at Port Royal Ferry, Coosaw River resulted in the Confederates removing their batteries and the Federal expedition to Edisto Island continued under Brig Gen, Burnside.

## **Tennessee;**

A Federal reconnaissance from Paducah, KY to Fort Henry, was a combined effort between Ulysses S. Grant and Brig. Gen. John McClernand. The result of the joint effort was a Federal gunboat demonstration on Fort Henry, on the Tennessee River led by Brig. Gen. Charles Ferguson Smith.

## **Virginia;**

There was a Federal reconnaissance from Camp Hamilton to Big Bethel and the occupation of the town while troops skirmished near Pohick Run.

Maj. Gen. "Stonewall" Jackson returned to Winchester from his stay in Romney, WV. There was also an affair at Lee's House, near the Occoquan Bridge, on the Occoquan River south of Washington, DC, as a Federal excursion broke up a Confederate dance.

## **West Virginia;**

There were skirmishes at Bath, (Berkeley Springs) with Maj. Gen. "Stonewall" Jackson arriving from Winchester, Virginia, in an attempt to destroy dams along the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, as well as the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, on his way to Romney. (referred to as the Romney Campaign).

The Confederate descent upon and skirmish at Huntersville under Brig. Gen. Edward Johnson and the occupation of Bath, by Maj. Gen. Jackson, also caused skirmishes at Slane's Cross-Roads, Great Cacapon Bridge, Sir John's Run, and Alpine Depot. Skirmishing at Hanging Rock Pass (Blue's Gap), near Romney resulted in a Confederate

defeat by Col. Dunning's Union troops, even as Maj. Gen. Jackson, continued to press his men forward in the blinding snow and freezing weather yet finally withdrawing from the Hancock, Maryland area to Romney.

There was skirmishing on the Dry Fork of the Cheat River and Romney was evacuated by the Union force and subsequently occupied by Maj. Gen. "Stonewall" Jackson. There was also an inconsequential Federal expedition to Logan Court-House and the Guyandotte Valley.

### **Navy Operations;**

A US Gunboat reconnaissance to Columbus, Kentucky, bombarding Confederate positions along the way disturbed Brig. Gen. Lloyd Tilghman, CSA.

Union Naval action from the *USS Hatteras* upon Cedar Keys, Florida, destroyed blockade runners and won a contest over the British schooner *Andracita*, formerly the *J.W. Wilder*, off the coast of Alabama resulted in the Federals capture of the blockade runner.

In January Federals sank a second and then a third stone fleet at the entrance to Charleston Harbor, South Carolina, in an attempt to prevent Confederate blockade runners from using the harbor.

The blockade runner, *Calhoun*, was captured by Federal vessels, near New Orleans, Louisiana, and the Federal's first ironclad, the *USS Monitor*, was launched at Greenpoint, Long Island, New York with its designer, Swedish born John Ericsson, on hand.

**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.

### **Part III:**

#### **First Encounters 1861; Combatant Formations Organize and Fight**

*By Lieutenant Colonel Edwin Kennedy (Ret)*

As the political crisis of 1860 morphed into secession of an increasing number of states in 1861, officers of the U.S. Army were caught in a conundrum. Many had served for years in the U.S. Army. A number had fought in the Mexican-American War together with men they respected but now were potentially on different sides politically. Military Academy graduates had all studied using the same texts stating that secession was legal. Yet, many were proud to be Americans and could not envision dividing the country. The decision was extremely tough for those from the South. Some Northerners were conflicted as well. Captain William Steele, a dragoon officer commanding Fort Leavenworth was a graduate of West Point. The New York native had served over 20 years in the west and on the frontier. He married a lady from Texas when stationed there so after preparing Fort Leavenworth for war as ordered, he penned his resignation and rode to Texas to take command of the 7<sup>th</sup> Texas Cavalry.

He wasn't the only one. Captain George Thomas from Virginia married a lady from New York. He famously went North. Both men ended the war as generals.

The Army had been involved with the violence on the frontier in Missouri and Kansas between pro-slave and anti-slave groups before the shots were fired at Fort Sumter. Most of what they did was to try and keep opposing factions apart and assist in maintaining the law. Despite the appellation of "Bleeding Kansas" (the name given by the press), relatively, there was actually very little combat and few deaths. This was likely due to the active presence of Army patrols. After the war began, serious fighting occurred, especially in 1861 as the Regular Army moved back east.

COL (ret) Jerry Morelock, Ph.D. and editor of "America's Civil War" wrote in an article about the "war on the border" stating:

*... historian Dale Watts in a ground-breaking article in the Summer 1995 edition of Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains titled "How Bloody Was 'Bleeding Kansas?'" In his exhaustively-researched article, Watts discovered that "Bleeding Kansas" actually produced only a fraction of the number of deaths due to clashes of anti- and pro-slavery forces that were widely claimed by both sides – and still parroted by historians today – suffered during the so-called "Border War."*

*The truth about "Bleeding Kansas" is revealed in the "Border War's" actual casualty figures unearthed by Watts's extensive research. Watts searched the historical records to document recorded deaths along the Kansas-Missouri border during the 1854-1861 time frame in order to determine which death could be attributed to a "political killing" (i.e. a murder by a pro- or anti-slavery settler solely because of the victim's political stance in the conflict) or was due to some other motivation altogether (such as land disputes, personal animosity, or simply common criminal activities such as robbery, crimes of passion, or homicide not connected with the victim's or perpetrator's political views). Although contemporary accounts and estimates of casualties nearly always over-estimated deaths in the conflict (e.g. the 1859 report of the Hoogland Claims Commission reported "the number of lives sacrificed in Kansas during [1854-1855] probably exceeded rather than fell short of two hundred") Watts's research of the actual historical record unearthed a verifiable casualty record that generally confirmed the 1974 conclusion of Robert W. Richmond that "approximately fifty persons died violently [for political reasons] during the [Kansas] territorial period [1854-1861]."*

*Extract from "Fake News!: The enduring myth of "Bleeding Kansas", America's Civil War (magazine).*

At the time of the "opening shots" at Fort Sumter on 12 April 1861, opening shots had actually been fired further south at Pensacola. On 8 January 1861, secessionists attacked Fort Barrancas only two days before Florida seceded. The U.S. commander, Lt Slemmer, abandoned Fort Barrancas and moved his force to Fort Pickens across the harbor on Santa Rosa Island. President Buchanan sent reinforcements but no further actions occurred until after those in Charleston, S.C. in April. What this action did was significantly raise the awareness and concerns of U.S. commanders at Federal

installations throughout the South. Fort Pickens on Santa Rosa Island remained in Federal control for the entire war. [NOTE: Fort Barrancas remained an Army Coast Artillery fort until WWII and closed in 1947. It is now within the confines of the Naval Air Station Pensacola and administered by the National Park Service.]

Most Confederate states seceded in 1861 with Mississippi doing so at the same time of the attack on Fort Barrancas. The fort on Ship Island off the coast of Gulfport (not named “Fort Massachusetts” until later in the war) was occupied by Mississippi militia. The *USS Massachusetts* attacked the only Federal fort in Mississippi in July with inconclusive results. Florida’s secession occurred immediately after the attack on Fort Barrancas and was followed by Alabama the next day on 11 January. Federal installations along the Gulf Coast were now alerted although it would take time for them all to receive the news.

On the Atlantic coast, Georgia seceded on 19 January, and like the gulf states, had Federal installations along the coast, significantly at the port of Savannah. Louisiana and Texas both left the Union in January and February respectively. No violence attended the departure of the U.S. garrisons and former Federal installations were quickly occupied by seceding state forces.

The U.S. Army, until the events surrounding events at Fort Sumter, quietly submitted to the states and the soldiers were allowed to depart unmolested for points north. When President Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to put down the “rebellion” and “restore the Union” on 15 April, the states of Virginia, Arkansas, Tennessee and North Carolina left the Union as a direct result.

In the meantime, consolidation of the Regular Army regiments continued as they were recalled from frontier duty to go east, replaced by state militias or volunteers. In the west, this resulted in an upsurge in Indian activity as states rushed to fill the power vacuum. In the East, small skirmishes and minor battles began to occur between northern and southern forces. Nine engagements occurred in Virginia, West Virginia and Missouri between regular forces of both sides prior to First Manassas (Bull Run) on 21 July. Three of the nine battles / engagements were Confederate victories. Four of the nine were Union victories. Two had inconclusive results.

Until the end of the 1861 calendar year, only five of the 24 conflicts by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission (CWSAC) *Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields* are classified as Class A – “Decisive” or Class B – “Major” after First Manassas. Only the Battle of Wilson’s Creek is classified as a Class A event. That means that in 1861, only one in five actions were significant enough to be classified as “Decisive” but mostly “Major”. The remaining actions are classified as Class C – “Formative” or, Class D – “Limited”. Neither of these were significant enough to really impact the war’s progress.

What does this tell us about what was happening? In general, 1861 was a “shake-down” consisting of organization and training periods for both armies. Because the Union Army was expanding from 16,000 to 1,000,000 under arms and the Confederates from 0 to over 700,000, the armies of both sides were struggling just to get men equipped, trained and prepared to fight. Neither side had the requisite arms and equipment necessary to fight major actions. Both immediately sent purchasing agents to Europe to buy as many small arms as possible. What was key is that both armies got a late start, not really mobilizing until after the bombardment of Fort Sumter in April. With the exception of the multiple low intensity raids and combat in Missouri

along the Kansas border peaking in 1862, fighting was confined to regularly organized units in the East. Training and equipping took a long time (weeks to months) and so it is completely understandable that only a handful of major or decisive battles took place in 1861.

Leaders on both sides were trained in tactics and with the exception of the Mexican War had never participated-in, or even planned operational-level campaigns. Almost all their experience was at the lowest level of military operations ---- the tactical level. In fact, the US Army did not have the means to even train officers in operational level campaigns (*this did not occur until the advent of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*). Strategy was not taught and “strategizing” in officer messes was a favorite past-time of many who envisioned themselves as the new Napoleon Bonaparte. In fact, Napoleon’s campaigns were widely studied in military schools since they had occurred just over 45 years prior to the beginning of the War Between the States. The fact that many officers admired Napoleon can be ascertained by viewing their war-time images made with one of their hands thrust into their unbuttoned coats ---- Napoleon style. Adding to the admiration of all things French were the writings of the Baron Antoine-Henri Jomini whose interpretations of Napoleonic warfare were the staple of many pre-war officer libraries. Jomini’s influence on the early parts of the conflict are undeniable.

When 1861 came to a close, the stage was set for a very bloody year to follow with two largely amateur armies thrashing to land knockout blows and quickly end the war. The learning curve was steep for both sides but 1862 showed that they both progressed quickly as the violence increased.

### **TVCWRT Little Round Table (LRT) Discussion and Schedule - 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.

**Next Up: Thursday, January 28; 2021**–Vicksburg Campaign 5 -Port Gibson to Jackson;  
Led by Jeff Ewing

### **LRT 2021 Schedule**

**February 26, 2021** - Vicksburg Campaign 6 - Champion Hill and Big Black; Led by John Allen,

**March 26, 2021** - Vicksburg Campaign 7 - Siege Operations; Led by Emil Posey

**April 22, 2021** – Armistead and Garnet - Parallel Lives; Led by Emil Posey



**Phil Wirey is accepting a Bicentennial Coin from Ed Kennedy.**

**Thank You!** Phil Wirey, of the Morgan County Historical Society for your informative presentation regarding Confederate Generals with ties to Decatur and Morgan County, with an emphasis on General James Longstreet.

## 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**

### **The TVCWRT Management Team**

#### **OFFICERS (Elected)**

- *Ed Kennedy, President*
- *(vacant), Vice President (We Need help)*
- *Secretary (Vacancy pending)*
- *Treasurer (Sallyanne Cos, Treasurer pending membership approval)*

#### **BOARD MEMBERS (Appointed)**

- **(Vacant) Programs Officer (We need help)**
- *Michael Acosta, Technology Officer*
- *Robert Hennessee, Preservation Officer*
- *Ed Kennedy, Communications Officer (We need help)*
- *Arley McCormick, Newsletter Editor*
- *Kevin Rodriguez, Membership Officer*
- *Art Helms, Sergeant at Arms*

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

- *Debra Morgan*

#### **COMMITTEE CHAIRS (Appointed)**

- *Jeffry Ewing, Little Round Table Coordinator*
- **(Vacant) Greeter Coordinator, (We need help)**
- *John Scales, Field Trip Coordinator (Former President)*

#### **GRAY BEARDS**

- *John A. Allen, Former President and Founder of the Little Round Table*
- *April Harris, Former President*
- *Mark Hubbs, Former Preservation Officer and Co-founder*
- *John Mason, Former President*
- *Kent Wright, Former Programs Officer*

#### **STAGE CREW**

- *Michael Acosta, Lead*
- *Ed Kennedy, Master of the Screen and General Roustabout,*
- *Mike Sosebee, First Master of the Sound System*
- *Lin Turner, Second Master of the Sound System*
- *Brad Tuten, Master Projectionist*