

157th Campaign  
9-11-5-12

# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**September 2011 Beginning our 15th Campaign**



[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)

## **From the President**

WELCOME BACK FOR THE 15th CAMPAIGN. I HOPE YOU ALL HAD A WONDERFUL SUMMER. GOLDEN OAKS GOLF CLUB WILL AGAIN BE OUR HOST FACILITY, WITH OUR FIRST MEETING BEING TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2011. MEETINGS WILL BEGIN AT 6:30. MEAL PRICES ARE UNCHANGED, BEING \$22.00. ONE CHANGE FOR THIS YEAR WILL BE THAT THE SERVERS WILL BEGIN BRINGING THE SALADS OUT AT 6:15. YOU MAY MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS EITHER BY USING THE WEBSITE, OR BY CALLING MY OFFICE AT 610-478-1717, AFTER 5:00. REMEMBER CALL IN YOUR RESERVATION BY MONDAY, ONE WEEK PRIOR TO THE MEETING.

THE FIRST DEFENDERS ROUND TABLE THRIVES TODAY BECAUSE OF YOUR SUPPORT, BUT NEVER FORGET THAT THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD, PAST AND PRESENT, SPEND COUNTLESS HOURS TO PROVIDE A GOOD EXPERIENCE FOR YOU. WITHOUT THEIR SERVICE, THERE IS NO ROUND TABLE. A LIST OF THE CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS CAN BE FOUND AT THE END OF THE NEWSLETTER AND ON THE WEBSITE. CONTACT THEM WITH QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS, AND ALWAYS GIVE THEM YOUR THANKS.

NOW LET US THANK THE PAST BOARD MEMBERS. THESE WERE THE VOLUNTEERS WHO STEPPED FORWARD TO BUILD THE BOARD AND SERVED FOR A DECADE OR MORE AND CAN NOW ENJOY WHAT THEY LABORED TO CREATE. MIKE GABRIEL, RON RHEIN, ARLAN AND PAT CHRIST, TOM TATE, DAVE FOX, ROGER COTTERILL AND RICH KENNEDY ALL SERVED MANY YEARS AND REMAIN IN THE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP. DAVE VALUSKA SERVED AS THE FIRST PRESIDENT BUT IS NO LONGER A MEMBER. NEVER FORGET TONY REILLY WHO PASSED AWAY.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO SUPPORT CATHY KENNEDY WHO GRACIOUSLY STEPPED FORWARD TO REPLACE TOM TATE AS PRESERVATION BOARD MEMBER.. BUY RAFFLE TICKETS. THE TICKET MONEY GOES TO BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION.

LAST, LET ME THANK DAVE FOX AND ROGER COTTERILL FOR ANOTHER GOOD TRIP. THEY HAVE ALWAYS SERVED US WELL AND WILL BE MISSED ON THE BOARD. DON STRIPLING AND ROB MARKS WILL FILL THEIR SHOES GOING FORWARD.

NO SPACE THIS MONTH FOR MY HISTORY UPDATES; WILL CONTINUE NEXT MONTH.

REMEMBER, WE NEED A NEW PRESIDENT NEXT YEAR. START THINKING IN THAT DIRECTION. THANKS. JOE

## **Round Table Business**

### **Treasurer's Report**

Lori Border presented her report at the August board meeting. Our balance as of August 2, 2011, stood at \$2892.13. \$1,377.00 of that amount is ear-marked for preservation. The field trip showed a loss of \$74.32. \$1,500 remained from dues' payments.

### **Membership**

Membership Chair Dave Unger wants to remind everyone that it's time to renew your membership for the new campaign of 2011-2012. Please fill out the attached form, and return it with your check as soon as possible. The deadline for payment is October 11, 2011.

### **Preservation**

Our round table ended the 2010-2011 year on a very high note. Through your purchase of raffle tickets PLUS the generous donations of money and books, we kept costs to a minimum and raised a record amount for preservation. The May meeting raised another \$308.00 thanks to ticket purchases and generous donations totaling \$209.00. Our Preservation fund ended with a total of \$1,872.00, significant as that was the year General Meade died. We also met on the anniversary of the death of Stonewall Jackson. Maybe there is some meaning in all this. From that fund the members voted to add \$200.00 to the \$300.00 we are sending to Richmond Battlefields Association, \$300 in Ed Bearss' name for his speaking to us in April. Our fund for preservation is at \$1,372 so we can make a contribution on our field trip. We will also be in a good position to make a donation in the fall if something hot is on the preservation sites list.

I want to thank all the members who have made my job so easy and so successful. But, as I said at the May meeting I wish to step down after so many years. To the credit of the club, Cathy Kennedy volunteered to take over. She will have my support in the transition and I know you will continue to support her as you always have supported me. Marilyn and I look forward to being able to visit with you more in the months ahead.

Tom Tate

### **Election of Officers**

Each May our round table holds an election for the coming campaign. Several long-serving officers stepped down after completing their duties in May. Tom Tate resigned as the chair of preservation. Cathie Kennedy will take over Tom's position.

Dave Fox and Roger Cotterill will no longer plan our field trips. Rob Marks and Don Stripling have volunteered to take over that job. All other board members will continue their jobs from last year. Find a listing of the board and contact information at the end of the newsletter.

## **Field Trip, June 11, 2011**

by Dave Fox

About 7 a.m. on June 11th, 33 First Defenders and friends gathered in Wyomissing under stormy skies. The weather forecast seemed ominous. However, by 7:30 we were on Rte. 222 and the rain had stopped. We arrived at the Visitor's Center in Gettysburg shortly before 9 a.m., met Eric Wittenberg, and proceeded to Westminster, MD. We enjoyed a delightful, rain-free day wandering through the rolling hills of MD and PA in an air-conditioned Elite bus with an excellent driver and an expert guide.

This was in sharp contrast to the frustrating, confusing, and grueling route that Gen. Stuart and his troopers took as they groped their way to Gettysburg. Stuart's circuitous route took him from Westminster to Union Mills, Hanover, the outskirts of York, Carlisle, Mt. Holly Springs, Hunterstown, and finally Gettysburg.

Eric was both enthusiastic and thoroughly knowledgeable about the local geography and topography. He supplied us with many fascinating anecdotes about what happened and where in small towns, farms, and cemeteries.

Midday we enjoyed our box lunches by a beautiful lake in Codorus State Park. We wish to thank Roger for not only picking up the lunches but also supplying us with water, sodas, fresh fruit, and goodie bags. In 30 minutes we may have eaten better than Stuart's troopers did in several days!

If Eric made one thing clear, it was that a combination of unanticipated delays, miscommunications, and a ponderous wagon train caused Stuart's tardy arrival in Gettysburg. Also, the Union Army undoubtedly had something to do with it. There was truly "plenty of blame to go around." Perhaps the effort to find a scapegoat for Lee's defeat put this whole journey under the microscope!

After completing our tour at the Visitor's Center, we had some time to check out the bookstore before we proceeded to the Old Country Buffet in York. We enjoyed our meal there and headed back to Wyomissing. It began raining near Lancaster and ended the day as it began with another thunderstorm!

We enjoyed this field trip as it basically went off with no significant glitches. If only Gen. Stuart had it so easy!

### **Fall Volunteer Work Day**

from Don Stripling

There will be a First Defenders volunteer work day on Saturday, October 29. The destination is the Antietam Battlefield. We will be assisting the Save Historic Antietam Foundation (SHAF) with their trail work--specifically, cutting back the tree lines and clearing brush for a trail branching off the Final Attack Trail that will lead up the hill across the Ninth Corps (Burnside) assault field. Once the trail clearing is completed, SHAF will fund the construction of the trail. This new trail, along with the completion of the Piper Lane Trail, will let walkers access the entire battlefield from the North Woods to the last shots along the Harpers Ferry Road.

We will work on this trail from 9:00 a.m. to no later than 1:00 p.m. We'll carpool from a local meeting place and grab a quick breakfast on the way to Maryland (another possibility is to stay overnight on the 28th at a hotel in the Antietam area since leave time from the Reading area will be about 6:30 a.m.--we can do it both ways). After our work detail is completed, the group will decide what to do before heading back to PA. All tools will be supplied.

This will be a great opportunity for all to make an impact at Antietam and will also provide a great opportunity for fellowship, not only amongst our members but also with our fellow preservationists from SHAF. If you're interested in joining us, contact Don Stripling (610.750.3998 or [donstripling54@msn.com](mailto:donstripling54@msn.com)).

### **Fascinating Stories submitted by Dave Unger**

#### **GOD ALONE WILL KNOW**

The Terrill brothers served on opposite sides in the Civil War. William and James Terrill were from Warm Springs, Bath County, Virginia.

The sons of a prominent lawyer and state legislator, one, William went to West Point and the other James, to the Virginia Military Institute(VMI) in nearby Lexington, Virginia. Older brother William became an artillery officer and younger brother James became a lawyer, like his father.

When the Civil War broke out both became generals, but for opposite sides. By 1862 William was chief of artillery for the second division of the Army of Ohio and fought at Shiloh and Corinth. William died later at the battle of Perryville. Younger brother James Terrill became commander of the 13<sup>th</sup> Virginia and saw combat at First Manassas, in the Shenandoah Valley, Second Manassas, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and in the 1864 battles of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania. He was killed in the small battle of Bethesda Church, Virginia on May 30, 1864.

Later the family memorialized both brothers with a single headstone that said, "God Alone Knows Which was Right."

(From Best Little Ironies, Oddities & Mysteries of the Civil War pp.28-31.)

#### DATELINE: WILLIAMSBURG, VIRGINIA, MAY 1862

The battle of Williamsburg, a Confederate defeat, was over. Federal troops were filtering into town as presage to a long period of occupation.

On Main Street, the restored Duke of Gloucester Street of today's Colonial Williamsburg, stood a house belonging to Mrs. Elizabeth Ware. It was the scene of a minor commotion as a Confederate soldier was carried in, wounded. No Federals seen here as yet.

In a short while, the grievously wounded young man died. Mrs. Ware and a daughter decided he should lie in the parlor for a moment.

Soon the Federals were in the area. They were seeking out the ailing, the wounded.

Told that the Ware home held a deceased Confederate soldier, a young man in Union uniform entered to investigate. While the two women stood by, he advanced on the body and drew aside the cloth covering the dead man's face.

As the women continued to watch, stunned now, the soldier fell to his knees and kissed the dead man, his enemy. And, it also seems, his own brother.

(Based upon Civil War Williamsburg by Carson O. Hudson Jr. as printed in Best Little Ironies, Oddities & Mysteries of the Civil War by C. Brian Kelly)

#### **September Trivia by Barbara Shafer**

1. What U.S. state was formed out of western Virginia and added to the Union as a direct result of the American Civil War?
2. Who was the youngest casualty of the American Civil War that served in the Union? He was a Regimental Drum Major, 49th PA Volunteer Infantry, a West Chester, PA, native and killed in the Battle of Antietam?
3. Who was a career US Army officer, serving during the Second Seminole War and the Mexican-American War, but during the American Civil War was the highest ranking Confederate general?



**The Program for September: George A. Hall**  
**Topic: Moccasin Rangers**

George Hall has spent a number of years researching original records, many unpublished, relating to the activities of the Moccasin Rangers and other irregular pro-Confederate units in Western Virginia during the first three years of the Civil War. The result is a fascinating account of these irregulars or "bushwhackers," as they were known then. It is a story that has been largely untold.

Mr. Hall will have copies of his book the night of the meeting for anyone interested in purchasing one.

**Reservations for the September 13, 2011 Meeting:**

**Dinner Reservation Procedures:** If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Meal choices: Vegetable Stir-Fry, Broiled Tilapia, or Pecan Chicken.

**The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, September 5, 2011, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.**

\*NOTE: Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. The Round Table will be billed for your meal whether you attend or not. Please understand that you will be asked to reimburse the RT should you not attend after having made a reservation.

**2011-2012 Program Schedule**

September 13, 2011: George Hall	Moccasin Rangers
October 11, 2011: Professor Sandow	Deserter Country-PA
November 8, 2011: David Unger	Medal of Honor
December 13, 2011: Rich Kohr	Gettysburg at Arlington
January 10, 2012: Round Table Discussion	Was the South Justified in Secession?
February 14, 2012: Dave Fox	Saltville
March 13, 2012: Dr. Fennel	TBA
April 10, 2012: Edwin C. Bearss	Chancellorsville
May 8, 2012: John Hoptak	Antietam

Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, [zeibers@comcast.net](mailto:zeibers@comcast.net)

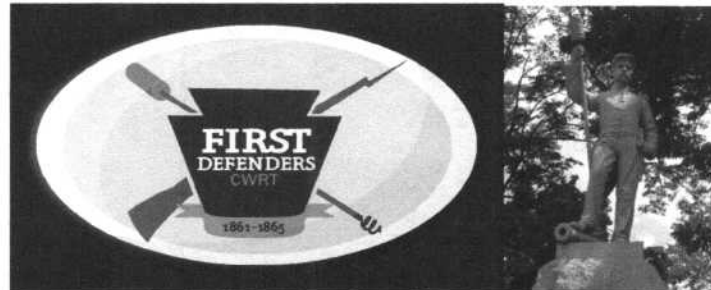


## Contact Information

President	<b>Joseph Schaeffer</b>	<a href="mailto:jschaeffer@heartlandsettlement.com">jschaeffer@heartlandsettlement.com</a>
Vice President/ Chaplain	<b>Robert Marks</b>	<a href="mailto:magcumbacat@yahoo.com">magcumbacat@yahoo.com</a>
Newsletter/Recording Secretary	<b>Linda Zeiber</b>	<a href="mailto:zeibers@comcast.net">zeibers@comcast.net</a>
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Treasurer	<b>Lori Border</b>	<a href="mailto:borlorig@verizon.net">borlorig@verizon.net</a>
Preservation	<b>Cathy C. Kennedy</b>	<a href="mailto:kenwycke1@aol.com">kenwycke1@aol.com</a>
Solicitor	<b>Robert P. Grim</b>	<a href="mailto:rgrim@hometownnu.com">rgrim@hometownnu.com</a>
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Programs/Adopt a Position	<b>Don Stripling</b>	<a href="mailto:donstripling54@msn.com">donstripling54@msn.com</a>
Programs/Web	<b>Errol Steffy</b>	<a href="mailto:esteffy1741@comcast.net">esteffy1741@comcast.net</a>

# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**October 2011**



**[www.firstdefenderscwrtr.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrtr.us)**

## **From the President**

**Summer green changed to fall gold in 1861, as early notions about how the Civil War would be fought were also changing. North and South, citizens saw their hopes of a quick and bloodless struggle, dashed by the reality of modern war. The war would not end with a sudden capture of Richmond or Washington. The battles of Bull Run, Wilson's Creek and Ball's Bluff exposed the ineptness of commanders, the inexperience of the volunteer soldier and the logistical difficulties in mounting decisive campaigns.**

**Lincoln, in spite of the lack of formal military training, recognized before most of his advisors and senior officers, that a long-term, comprehensive strategy and an iron will would be required to subdue the secessionists. His search for winning generals began with the appointment of George McClellan to command of the Army of the Potomac. McClellan immediately displayed superb skills at organizing and training; and, unfortunately, a bitter streak of insubordination coupled with an unwillingness to fight. Lincoln's patience was never so tested as by Little Mac.**

**Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy, while elated by his armies early successes at the above-mentioned battles, nevertheless had his own headaches. Infighting and jealousy arose immediately between senior generals such as Joseph Johnston and Pierre Beauregard. The success of the opposing armies would, to a large degree, depend on the ability of each President to work with his military commanders and persevere through many dark hours. Decisions made by each Commander-in-Chief, in the fall of 1861, could not put a quick end to the war but would begin to show the mettle of each man.**

**Joe Schaeffer**

## **Round Table Business**

### **Beginning the 15th Campaign...**

President Joe Schaffer opened the September meeting at Golden Oaks where 70 members and guests had gathered for our inaugural meeting. Rob Marks offered a prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Guests and one new member were introduced and welcomed. Joe announced that we have asked Golden Oaks to begin serving salads at 6:15 followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. The plan is to allow fellowship during dinner and begin the business meeting on completion of the meal.

### **Ed's Artifacts**

Ed Ewing continued his custom of sharing with us his vast collection of Civil War artifacts. September's table was covered with various canteens including 2 Confederate ones made in the North Carolina style. The remainder were 1858 Union models several of which were identified to particular soldiers. Ed's collectibles and information always fascinate and educate.

### **Membership**

Membership Chair Dave Unger wants to remind everyone that it's time to renew your membership for the new campaign of 2011-2012. Please fill out the attached form, and return it with your check as soon as possible. The deadline for payment is October 11, 2011.

### **Preservation**

Cathie Kennedy began her tenure as the new preservation officer taking over for Tom Tate who had served in that capacity since the round table's inception. Five books were raffled bringing \$160.00 to the preservation fund of \$1177.00. Arlan Christ volunteered to bring information on possible recipients of preservation money to the October meeting.

### **Field Trips**

Rob Marks and Don Stripling have volunteered to take over the job of planning field trips from Dave Fox and Roger Cotterill. Rob shared information about a 3-year plan for trips. Next June's trip will be to Antietam and will be guided by our May speaker who is presenting a program about Antietam. The next year may be a trip covering Lee's retreat from Gettysburg which would coincide with the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg. The third year may be a trip to Baltimore centering on Fort McHenry but including other Civil War sites.

### **Miscellany**

Beginning in October, Golden Oaks will now offer a choice from 4 meals: fish vegan, meat, or poultry.

Transportation: If you are aware of any member who is not attending meetings because of transportation issues, please make this known to any board member.

The decision has been made not to publish a membership roster because of privacy issues. All members can be assured that personal information will not be shared with anyone.

The programs for this year have all been selected. If you have an idea for a speaker or would like to make a presentation, contact Errol Steffy, Barb Shafer, or Don Stripling. January's meeting will be an actual "round table" conversation among members with the topic that was going to be used for the canceled meeting last January--*Was the South Justified in Seceding?*



### **A Thank-You from Port Republic**

Dave Fox received the following note after the round table had sent a donation to the Museum of the Society of Port Republic:

Dear First Defenders Civil War Round Table,

Thank you so much for remembering my husband with a contribution to the Port Republic Museum. It was so special of you to do this and greatly appreciated.

Don's death was very unexpected. He had fought a brave battle with Parkinson Disease for about 20 years but died of acute leukemia within 18 days of diagnosis.

Last year we downsized to a townhouse in Staunton and moved closer to family. I am still a part (although a smaller part) of the museum and Port Republic.

Again, thank you for your kindness.

Fondly,

Carol Poulson & Family

### **Fall Volunteer Work Day from Don Stripling**

There will be a First Defenders volunteer work day on Saturday, October 29 and the destination is the Antietam Battlefield. We will be assisting the Save Historic Antietam Foundation (SHAF) with their trail work – specifically, cutting back the tree lines and clearing brush for a trail branching off the Final Attack Trail that will lead up the hill across the Ninth Corps (Burnside) assault field. Once the trail clearing is completed, SHAF will fund the construction of the trail. This new trail, along with the completion of the Piper Lane trail, will let walkers access the entire battlefield from the North Woods to the last shots along the Harpers Ferry Road. We will work on this trail from 9:00 AM to no later than 1:00 PM. There will be 2 ways we will use to get to Antietam. Some will be driving down the evening before (Oct 28) and staying at an Antietam-area motel and others will be meeting at a local meeting spot and carpooling down on the morning of Oct 29. After our work detail is completed, the group will decide what to do before heading back to PA. All tools will be supplied.

This will be a great opportunity for all to make an impact at Antietam and will also provide a great opportunity for fellowship, not only amongst our members but also with our fellow preservationists from SHAF. If you're interested in joining us, contact Don Stripling (610.750.3998 or [donstripling54@msn.com](mailto:donstripling54@msn.com).)

### **Gen. R. E. Lee's Mother Buried Before His Birth**

Great Strategist of the Civil War Nearly Lost to the Confederate States Through Remarkable Case of Premature Interment.

**submitted by Mike Straus**

Dateline: The Reading Eagle, Monday, February 3, 1908

This, the one hundred and first anniversary of the birth of General Robert E. Lee, recalls the little known fact that he was born more than a year after his mother had been buried, furnishing to the world one of the most astonishing cases of reviviscence on record.

General Lee's mother was by no means an entirely healthy woman, and the physician at Stratford, Va., the home of Henry Lee (Light Horse Harry), was kept in almost constant attendance. Mrs. Lee suffered from catalepsy, and during a prolonged trance she was pronounced dead. The body was prepared for interment, and the morning of the third day after the supposed death the remains were laid to rest in the family vault in the graveyard of that pretty little Virginia village.

While the sexton was cleaning up and arranging some fresh flowers to be placed on the casket, he heard a faint voice as though of some one calling for assistance.

Of course, the old man was somewhat alarmed, but as he had seen many years of service in the "city of the dead", he did not leave the vault. He listened closely and the voice was distinctly heard again.

Becoming satisfied that the voice came from within the casket, he at once set to work and opened it discovering that Mrs. Lee was alive. He then summoned assistance and within a short time she was safe in bed at her home.

Mrs. Lee's recovery was slow, but she did regain good health and a little more than a year after she was buried alive her youngest son, Robert E., was born, and thus came into the world one of her bravest men and greatest generals....

...It is not a difficult matter to tell the difference between a dead person and one seized with a catalepsy. There is a tremendous difference in the rigidity. The temperature will also show you, and you will be able to feel that the pulse is beating. Should these tests fail, open a small blood vessel and you will know whether a person is living or dead. The greatest danger of premature burials lies in countries where there are extremes in temperature, and interment should not be made under from four to six days, by which time decomposition will have set in if death is really there.

### **October Trivia by Barbara Shafer**

1. True or False. North Central Pennsylvania was an area where many draft-eligible men evaded Civil War conscription.
2. According to the records, how many men from Pennsylvania deserted the Union Army?
3. What did deserter gangs in Western Pennsylvania form?

### **FYI**

#### **--The Civil War Road Show**

The road show's mission is to see how Pennsylvanians contributed to the war and how the war transformed their lives. It features hands-on, interactive displays to tell stories that will be engaging for the whole family. From the original "3-D experience" of stereoscopes, to the voices of individual Pennsylvanians, to the scenes of camp and home life, visitors will be immersed in a new understanding of how America's greatest crisis changed the lives of Pennsylvanians.

The road show aims to assemble PA's CW history, one story at a time. Through a "Share Your Story" recording booth, visitors are invited to share their own CW-era family photographs, artifacts, and other materials and stories. These are then uploaded to the PA CW 150 website, a public repository that grows as the Road Show travels the state.

The road show will be in Columbia County from September 24-October 1st onsite at the Bloomsburg Fair located at Fort McClure Blvd. and US Route 11 in Bloomsburg, PA 17815. Times of operation are TBA.

submitted by Barbara Shafer

#### **--Special Civil War Exhibits from the USAHEC Collections**

Be sure to check out the following website:

[http://www.carlisle.army.mil/ahec/newsimages/going\\_to\\_winter\\_camp.pdf](http://www.carlisle.army.mil/ahec/newsimages/going_to_winter_camp.pdf)

There are outstanding images to view.

submitted by Errol Steffy

**The Program for October:  
Deserter Country: Civil War Opposition in the Pennsylvania  
Appalachians presented by Professor Robert M. Sandow**

Robert Sandow grew up in the Lauren highlands of Southwestern Pennsylvania, where family trips to its famous battlefields sparked a lifelong passion for Civil War history. His research specialties include the Northern home front particularly the issues of dissent, partisan politics and opposition. He is an Associate Professor of history at Lock Haven University.

Sandow's book, *Deserter Country*, will be on sale for \$25.00 cash or check.

**Reservations for the October 11, 2011 Meeting:**

**Dinner Reservation Procedures:** If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Meal choices: Pasta Primavera, Broiled Salmon, Chicken Picata, Roast Beef Marsala.

**The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, October 3, 2011, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.**

\*NOTE: Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. The Round Table will be billed for your meal whether you attend or not. Please understand that you will be asked to reimburse the RT should you not attend after having made a reservation.

**2011-2012 Program Schedule**

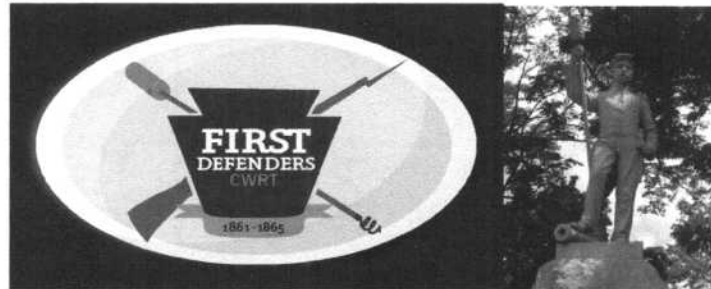
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Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, [zeibers@comcast.net](mailto:zeibers@comcast.net)



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**November 2011**



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## **November 1861:**

On November 7, 1861, Capt. Samuel Dupont's warships silenced Confederate guns in Fort Walker and Fort Beauregard. This victory



enabled General Thomas W. Sherman's troops to occupy first Port Royal and then all the famous Sea Islands of South Carolina.

## **From the President**

The changing of seasons in the fall of 1861 signaled new arguments in the North about the reasons for fighting this war. While Lincoln worked to keep border states like Kentucky and Maryland in the Union, he faced increasing pressure from abolitionists to turn the war into a crusade against slavery. John C. Fremont, commanding Union forces in Missouri, issued a proclamation which among other things, freed the slaves of those in rebellion. Lincoln knew he must appease slave-holding Union men in the border states in order to keep those states in the Union. Fremont rescinded his proclamation only after being ordered publicly to do so. Nonetheless, abolitionists increased their rhetoric.

Frederick Douglass challenged that "To fight against slaveholders, without fighting against slavery, is but a half-hearted business". James McPherson has so correctly stated, "A rebellion sustained by slavery, in defense of slavery, could be suppressed only by moving against slavery". Ben Butler operating in Virginia adopted an approach soon to be hailed by Northerners and scorned by Rebels. Virginia claimed to be out of the Union; therefore, the fugitive slave law no longer



applied and slaves who made it to Union lines would be treated as "contraband of war", not to be returned to their former owners. Lincoln cautiously approved.

Now the question of what to do with these former slaves, freed from bondage and yet not quite citizens. Republicans now called for the arming of these men as soldiers. Lincoln was not yet ready for this, but he was moving closer. Emancipation would occupy Lincoln's thoughts from now on.

Joe Schaeffer

### **Round Table Business**

President Joe Schaffer opened the October meeting at Golden Oaks where 68 members and guests had gathered for our meeting. Rob Marks offered a prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Guests and new members were introduced and welcomed. Joe reminded everyone that the deadline for renewing membership has now passed. Anyone with questions should contact Dave Unger, Membership Chair.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Lori Border reported a balance of \$2692.13 as of September 13, 2011. Receipts totaled \$1971.00 with expenses of \$1769.83 leaving a balance of \$2,893.30. The preservation account had \$1342.00.

### **Ed's Artifacts**

Ed Ewing brought six handguns from the 1860's. They were all 31 cal. revolvers patterned after the Colt 1849 model after that patent had run out. None of these were government approved or manufactured. Often parents sent them to soldiers. They originally sold for \$25-\$30 which made them more expensive than rifles. These were popular with officers as "backup guns".

Those that had been manufactured by Cooper in Pittsburgh, and later in Philadelphia, are both single and double action. Ed's collectibles and information always fascinate and educate.

### **Preservation**

With the preservation fund having a large balance prior to the October meeting, Joe suggested sending some of this to worthy causes, those with significant leverage if possible. A motion was made and seconded to send \$500.00 to Franklin, TN as well as \$500.00 to Central Virginia Battlefield Trust. Several members are going to investigate other considerations and report back to the group next month.

### **Field Trips**

Rob Marks reported that the second Saturday in June 2012 will be the date for the field trip to Antietam. He will be finalizing some arrangements at the end of the month and discussed the possibility of touring the Pry House during this trip. Stay tuned for more details in the ensuing months.

### **Miscellany**

Don Stripling sent a reminder about the October 29th trip to Antietam to participate in a clean-up followed by a tour. The deadline for contacting Don about this trip is Wednesday, October 26th.

Joe reported that he is frequently contacted by groups interested in hosting a Civil War speaker. Please let him know if you are interested in speaking to groups in the future.

Errol Steffy reminded us that Tim Antosy is now the official round table photography. He urges us to thank him for taking on this responsibility.

## **A Closer Look....Gen. David McM. Gregg: The Man Behind the Monument**

by Howard S. Blanck for *The Historical Review of Berks County*

Take a casual drive on Centre Avenue in Reading and you cannot miss the impressive equestrian monument at the intersection of North 4th Street and Centre Avenue. The statue depicts Gen. David McMurtrie Gregg mounted as he appeared during the Civil War....The General's heroic actions at Gettysburg undoubtedly furthered the Union cause and were arguably an essential key to the North's victory.

An early interest in military matters was evident as Gregg graduated eighth out of 34 in his West Point Class of 1855. He permitted few distractions from his studies and career path until another interest could no longer be ignored--Ellen Frances Sheaff of Reading. The couple had met at his graduation ceremony, but was not married until October 6, 1862. They settled in Ellen's hometown where they maintained permanent residence for the remainder of their lives.

Ellen was a granddaughter of Gov. Joseph Hiester, a Bern Twp., Berks Co. native, and it is also worth noting that Gregg's first cousin was Andrew Curtin, Pennsylvania's Civil War-time governor.

Due to Gregg's fine West Point record, he was allowed to gravitate toward the cavalry and was assigned to the far western United States. Gregg remained out west gaining much valuable experience along with a promotion to First Lieutenant. He was stationed at Warm Springs Indian Reservation in Oregon when the Civil War broke out and was ordered east to Washington, D.C. as Captain following the first battle of Bull Run in July 1861.

By November of 1862 Gregg was again promoted to Brigadier General. He commanded a cavalry brigade at Fredericksburg in December 1862 and by early 1863 assumed command of the entire third division. During this period, Gregg was involved in several lesser-known battles and skirmishes along with some major ones, including Antietam.

Throughout the later part of May 1863, Gen. Gregg was on the prowl looking for legendary Confederate raider, John S. Mosby, who acquired a reputation as the "Gray Ghost" of the south.

On July 1, 1863, the Battle of Gettysburg erupted. Gen. Gregg's heroic actions greatly helped the Union cause on July 2nd and 3rd in two places--Brinkerhoff's Ridge and East Cavalry Field.

Following the Battle of Gettysburg, Gregg provided excellent service to Gen. Grant in his campaign against Richmond in 1864. Although Gregg had received much recognition by that time, there was another Union cavalry commander whose star was on the rise: Philip Sheridan. Gregg simply did not like him, although he never acknowledged such sentiments in writing.

Although no one knows with certainty his reasons, Gregg resigned from the army on February 3, 1865--just two months before Gen. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House.

Following the war, Gregg briefly tried farming near Milford, DL and in vain tried getting reinstated into the army. In 1874, he was appointed by President Grant to be U.S. Consul to Prague, Austria-Hungary. However, Ellen pined for home and the couple soon returned to Reading. They settled at 106 North 4th Street.

Gregg became active in local political and state offices and served as Auditor General in 1891. In 1896 he helped dedicate the statues of Generals Meade and Hancock at Gettysburg, and in 1910, he assisted with the dedication of the Pennsylvania Monument as well. By this time, he was 77 years old and the only surviving Civil War General from Pennsylvania.

David McMurtrie Gregg died on August 7, 1916. He and his wife are buried in Charles Evans Cemetery. The people of Reading dedicated a magnificent statue to Gregg on July 7, 1922, a few blocks south of the general's grave site. It has become a landmark--a lasting tribute to Reading's unsung hero who went above and beyond the call of duty and in doing so changed the course of history.

--submitted by Dave Unger

### **November Trivia by Barbara Shafer**

1. What is the number of Civil War recipients awarded the Medal of Honor?
2. Who was the first Army Medal of Honor awarded for his role in the Andrews Raid capturing the General?
3. Who is the only female Medal of Honor awarded in the Civil War, rescinded in 1917, but restored by President Jimmy Carter in 1977?

### **The Program for November: The Creation of the Medal of Honor and Its Use during the Civil War presented by Dave Unger**

Dave graduated from Susquehanna University with a BS in education as a history major and social science minor, attending Susquehanna's program at Oxford after graduation. He earned a Master in Education with a concentration in history from Kutztown University. He earned credits from Temple University in black history as well as credits from PSU Berks in psychology and sociology. He has earned credits from various colleges through the Freedom Foundation at Valley Forge while taking travel programs to Revolutionary War battlefields, Civil War battlefields and the homes of many American Presidents.

Dave taught American history and psychology for 35 years at Blue Mountain High School in Schuylkill County. He studied the Holocaust in Poland and Israel through a sponsorship from the Jewish Labor council in New York and Anti-Defamation League. He currently volunteers in the library and museum of the Historical Society of Berks County.

### **Reservations for the November 8, 2011 Meeting:**

**Dinner Reservation Procedures:** If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Meal choices: Vegetable Lasagna, Shrimp Stir Fry, Chicken Cordon Blue, or Sirloin Beef Tips

**The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, October 31, 2011, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.**

\*NOTE: Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. The Round Table will be billed for your meal whether you attend or not. Please understand that you will be asked to reimburse the RT should you not attend after having made a reservation.

### **2011-2012 Program Schedule**

November 8, 2011: David Unger	Medal of Honor
December 13, 2011: Rich Kohr	Gettysburg at Arlington
January 10, 2012: Round Table Discussion	Was the South Justified in Secession?
February 14, 2012: Dave Fox	Saltville
March 13, 2012:	TBA
April 10, 2012: Edwin C. Bearss	Chancellorsville
May 8, 2012: John Hoptak	Antietam

Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, [zeibers@comcast.net](mailto:zeibers@comcast.net)

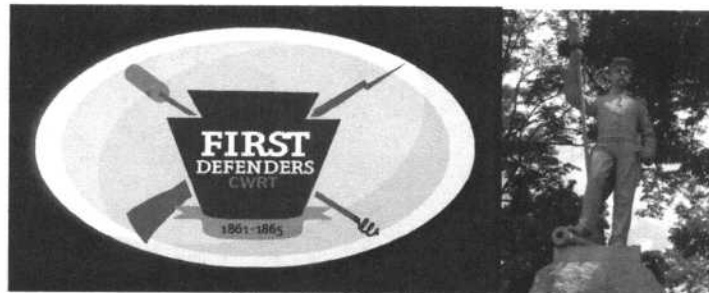




# **The First Defenders**

## **Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**December 2011**



[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)

### **Christmas 1861**



#### **From the President**

One of the key factors necessary to defeat the Confederacy was cutting off its trade with European countries, notably Britain and France. British textile factories relied on Southern cotton and the Confederacy needed manufactured goods in return, especially war materials. Lincoln and his advisors put the Yankee shipbuilding industry to work on a furious schedule to build what would soon become the largest navy in the world. Union strategy became to blockade the entire Southern coast and stifle commerce.

Jefferson Davis and his advisors decided to forego any attempt to compete by building a navy. Secretly they held back on shipping the 1861 cotton crop, declaring to the British that their cargo ships could not break the Yankee blockade. If Britain wanted the cotton, they would need to

intervene with the Royal Navy. British factory workers were laid off and screamed for intervention. France and Russia wanted to act, but no one moved without the British. Arrogant British naval officers scoffed at the seemingly inferior Union navy, but to decision makers in the higher levels of government and military, the thought of tangling with America carried more risk than reward.

There was also the question of the legality of the blockade. Southerners and some Europeans argued that the 1856 Declaration of Paris declared that blockades be recognized as legal only if they were effective. Clearly at this time the Union navy was not in complete control of the coast. This line of reasoning struck many as odd, as the Confederates were arguing opposite theories simultaneously. They could not ship cotton because of the blockade and yet the blockade was not legal since it was not complete. Confederate leaders had clearly overplayed their hand. British leaders decided it was in their best interest to stay neutral, while quietly trading with both sides. There was a lot of money to be made selling guns to the Union and the Confederacy. Southern leaders would need a new strategy to combat the Union navy. Soon, the world would witness the dawn of commerce raiders, ironclad rams and blockade runners. Naval warfare would never be the same.

As we are approaching two holidays, I would like to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to those of different faiths.

Joe Schaeffer

### **Round Table Business**

President Joe Schaeffer called the November meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at Golden Oaks Golf Club by asking Rob Marks to offer a prayer and lead the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 60 members and guests present.

Last month Joe spoke of organizations calling him to request speakers. The following members have offered to give presentations: Craig Brenheiser, Dale Kratzer, Dave Fox, and Tom Tate.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Lori Border reported that our balance from October's meeting was \$2893.30. Receipts from the October meeting totaled \$2290.00 including \$180.00 for preservation. Expenses incurred totaled \$2785.64 leaving a balance of \$2397.66. The preservation fund had a total of \$522.00 prior to the November meeting.

### **Membership**

Membership Chair Dave Unger reminds all members that dues were due October 10. If you have not renewed your membership, please do so as soon as possible.

### **Preservation**

Linda and Gerry Zeiber took over Cathie Kennedy's book raffle in her absence. We took in \$153.00 in ticket sales. Many thanks for the generosity of our members who make it possible to send money for battlefield preservation. In addition to ticket sales, three members brought books to donate for future raffles.

Tom Tate, former chair of preservation, shared the following note from historian and author Robert Krick:

**"At last night's board meeting of the CVBT, I accepted the job of sending special thanks to your CWRT. We usually call major donors for a brief verbal thanks; that's hard to do with a whole group! Will you stand up at the next meeting for a moment and tell them that Krick asked you to extend special appreciation for the support?"**

**We're doing some great stuff at CBF--hoping to get the idiotic "Castle" building in the Flank Attack bought from the owner....**

**Thanks."**

An issue of another type of preservation was discussed. Brad Kissam announced that The Berks County Historical Society has now archived all of Capt. James McKnight's letters and has depleted their archiving funds by doing so. Brad reported that the Society is putting together Civil War materials for a Saturday meeting there to be announced. A suggestion was made that we donate some preservation money to the Historical Society. Members are asked to consider this action prior to the next meeting.

Linda Zeiber

### **June Field Trip**

Rob Marks talked briefly about the upcoming field trip to Antietam on June 9, 2012. Dinner will be at the Carriage House Inn in Emmitsburg. Other details will be forthcoming.

### **Ed's Artifacts**

Ed Ewing provided us with an 1847 Muskatoo 69 cal. smoothbore rifle. He described it as rare. About 3,000 were made at the Springfield Armory. They were accurate to 75 yards and less.

### **December Trivia**

by Barb Shafer

1. Who is credited with establishing Arlington Cemetery?
2. Why was the cemetery established?
3. As a reminder of Meigs' wrath, how many headstones stand near Mary Lee's rose garden?

### **New Website Link**

Errol Steffy has added a new link to our website. This one is for 150th anniversary events of Jackson's 1862 Valley Campaign: Shenandoah at War. It lists all the events for next year. Be sure to check this out.

### **Quotable**

"Last night was Christmas Eve. It brought to my mind a thousand recollections of the past. The contrast is great. I sat up late in the evening at the fire...for we were under marching orders for this morning at five o'clock. A grand movement seems to be at hand. About eleven o'clock at night I heard heavy firing in the front. Where will the next Christmas Eve find me?"

--submitted by Linda Zeiber

On November 23, 1863, during the fighting before Chattanooga, Captain George W. Lewis of the 124th Ohio was interrogating prisoners captured on Orchard Knob.

One of the prisoners that was captured said: "Weuns thought youns was coming out for a review, we didn't think youns was coming out to fight weuns." We informed the Johnny that General Grant was commanding us, and he was not a review general.

--submitted by Mike Straus

## A Civil War Thanksgiving

*...As we gather at our Thanksgiving tables this year, pause for a moment to thank the two people who gave us this holiday: Sara Josepha Hale for her persistent promotion of the celebration and Abraham Lincoln for declaring it a national holiday....*

By the fall of 1863, the nation was war-weary and facing another long winter of conflict. On October 3, 1863, six weeks before delivering the Gettysburg Address, Lincoln boosted the country's morale by designating the last Thursday in November as a national day of thanksgiving.

In his proclamation, Lincoln wrote of the "blessings of fruitful fields and healthful skies" and the health of the nation despite being "in the midst of a civil war of unequalled magnitude and severity." He concluded:

**I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens.**

The idea was not Lincoln's alone. Sara Josepha Hale, editor of Godey's Ladies Magazine for 40 years, had vigorously campaigned for a Thanksgiving holiday in her writings and editorials for 17 years.

Years earlier in her successful 1827 novel *Northwood*, Hale described a Thanksgiving table laden with stuffed roast turkey, roast pork, mutton, beef, duckling, pumpkin pie, plum pudding, and wine. In the September 1863 issue of Godey's, Hale pleaded for a presidential proclamation declaring a day for offering gratitude for "the blessings of the year." Sensing the mood of the nation, Lincoln was swayed.

Although not officially celebrated in the military until 1864, Thanksgiving was honored in many of the camps throughout the War. Soldiers wrote home describing their thanksgiving meals that sometimes included turkey. But in most cases, the soldiers dined on modest fare such as salt pork, fish, chicken and mince pies, fruit, nuts, and, if they were lucky, cakes from home.

In 1864, the Union League of New York City launched an appeal to provide Thanksgiving dinner for all of the Union Forces. Other organizations and newspaper editors supported the effort and donations of food and dollars rolled in. The Union forces, including the wounded in hospitals, ate heartily and gratefully on Thanksgiving Day.

Sara Hale was overjoyed. Her dream had come true--at least for the North. The South always viewed Thanksgiving as a celebration for New Englanders, and the Confederacy, of course, did not recognize Lincoln's authority. It was not until the Union was restored after the War that the South honored Lincoln's proclamation and gradually adopted the Thanksgiving tradition.



## **Reservations for the December 13, 2011 Meeting:**

**Dinner Reservation Procedures:** If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Our meal choices for December include: Cheese Stuffed Shells (Vegetarian), Broiled Flounder, Chicken Marsala, or Meat Loaf.

**The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, December 5, 2011, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.**

**\*NOTE\*** Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. The Round Table will be billed for your meal whether you attend or not. Please understand that you will be asked to reimburse the RT should you not attend after having made a reservation.

## **2011-2012 Program Schedule**

January 10, 2012: Round Table Discussion	Was the South Justified in Secession?
February 14, 2012: Dave Fox	Saltville
March 13, 2012: Chris Heisey	With an Eye to the Past: Images of our Civil War Battlefields
April 10, 2012: Edwin C. Bearss	Chancellorsville
May 8, 2012: John Hoptak	Antietam

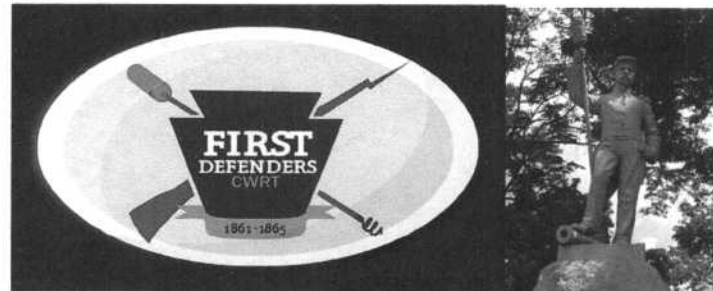


Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, [zeibers@comcast.net](mailto:zeibers@comcast.net)

# **The First Defenders**

## **Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**January 2012**



[www.firstdefenderscwrtr.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrtr.us)

### **January's Round Table Discussion: Was the South Justified in Seceding?**



#### **From the President**

PLEASE ACCEPT THIS REMINDER OF HOW TO MAKE YOUR DINNER RESERVATION. WHEN USING THE WEBSITE, BE SURE TO FILL IN EACH REQUIRED FIELD AND TYPE THE CODE AT THE BOTTOM. IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE READING THE CODE, YOU CAN HIT THE BUTTON TO REQUEST A NEW WORD UNTIL YOU GET ONE YOU CAN READ. YOU HAVE NOT REGISTERED UNTIL YOU DO THIS PROPERLY. WHEN ENTERED PROPERLY, YOU WILL IMMEDIATELY RECEIVE AN EMAIL THANKING YOU FOR YOUR RESERVATION. IF YOU FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE SYSTEM, CALL IN YOUR RESERVATION. THANKS.

I spent a long time pondering the subject of our discussion for January and how to write my President's message. This month, my words would be pitifully weak compared to those of James M. McPherson in his book, *Abraham Lincoln and the Second American Revolution*. Therefore, I quote his words, as follows:

Secession was not a just revolution, but an unjust counterrevolution. As Lincoln phrased it in the summer of 1861, "the right of revolution, is never a legal right...At most, it is but a moral right, when exercised for a morally justifiable cause. When exercised

without such a cause revolution is no right, but simply a wicked exercise of physical power." In Lincoln's view, secession was just such a wicked exercise. The event that precipitated it was his own election, which had been achieved by a constitutional majority according to constitutional procedures. The Republicans had done nothing against the law, had violated nobody's constitutional rights. Indeed, seven states had seceded and formed the Confederacy a month before Lincoln even took office.

As Northerners saw it, the South, having controlled the national government for most of the previous two generations through its domination of the Democratic party, now decided to leave the Union just because it had lost an election. For Lincoln, it was the Union, not the Confederacy, that was the true heir of the Revolution of 1776. That revolution had established a republic, a democratic government of the people by the people. This republic was a fragile experiment in a world of kings, emperors, tyrants, and theories of aristocracy. If secession were allowed to succeed, it would destroy that experiment. It would set a fatal precedent by which the minority could secede whenever it did not like what the majority stood for, until the United States fragmented into a dozen pitiful, squabbling countries, the laughing stock of the world. James M. McPherson.

Joe Schaeffer

### **Round Table Business**

President Joe Schaeffer called the December meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at Golden Oaks Golf Club by asking Rob Marks to offer a prayer and lead the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 65 members and guests present. We welcomed new member **Randy Ulmer** as well as the following guests: Maryanne Rossello, Deryl Maruschak, and Bill Boehmer.

Joe reminded everyone that our meeting was occurring on the 149th anniversary of Fredericksburg which resulted in 1,300 Union casualties.

**Bob Shuman** has been added to the list of available speakers for organizations that call for presenters. Joe also discussed the Historical Society's need for replenishing their fund recently depleted with the James McKnight letters' initiative. \*See below for more information regarding the Historical Society.

Member **Craig Brenheiser** was recently named the recipient of the 2011 EMS Communications Award by the PA Emergency Health Services Council. Craig worked for twenty years with the Berks County emergency communications operations until his retirement three years ago. He continues to have a hand in the field works as a private consultant in public-safety communications-systems design and operation. Congratulations, Craig, from all of us.

### **\*Special Meeting Scheduled at the Berks County Historical Society**

On Saturday, February 18, 2012, a special meeting will be held for our Round Table at the Historical Society. This meeting is not in place of our usual monthly meeting the second Tuesday of each month. The meeting's purpose is to introduce our members to the services and resources of the Berks County Historical Society. More information will be forthcoming soon.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Lori Border reported that our balance from November's meeting was \$2397.66 Receipts from the November meeting totaled \$1989 of which \$153.00 was earmarked for preservation. Expenses incurred totaled \$1319.85 leaving a balance of \$3066.81. The preservation fund has a total of \$675.00.

Lori announced that the Civil War Preservation Trust had sent a letter of thanks for our recent donation of \$500.

### **Membership**

Joe Schaeffer reported that 85 people have renewed their memberships as of this writing. While that number is down from previous years, attendance at meetings is averaging in the 60's which is good attendance from current members.

### **Preservation**

The Civil War Preservation Trust is trying to buy Grant's headquarters in the Wilderness. There is also land available at Gaines Mills that is of interest. We will try to stay informed of financial need for donations in the future. Many thanks to the generosity of our members who make it possible to send money for battlefield preservation.

### **June Field Trip**

Rob Marks talked briefly about the upcoming field trip to Antietam on June 9, 2012. A 47-person bus has been reserved. We plan to leave at 7:00 a.m. from Joe Schaeffer's business in Wyomissing. We expect to return by 9:00 p.m. A boxed lunch will be provided for lunch. Dinner will be at the Carriage House Inn in Emmitsburg, MD.

### **Ed's Artifacts**

Ed Ewing provided us with an array of personal items which included letters and envelopes from soldiers. He displayed a boiler and coffee pot as well as 2 cigars and Confederate plug tobacco. He also shared 3 dominoes from Fredericksburg, VA, and utensils from the 93rd Pennsylvania.

\*\*\*\*\*

**From Mike Straus, please read the following account eloquently written of the horror of war:**

**January 17, 1863**

**Captain Charles B. Haydon- Co. E; 2nd Michigan**

The time between the bursting of a shell in front of you & the striking of the fragments on the ground, short as it is, gives rise to the most peculiar feeling I have yet experienced. To get the full benefit you should be standing or lying perfectly idle on the ground in the direction from which the shell is to come. First the sound of the gun, instantly followed by a noise between a whiz & a yell, then say 20 rods in front and 100 feet in the air, there is a small haycock, eddying & unfolding in all manner of graceful shapes.

This is all you see but you know that from 10 to 200 musket balls and ragged pieces of iron will strike within the next two seconds on the acre of ground on which you stand. You hear the explosion, not so loud as the cannon, but a round compact noise, then come the fragments each one according to its shape singing a different note, varying from a sharp whiz to a low, heavy bass. The senses are so wonderfully acute that you seem to hear each one distinctly. There is no use of dodging or moving about. But where will they all strike? Will that little bullet with the shrill, piping voice pierce your body? Will that triangular chap which screams so tear out your bowels with one of his sharp points? Will that big fellow which makes that low, rushing sound be satisfied with an arm or a leg or will he take your head? Will they skip you too high- no- too low- no. It is soon decided- thump, rattle, bang, smash, dirt & splinters fly on every side. You are safe but looking around you see from one to a dozen poor fellows rolling headless, or writhing in agony on the ground.

One could not write in all the day the thoughts which pass through his mind in those two seconds. One does not need a better opportunity to test his religion. Misdeeds are sure to find their way to the surface. These two seconds explain his spiritual condition better than all the sermons ever preached. If he is afraid to die he knows it & he knows the reason with a certainty which admits of no doubt. Those two seconds may be worth more to a man than all his previous life. If one has done his duty toward himself & others he will in that brief space of time be well repaid for it. If he has kept within the limits of his code of morals he will be very thankful. If he has not he will be more careful afterwards how he walks.

While this is passing through your brain you will see & hear all that is going on around you & have the most perfect presence of mind. Perhaps 10 seconds after you are laughing to see a comrade scratching the dust out of his eyes. What would I give if such activity of the mind & such clearness of perception could be continued & I had the power to express my thoughts in language. If you are in motion at the time or busied about anything you will feel nothing of this. It comes & goes instantly.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Reservations for the January 10, 2012 Meeting:**

**Dinner Reservation Procedures:** If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Our meal choices for January include: **Vegetable Stir Fry, Broiled Haddock, Chicken Picata, and Pot Roast.**

**The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, January 2, 2012, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.**

**\*NOTE\*** Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. The Round Table will be billed for your meal whether you attend or not. Please understand that you will be asked to reimburse the RT should you not attend after having made a reservation.

### **2011-2012 Program Schedule**

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April 10, 2012: Edwin C. Bearss	Chancellorsville
May 8, 2012: John Hoptak	South Mountain

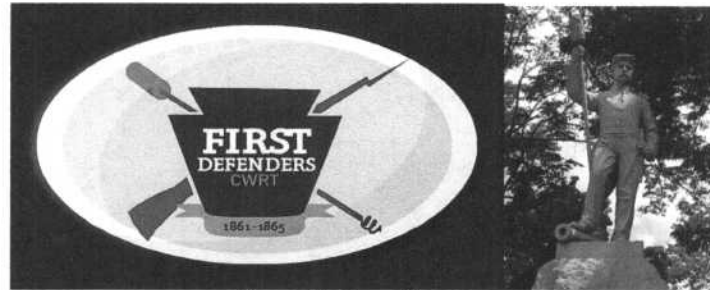


Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, [zeibers@comcast.net](mailto:zeibers@comcast.net)



# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**February 2012**



[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)

**Program for February 14th: Saltville**  
Dave Fox, Presenter



## **From the President**

**ALERT:** THE MEETING WE HAD PLANNED AT THE BERKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOR FEBRUARY 18, 2012, HAS BEEN RESCHEDULED TO SATURDAY, MARCH 10, 2012, AT 9:30 AM. THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY HAD A SCHEDULING CONFLICT. REMEMBER, THIS MEETING IS FOR OUR GENERAL MEMBERSHIP TO INTRODUCE US TO THEIR FACILITIES. THIS IS NOT THE MEETING FOR THE COMMITTEE FORMED TO HELP WITH THEIR DISPLAY FOR THE 150<sup>TH</sup> COMMEMORATION.

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Thank you to everyone who attended and participated in our Round Table discussion in January. I am very proud that we have so many members willing to spend time reading and researching and giving their

opinions. I kept telling people before the meeting, not to worry, that our group will not shy away from a good argument. What I took away from the discussion is a feeling that the Founding Fathers, although they had great vision, nonetheless left to succeeding generations an imperfect Constitution. In a sense, they "kicked the ball down the road", many hoping the issue of slavery, would somehow melt away. Not only did that not happen, differences between North and South grew to a point where the flames of passion could not be extinguished. Southerners believed states had a right to secede from the Union which trumped arguments against it. Northerners were just as firmly entrenched in their belief that the Union was sacred and that no legal right existed to sever it. The war to settle this question led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of citizens. The Civil War, by whatever name you choose to refer to it, put an end to the secession of the Southern states, but today we still wrestle with unresolved consequences.

Joe

### **Round Table Business**

President Joe Schaeffer called the January meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at Golden Oaks Golf Club by asking Rob Marks to offer a prayer and lead the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 54 members and guests present. We welcomed new members Marge and Bill Boehmer. At this time membership totals 91 with another new member expected soon. The round table is looking for someone to create a Facebook page. If anyone knows of a person willing to do this, please contact Joe with details.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Lori Border reported that our balance from December's meeting was \$3066.81 Receipts from the December meeting totaled \$1473.80. Expenses incurred totaled \$1773.80 leaving a balance of \$2999.01. The preservation fund has a total of \$881.00.

### **June Field Trip**

Rob Marks talked briefly about the upcoming field trip to South Mountain on June 9, 2012. A 47-person bus has been reserved. We plan to leave at 7:00 a.m. from Joe Schaeffer's business in Wyomissing. We expect to return by 9:00 p.m. A boxed lunch will be provided. Dinner will be at the Carriage House Inn in Emmitsburg, MD.

### **Ed's Artifacts**

Ed Ewing provided us with a tableful of Confederate and state bonds. One South Carolina bond was issued in January 1861. The collection also included 2 Montgomery bonds (Alabama) as well as an Arkansas \$5.00 bond. He explained that most Alabama notes are usually in bad shape. He told us that most Confederate states issued them including Virginia although he had personally never seen one from that state.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **February Trivia Quiz by Barbara Shafer**

1. Where were over one hundred men of the Fifth US Colored Cavalry said to be massacred on October 2, 1864?

2. At what site was salt destroyed in enormous quantities by Union cavalry under General George Stoneman?
3. At least 50K bushels of what scarce commodity were destroyed by Federal troops in December 1864?

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Bruce Catton Stories...contributed by Mike Straus....**

There was in the 67th New York Infantry a young German named Sebastian Muller, who got off an immigrant ship in 1860 and walked the streets unable to find work because he could speak no English and because times in this land of promise were harder than he had supposed they would be.

The war came and in 1861 a recruiting agent got him, and to his people back in the fatherland Muller wrote, "I am a volunteer soldier in the Army of the United States, to fight the rebels of South America for a sacred thing. All of America has to become free and united and the starry banner has to fly again over the new world. Then we also want to have the slaves freed, the trading of human beings must have an end and every slave should be set free and on his own time... Evil of all kinds, thievery, whoring, lying and deception have to be punished here."

On June 22, 1864, Muller was on picket duty in an advanced gun pit on the VI Corp front, and a rebel sniper drew a bead on him and killed him. A German comrade wrote a letter of consolation to Muller's parents: "If a person is meant to die on land, he will not drown. If death on the battlefield is to be his lot, he will not die in the cradle. God's dispositions are wise and his ways are inscrutable."

+++++

In the 19th Massachusetts there was an Irish sergeant named Mike Scannell-who had won his chevrons by carrying the flag at Cold Harbor. In the II Corp debacle over by the Jerusalem Plank Road, Mike and his flag were out in front and were taken by Confederates, one of whom came at Mike with leveled bayonet, ordering: "You damned Yankee, give me that flag!" Mike looked at the Southerner and looked at the bayonet, and he replied:

"Well, it is over twenty years since I came to this country, and you are the first man who ever called me a Yankee. You can take the flag for that compliment."

\*I would like to personally thank Mike for his willingness to share parts of his readings so often.  
He helps to give color to our newsletter! L.Z.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **February's Program: Saltville by Member Dave Fox**

Dave Fox is a graduate of Albright College with a degree in history and political science. He had attended Villanova University School of Law for two years when he was drafted into the U.S. Army and served one year in Vietnam at the 8th RRFS (Army Security Agency) in Phu Bai.

Dave is retired from the Reading School District where he taught social Studies for thirty-three years. His last ten years of teaching were at Reading High School where he served as department chair as well. Dave has done graduate studies in Educational Administration at Lehigh and Penn State Universities.

Dave is currently at docent at the Berks County Historical Society and has also served in this capacity at the Reading Public Museum. He has attended the Stonewall Jackson symposium in Lexington, VA, for the last 20 years.

He previously presented a program to the First Defenders CWRT on the subject of General David McMurtrie Gregg.

Dave's Saltville program was previously scheduled for last season, but bad weather prompted the cancellation of it. We are looking forward to his program and have our fingers crossed for clear roads.

### **Reservations for the February 14, 2012 Meeting:**

**Dinner Reservation Procedures:** If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Our meal choices for February include Pasta Primavera, Broiled Salmon, Pecan Chicken, and Roast Beef Marsala.

**The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, February 6, 2012, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.**

**\*NOTE\*** Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. The Round Table will be billed for your meal whether you attend or not. Please understand that you will be asked to reimburse the RT should you not attend after having made a reservation.

### **2011-2012 Program Schedule**

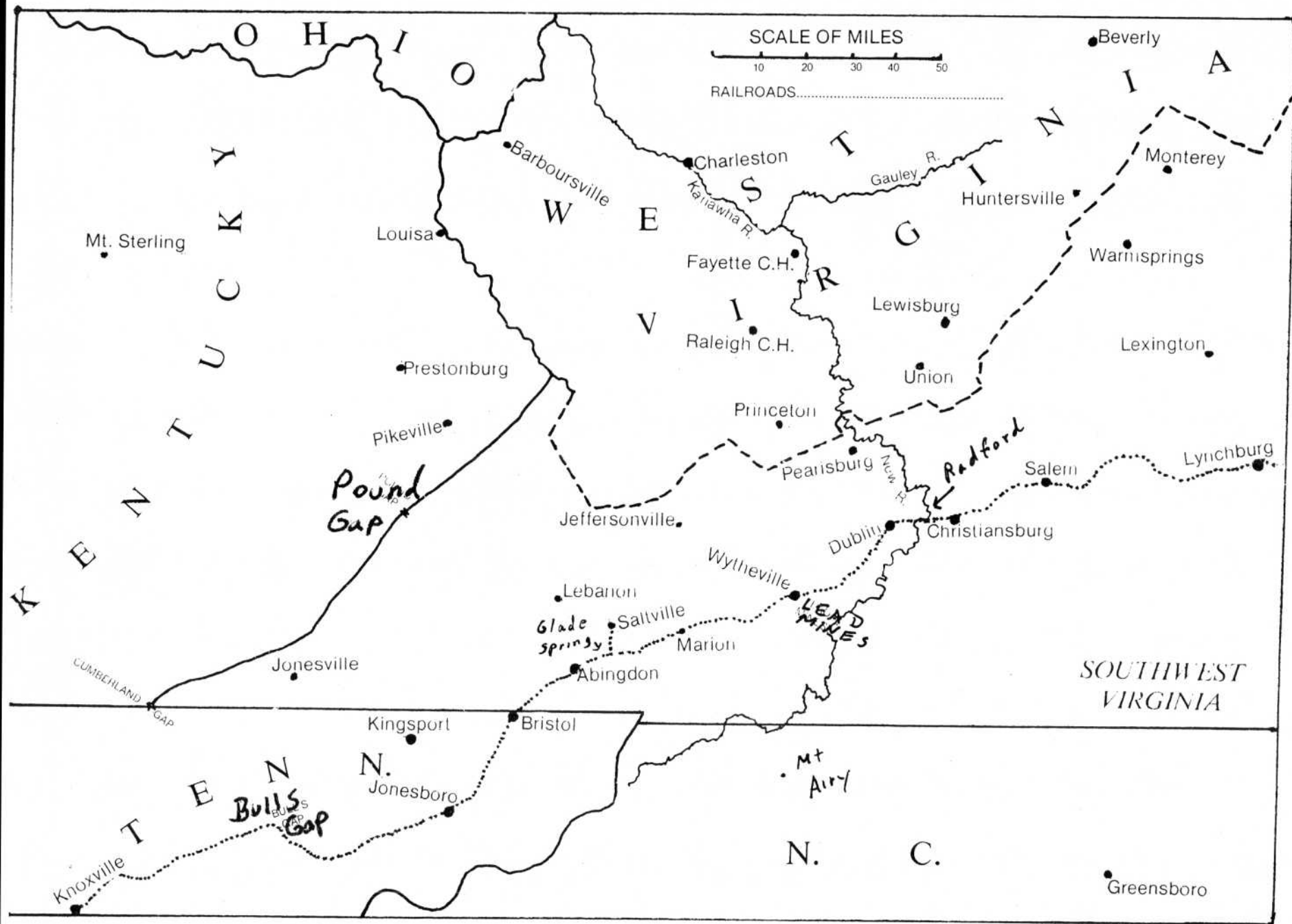
February 14, 2012: Dave Fox  
March 13, 2012: Chris Heisey

April 10, 2012: Edwin C. Bearss  
May 8, 2012: John Hoptak

Saltville  
With an Eye to the Past: Images of our Civil  
War Battlefields  
Chancellorsville  
South Mountain



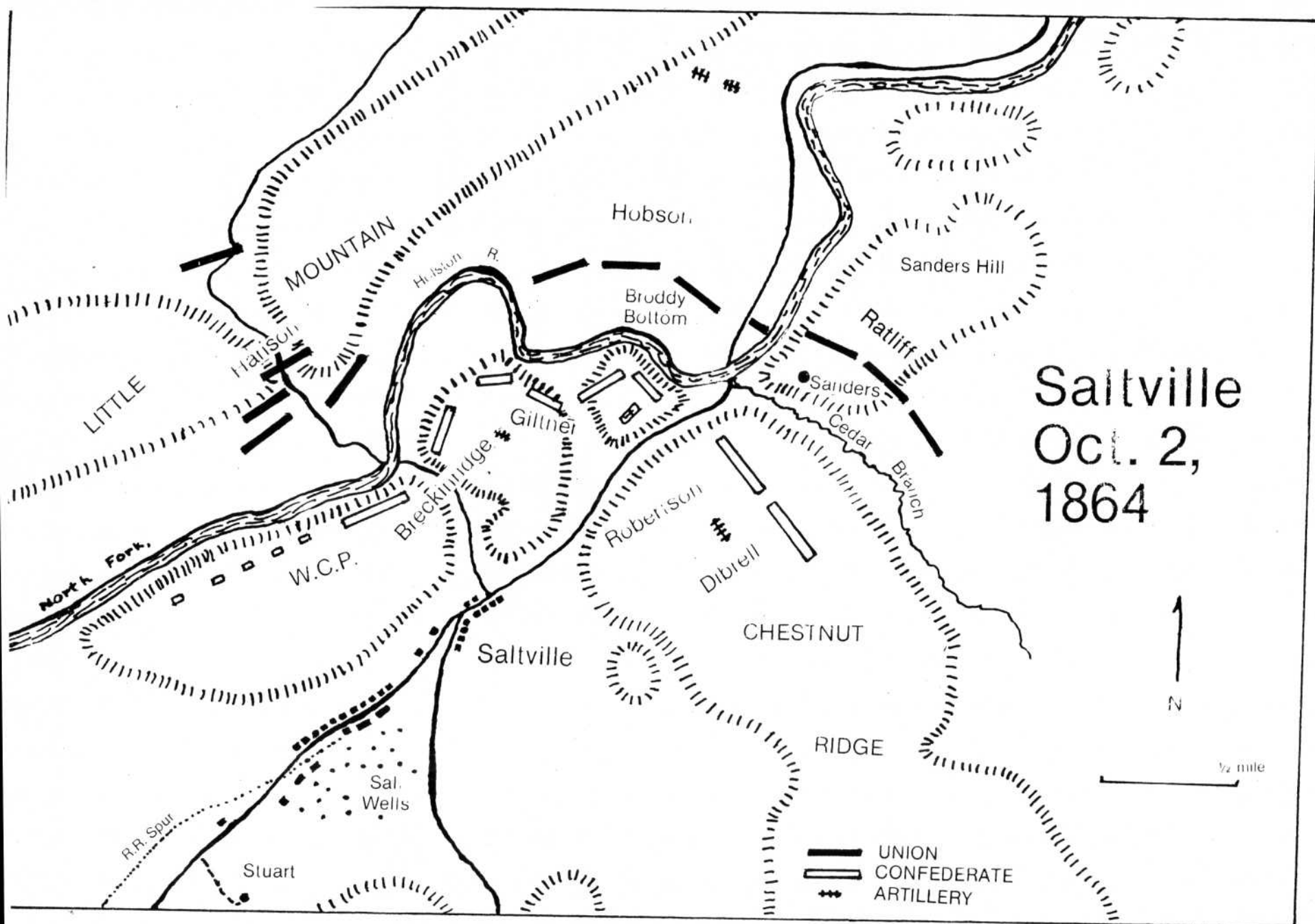
Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, [zeibers@comcast.net](mailto:zeibers@comcast.net)



Dave Fox  
Program Saltville

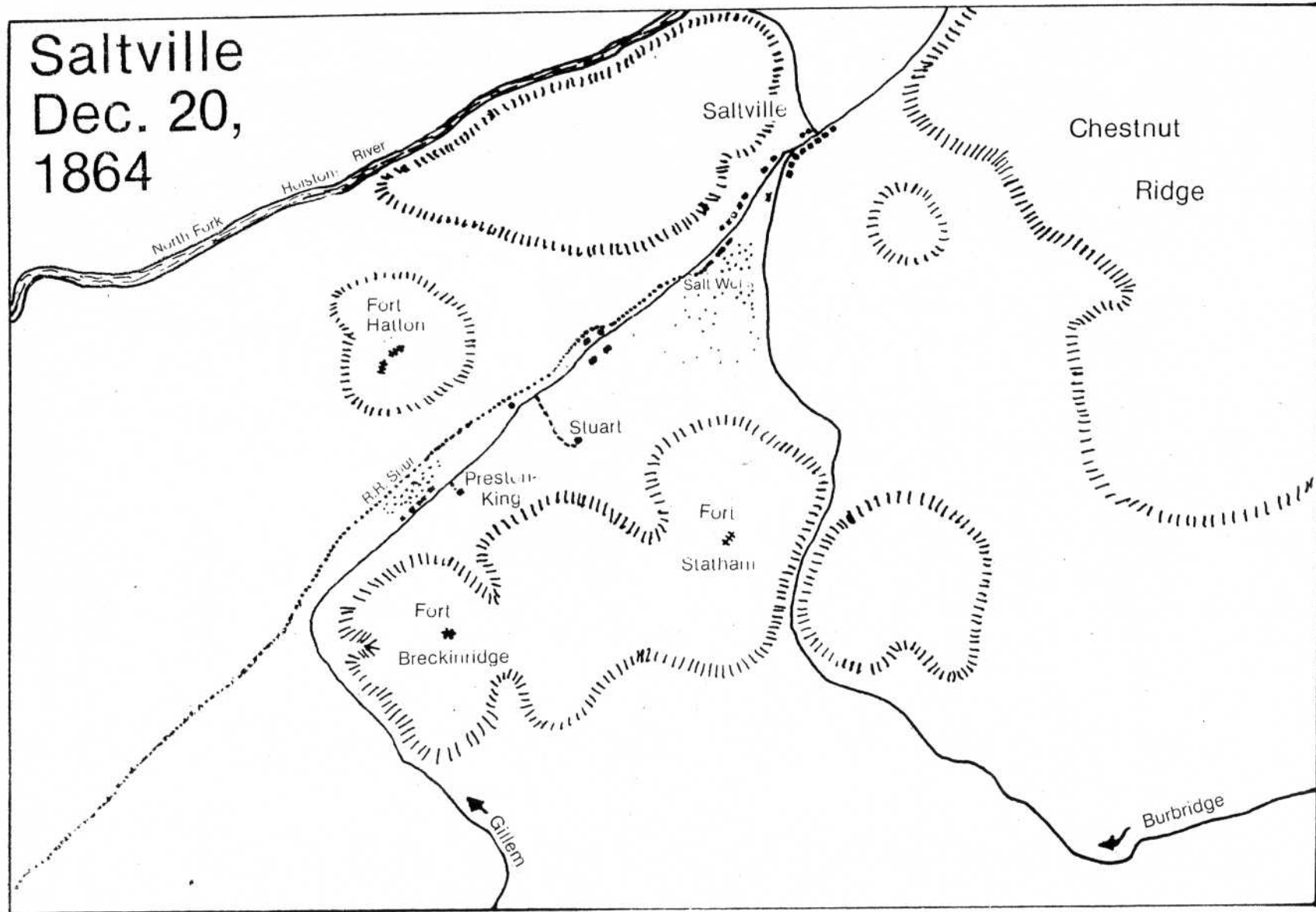
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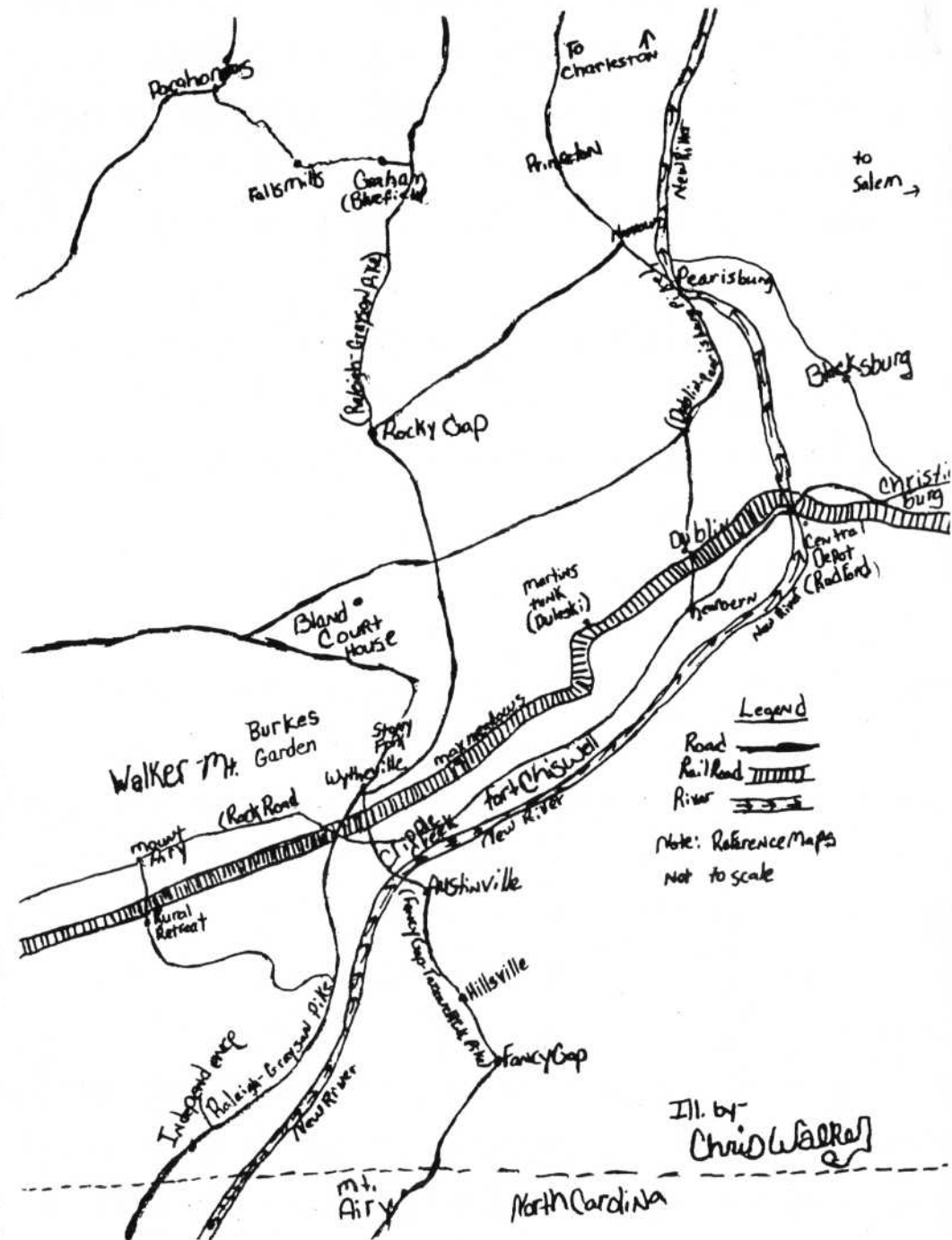
Saltville  
Oct. 2,  
1864

Saltville  
Dec. 20,  
1864



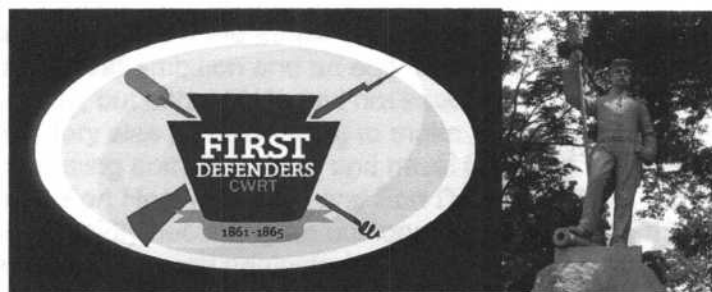


Reproduction salt shed



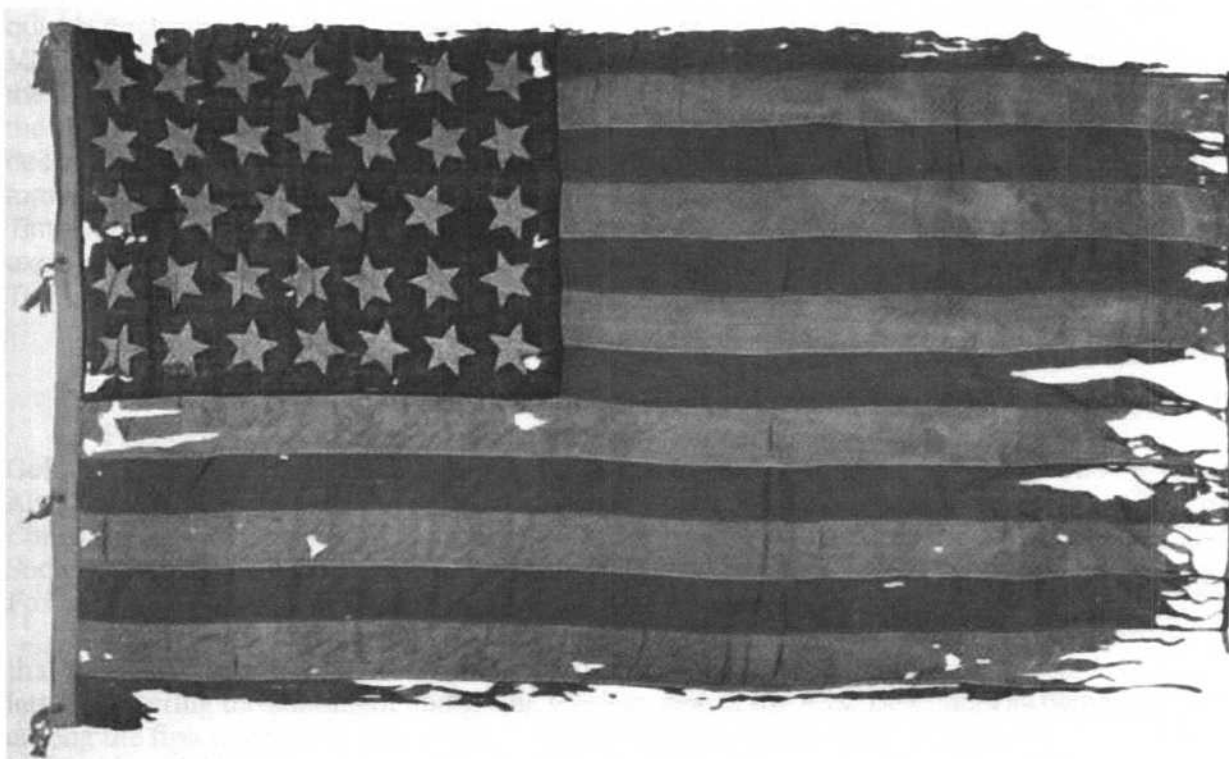
# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**March 2012**



[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)

**The Ringgold Light Artillery National Flag  
--carried into Washington, DC, April 18, 1861**



## **Alert: Meeting at the Berks County Historical Society**

On Saturday, March 10, 2012, a meeting for Round Table members has been scheduled for 9:30 a.m. This meeting is to introduce the membership to the facilities there. This is not a meeting for the committee working on the 150th commemoration.



## **From the President**

Jefferson Davis had reason to be optimistic during the winter of 1861-1862. The Confederacy had not only survived the first year of the war, but in the East, had humiliated the Union Army of the Potomac at First Bull Run and Ball's Bluff. Abraham Lincoln, Davis's adversary, was faced with the task of finding a new general to reorganize the army and renew the attack on Southern forces. Lincoln turned to George McClellan, a man of great ambition and an ego to match. There was no shortage of egos in Lincoln's army, but although he did not know it at the time, the man to ultimately lead the North to victory was just beginning to make a name for himself in the Western theater. U.S. Grant using combined land and naval forces won victories on the Tennessee River, at Fort Henry (Feb. 6) and Fort Donelson (Feb. 16). Simultaneously, the Union navy was rapidly becoming an unstoppable force along the length of the Confederate coastline. Although neglected in the decades leading up to the war, the Union navy was now on an incredible building program. The slow strangulation of Confederate ports would take several years to complete, but victories began to pile up early in 1862. Rebel coastal cities in Virginia and North Carolina fell one after another, with only Wilmington surviving most of the war. Blockade runners would continue to bring in some goods, but the loss of these ports slowly starved Rebel armies of supplies. Davis pinned his hopes on a new ironclad, to break the blockade of the wooden navy, at the Battle of Hampton Roads on March 8-9. The ironclad CSS Virginia quickly destroyed the USS Cumberland and Congress and was poised to finish off the Minnesota when a new ship appeared on the horizon. The Union navy's new ironclad, the Monitor, had arrived, and none too soon. The two ironclads battled to a draw, but the Union navy was saved when the Virginia withdrew for repairs. The revolutionary design of the Monitor with its revolving turret and sleek profile changed naval warfare forever. The British navy, the ruler of the high seas took immediate notice. The London Times noted that "it would be folly to employ any British warship, apart from the experimental ironclads Warrior and Ironside, in an engagement with that little Monitor". The United States Navy began its rise to the top.

Joe

## **Round Table Business**

President Joe Schaeffer called the February meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at Golden Oaks Golf Club by asking Rob Marks to offer a prayer and lead the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 56 members and guests present. We welcomed new member Chuck Bezler and guests Sime Bertolet, Executive Director of the Berks County Historical Society, Josh Blay, curator at the historical society, and Sue Fox, wife of member Dave Fox.

Joe told us about an error recently published in the *Civil War News*. It stated that Massachusetts' troops were the first to answer Lincoln's call to arms. Joe wrote a letter correcting the statement and giving the response of the First Defenders as being among the first to arrive in Baltimore. An editor from the paper responded to his correction quickly and will correct the error in the next edition. She also offered to send a stack of *Civil War Times* for our members in the future.

We are working on a project with the Historical Society for display commemorating the 150th anniversary. Part of their initiative which included our participation was to help man the traveling Civil War Road Show that had been scheduled for the Kutztown Folk Festival. At this time, funding for that is in question. Please write a letter to your state representative to encourage funding for this worthwhile project. An article follows giving more details about our partnership with the Historical Society. All are welcome to participate.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Lori Border reported that our balance from January's meeting was \$2999.01. Receipts from the January meeting totaled \$1392.00. Expenses incurred totaled \$1187.87 leaving a balance of \$3203.14. The preservation fund has a total of \$1007.00.

### **June Field Trip**

Included in this newsletter is the flyer for the June 9 bus tour of the South Mountain Battlefield. There are several selections that must be made for the boxed lunch and the dinner; please note your selections on the registration form. The only beverages/snacks to be provided are those associated with the boxed lunch. Feel free to bring along your own additional snacks and beverages.

Registration for this tour is limited to First Defenders members and their guests only until the April 10 meeting. After April 10, the tour will be opened to the public if the bus is not filled by that time. When John Hoptak, our tour guide (and May speaker), finalizes the tour itinerary, that information will be provided on our website. Any questions, please contact Rob Marks or Don Stripling.

### **Ed's Artifacts**

Ed Ewing provided us with an 1853 artillery carbine. This type gun was used by the first four Virginia cavalry regiments. Birmingham handled the Virginia contract and this particular gun had a VA sight on it. It belonged to a Confederate soldier named Archibald Owen whose initials are on the gun. The troopers were quite fond of these weapons.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **March Trivia Quiz: Ancestors and Descendants by Barbara Shafer**

Clues: All of the below Descendants probably have been in your home at one time via television or you may have seen them on the screen. Some have appeared on Broadway. All have been either nominated or won Oscars, Emmys, or Golden Globe awards. Name that descendant.

1. My great-grandfather offered his home to "Stonewall" Jackson in 1861. Jackson planned his Romney Expedition and his Valley Campaign here. Who am I?
2. I have an illustrious heritage. Through my famous mother, I am a descendant of Brevet Major General Hugh Judson Kilpatrick. Who am I?
3. I portrayed my relative, General Robert E. Lee in Gods and Generals. Who am I?

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Historical Society Collaboration with the First Defenders**

On Wednesday, February 15, 2012, the inaugural meeting of six Round Table members with staff and volunteers of the Historical Society was held. We discussed various topics and content to be included in the exhibit being put together for the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. We learned that we can best

help by doing research of various topics. Round Table members who do not belong to the Historical Society will be able to use the library at no cost during this project.

If you could not attend this meeting, you can still get involved. The work can be scheduled by each individual according to his availability. If you are interested in helping, you may contact, Joe Schaeffer, Dave Unger, Dave Sweigert, Dave Fox, Don Stripling, or Linda Zeiber. We will be happy to fill you in on details.

### **Former President Mike Gabriel Publishes a New Book**

Mike has just published a new book, *The Battle of Bennington: Soldiers and Civilians*, a collection of over fifty American, British, German, Loyalist, and civilian accounts of an often overlooked event in the American Revolutionary War. Bennington laid the groundwork for the American victory at Saratoga and French entry into the war. The book is available online at Barnes&Noble, Amazon, and other sites. You can also obtain a copy from Mike. The price is \$19.99. The following is taken from the book jacket:

On August 16, 1777, a motley militia won a resounding victory near Bennington, Vermont, against combined German, British and Loyalist forces. This laid the foundation for the American victory at Saratoga two months later. Historian Michael Gabriel has collected over fifty firsthand accounts from the people who experienced this engagement, including veterans from both sides and civilians--women and children who witnessed the horrors of the battle. Gabriel also details a virtually unknown skirmish between Americans and Loyalists. These accounts, along with Gabriel's overviews of the battle, bring to life the terror, fear and uncertainty that caused thousands to flee the British army as loved ones departed to fight for the fledgling United States.

\*\*\*\*\*

**From Dale Kratzer:--**

#### **Alvernia Seniors College Program and Offer**

In April, several CWRT members will be presenting a 4-session program for the Alvernia Seniors College on an eclectic mix of Civil War subjects.

The dates are April 3, 10, 17 and 24. These are all Tuesdays and the sessions will run from 1:30 to 3:00pm each Tuesday. The location is in Alvernia's Upland Center on Upland Avenue.

The program will be free to 1<sup>st</sup> Defenders roundtable members. Contact Dale Kratzer at 610-678-5887 or [kratzernj@verizon.net](mailto:kratzernj@verizon.net) for information.

The speakers and a synopsis of their session are as follows:

April 3. Dale Kratzer. Civil War Civil Engineering

This session discusses how civil engineers, skilled journeymen, and engineering works such as bridges, dams, canals, fortifications, mines and the like contributed to the war effort, played key roles in selected battles or campaigns, including saving a Union fleet. The session will cover Union and Confederate engineers, some "creative" engineering solutions, status of engineer troops, and the like.

April 10. Craig Breneiser. "The Tale of Two Councils"

This session discusses two "councils of war" and their impact on the Army of the Potomac and their commanding generals. The first, convened on May 4<sup>th</sup> 1863 in the woods surrounding Chancellorsville by Major General Joseph Hooker, would lead to the loss of the battle and, eventually, Hooker's job. The second occurred nearly two months later on the slope of Cemetery Ridge and would result in victory at Gettysburg and permanent command of the Army of the Potomac by Major General George Meade. This study, relevant even today with respect to management of any enterprise, is illustrative of "how to" and "how not to" lead

April 17. Tom Tate. Civil War Arms Manufacturing

The armory production of small arms during the Civil War was based upon the use of machine tools, hence the rise of the machine tool industry over time and the American system of manufacturing with division of labor and interchangeable parts. Based on this, Tom will argue that it was a conservative but wise policy to arm the Union infantry with the muzzleloader. And, to bring this closer to Reading, he will discuss the role of a local foundry that cast large cannon on the Rodman principle.

April 24. Dave Fox. David McMurtrie Gregg. Reading's Reticent Civil War General

This capable cavalry general, who married a woman from Reading, could be described as a dignified, sensitive and humble officer. Nevertheless, his career displayed steadiness, courage, and perhaps a sense of genius. His resignation from the Army before war's end remains a mystery to this day. His long life as one of Reading's distinguished citizens is enigmatic.

### **Reservations for the March 13, 2012 Meeting:**

**Dinner Reservation Procedures:** If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Our meal choices for March include Vegetable Lasagna, Shrimp Stir Fry, Chicken Cordon Blue, and Sirloin Beef Tips.

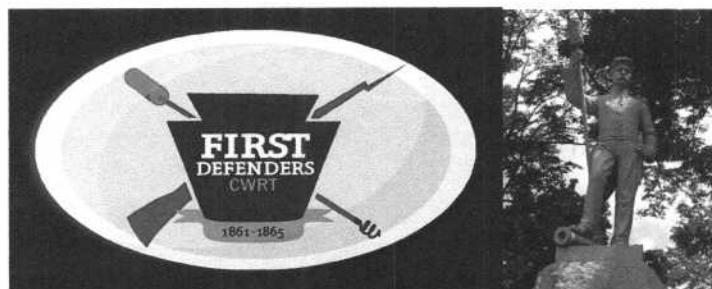
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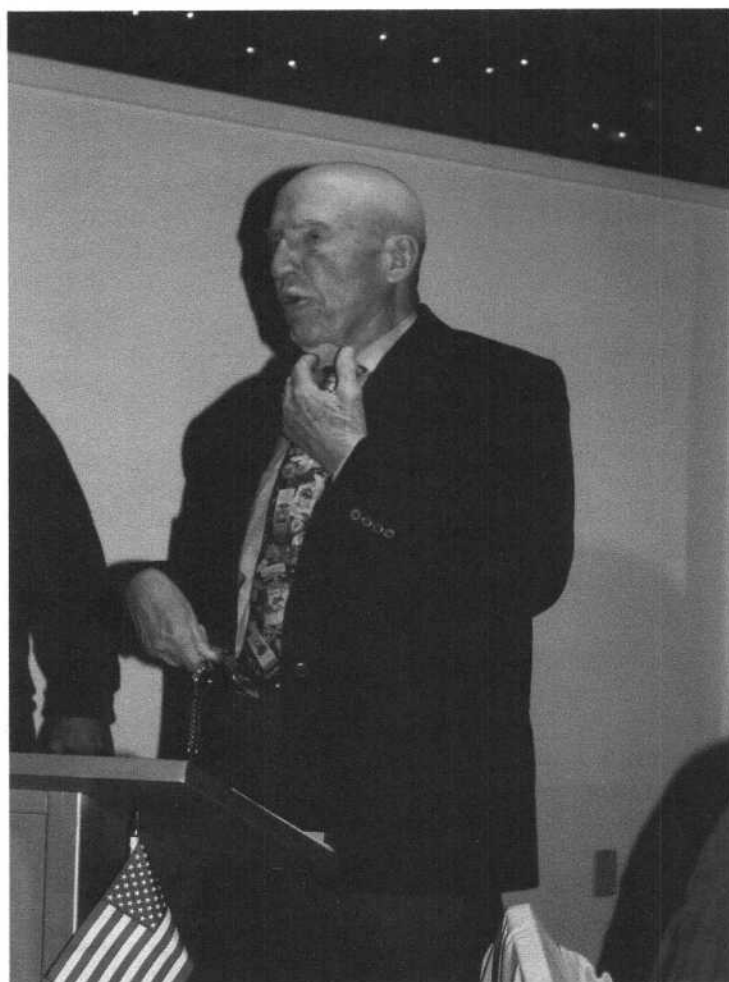
# The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

April 2012



[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)

## Ed Bearss Returns



### President's Message

Springtime is upon us and we are lucky again to have Ed Bearss as our speaker for April. We are expecting an overflow crowd again and will follow the same procedures as last year. The speakers have to be the only one with reserved seating. Everything else is first come, first served. As we did last year, the overflow tables will be in the left aisle at the top of the aisle. When dinner is over, those people will move to chairs in the auditorium, which London Reed will provide. Get there early, get a seat and be there for your friend. This will be a great time to introduce you to speak with Ed. Bring your book and be a sign for you. He will not bring books to sell, but will autograph one of his writings which you own. You may also get a picture taken with him if you bring your camera. We will have the American publisher and printer in a rooming to provide extra time for Ed. Please show pictures with the Center and staff. If you have any questions, please ask me and we will be glad to help you. The event will be broadcast on the 3rd. Thank you for your support.



## **Round Table Business**

President Joe Schaeffer called the March meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at Golden Oaks Golf Club by asking Rob Marks to offer a prayer and lead the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 70 members and guests present. We welcomed our speaker for the evening Chris Heisey and guests Jeff Reed and Ken Schwoyer.

Joe thanked those members who attended a gathering at the Historical Society on March 10 to familiarize round table members with the facility. Josh Blay, historian and curator for the Historical Society, had gathered Civil War artifacts owned by the society. Of special interest was a Zoave uniform from a Reading unit which will be used in an exhibit commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. Several members are currently working on research for that exhibit. Anyone still interested in helping should know that there is still plenty of time to help and much work that needs to be done.

We learned recently that funding for the traveling Civil War Road Show scheduled for the Kutztown Folk Festival has been restored. Round table members may have the opportunity to help staff the exhibit during the festival.

## **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Lori Border reported that our balance from February's meeting was \$3203.14. Receipts from the February meeting totaled \$1217.81. Expenses incurred totaled \$1315.00 leaving a balance of \$3303.33. The preservation fund has a total of \$1136.00.

## **The June South Mountain Trip**

The June 9 trip flyer/registration form will be emailed to those who receive the newsletter electronically; for those who have the newsletter mailed, hard copies will be available at the April 10 meeting. Also, the flyer is available on our website under the "Trips" link. Reminder, the trip will be opened to the public beginning April 11 and the bus will be filled on a first-come basis if the bus isn't filled by April 10.

Don

## **Ed's Artifacts**

Ed Ewing provided us with an 1855 pistol carbine. This type gun was used by dragoons and not very favorably. It was a 58 caliber rifled gun with a detachable shoulder stock. He also brought an 1856 cartridge case which is rare. Troopers didn't care for these pistol carbines and much preferred the 1851 Navy revolver. The pistol carbine uses a Maynard cap system with 25 caps per roll which were useless when wet. Troopers could fire two rounds per minute.

As always, thanks, Ed, for sharing your vast collection of artifacts. You never seem to run out of surprises.

## **April Trivia**

by Barbara Shafer

1. What was ceremoniously raised over Ft. Sumter, SC, following the South's surrender at Appomattox Courthouse, VA?
2. What significant event in American history occurred on April 12, 1861?
3. April 1863 was prelude to what battle?

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This session discusses two "councils of war" and their impact on the Army of the Potomac and their commanding generals. The first, convened on May 4<sup>th</sup> 1863 in the woods surrounding Chancellorsville by Major General Joseph Hooker, would lead to the loss of the battle and, eventually, Hooker's job. The second occurred nearly two months later on the slope of Cemetery Ridge and would result in victory at Gettysburg and permanent command of the Army of the Potomac by Major General George Meade. This study, relevant even today with respect to management of any enterprise, is illustrative of "how to" and "how not to" lead

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## **A First Defenders' History Lesson**

submitted by Barbara Shafer

On the 15th of April, 1861, the President of the United States issued his proclamation calling out the militia of several States to the number of seventy-five thousand men. On the afternoon of the same day, the Secretary of War telegraphed to the Executive, that a call had been made on Pennsylvania for sixteen regiments. Two regiments were wanted within three days.

The President's call, accompanied by an appeal from the Executive, was telegraphed to every part of the Commonwealth, urging men to come forward, in companies and squads, with all possible dispatch, to the defense of the imperiled Capital. Aside from the city of Philadelphia, there were few militia companies fully armed and equipped; and of these, few contained even, the minimum number of (32) men. As the appeal for men, spread through the towns and villages of the interior, the officers of the few organized companies, hastily called their men together, and tendered their services to the Governor.

Among the first to promptly respond, were the Ringgold Light Artillery. They were recruited at Lewistown and mustered in April 18, 1861 in Harrisburg, PA.

The Ringgold Light Artillery of Reading was organized and equipped in 1850, under James M' Knight, Captain. It was armed with four six-pounder brass field pieces and caissons, with full equipments of artillerists, including sabers, and mustered over two hundred men. It was composed of good material, was well drilled, and was the pride of the city of Reading.

Those responding as officers were James M. M'Knight, Captain, Henry Nagle, First Lieutenant, William Graeff, Second Lieutenant, George W. Durrell, First Sergeant, Daniel Kreisler, Second Sergeant, Henry Rush, Third Sergeant, Jeremiah Seiders, Fourth Sergeant, Levi J. Homan, First Corporal, F. W. Folkman, Second Corporal, Jacob Womert, Third Corporal, Horatio Leader, Fourth Corporal, John A. Hook, Musician, George B. Eckert, Musician

Those serving as Privates were Ammon, Anthony, Ansart, Charles B., Anthony, James M., Ash, Solomon D., Bechtel, Aaron, Bechtel, David, Berger, Augustus, Bickley, George S., Bitting, Charles A., Bouse, Harrison G., Bowers, William W., Burkert Reuben R., Christ, William F., Coleman, Henry, Dickinson, Daniel M., Drenkel, Amos, Eben, William C., Ebling, Edward G., Eisenbeis, Henry E., Eltz, Robert, Ermentrout, Benjamin F., Evans, Samuel, Faust, Adam, Fix, William T., Fleck, Henry, Fox, Harrison, Fox, James A., Frantz, Christian C., Frees, Adam, Frees, John, Jr., Gebhart, Charles W., Gehry, Addison, Geiger, Henry, Gentzler, James H., Gries, Lemuel, Haberacker, William, Hamilton, Samuel, Helms, Andrew S., Hessler, Jacob J., Hill, Nathaniel B., Housel, Franklin, Huyett, Amos, Kennedy John L., Knabb, George W., Koch, John D., Lantz, Peter A., Lauman, George S., Leaf, George D., Leeds, Isaac S., Leeds, Jacob, Leoser, Christopher, Levan, Aaron H., Levan, Charles, Levan, Daniel J., Lutz, Harrison, Mast, James L., Miller, William M., M'Ilvaine, Howard, M'Knight, Joseph H., M'Lenegan, John H., Mock, William P., Muhlenberg, Charles P., Neihart, Henry, Pearson, Edward P., Jr., Peck, Frederick, Pfleger, James, Phillippi, Frederick H., Rambo, Francis, Rambo, Isaiah, Rapp, William, Jr., Rhoades, George B., Ritter, Ferdinand S., Rush, Henry, Sauerbier, William, Scull, Edward, Seyfert, Albert H.,

Shaeffer, Franklin, Shearer, Jonathan, Sherman, Jackson, Shirey, Albert H., Silvis, George W., Smeck, Franklin, Smith, Edward L., Smith, William H., Spangler, Charles, Whiteside, Henry, Witman, Daniel, Yeager, Frederick M., Yohn, Daniel S., Yohn, John L.

Source: Bates, Samuel P. *History of the Pennsylvania Volunteers, 1861-65*.

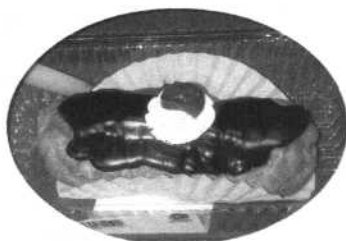
From Barbara Shafer--

**"I cannot raise my hand against my birthplace, my home, my children."**

**Robert E. Lee, on choosing to fight for the South**

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Thank you, Denton. You made me smile! And thanks to everyone else who helps to make my job easier. It's the little things in life that make the difference! Thanks, Craig, for your ever-abiding technical abilities and fast-draw phone. Linda Z.



**Reservations for the April 10, 2012 Meeting:**

**Dinner Reservation Procedures:** If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Our meal choices for April include Cheese Stuffed Shells, Broiled Flounder, Chicken Marsala, Beef Pot Roast.

**The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, April 2, 2012, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.**

**\*NOTE\*** Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. The Round Table will be billed for your meal whether you attend or not. Please understand that you will be asked to reimburse the RT should you not attend after having made a reservation.

**2011-2012 Program Schedule**

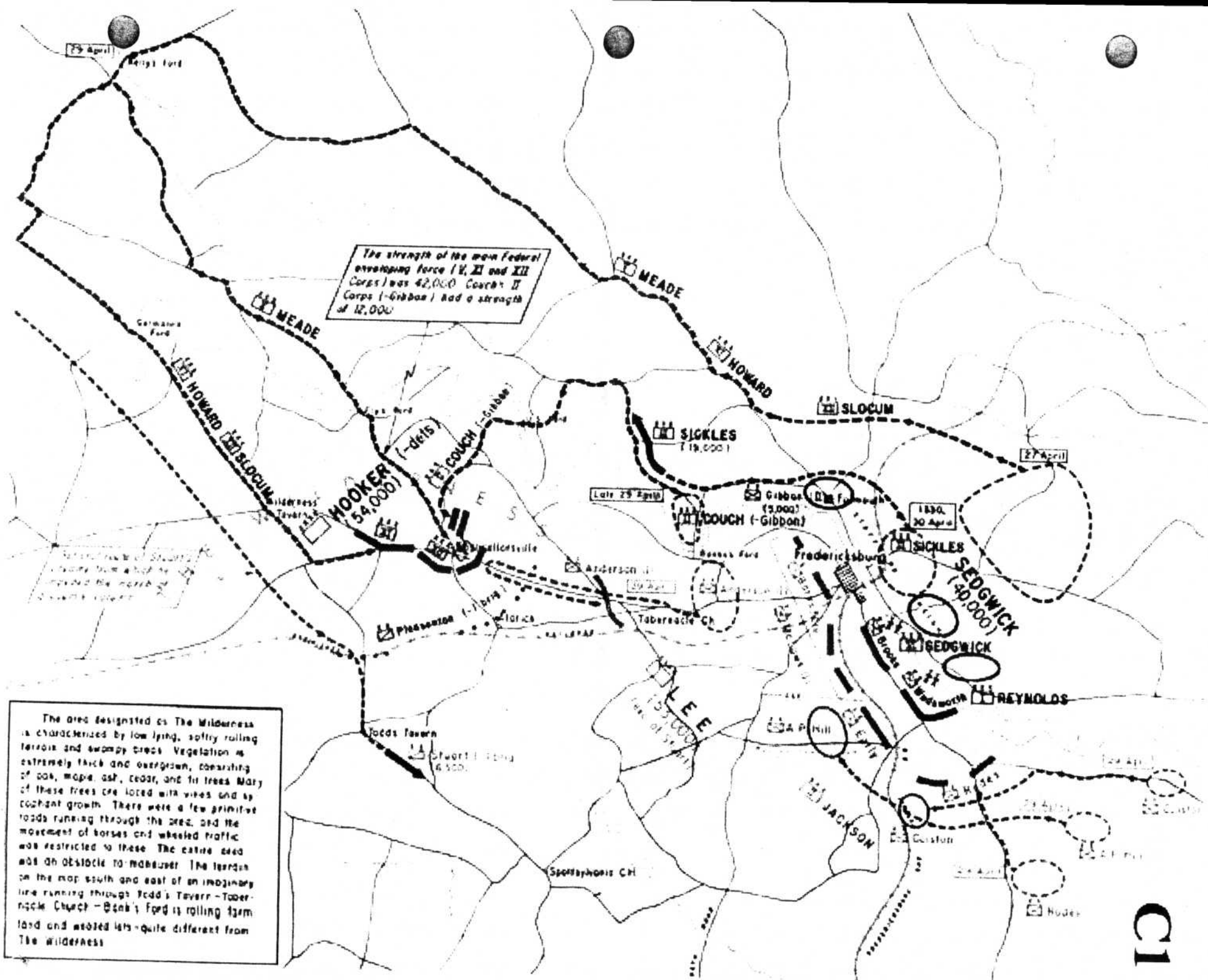
April 10, 2012  
May 8, 2012  
June 9, 2012

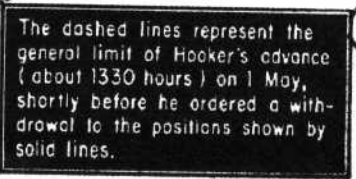
**Edwin C. Bearss**  
John Hoptak-- South Mountain  
Field Trip to South Mountain

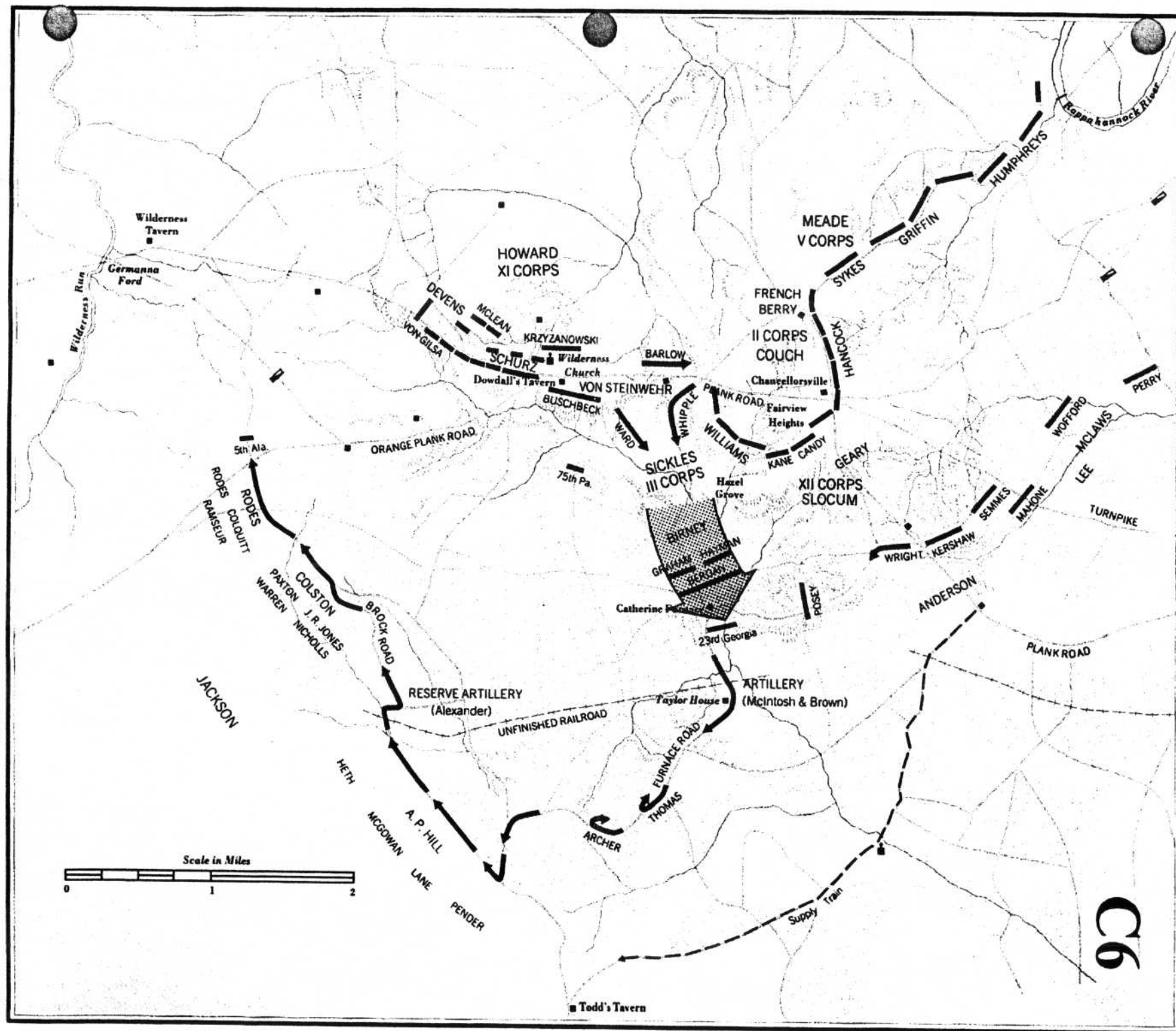
## Contact Information

President	<b>Joseph Schaeffer</b>	<a href="mailto:jschaeffer@heartlandsettlement.com">jschaeffer@heartlandsettlement.com</a>
Vice President/ Chaplain	<b>Robert Marks</b>	<a href="mailto:magumbacat@yahoo.com">magumbacat@yahoo.com</a>
Newsletter/Recording Secretary	<b>Linda Zeiber</b>	<a href="mailto:zeibers@comcast.net">zeibers@comcast.net</a>
Membership	<b>David Unger</b>	<a href="mailto:dsunger@comcast.net">dsunger@comcast.net</a>
Treasurer	<b>Lori Border</b>	<a href="mailto:borderlori@verizon.net">borderlori@verizon.net</a>
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Programs/Trivia	<b>Barbara Shafer</b>	<a href="mailto:barbajeanz@juno.com">barbajeanz@juno.com</a>
Programs/Adopt a Position	<b>Don Stripling</b>	<a href="mailto:donstripling54@msn.com">donstripling54@msn.com</a>
Programs/Web	<b>Errol Steffy</b>	<a href="mailto:esteffy1741@comcast.net">esteffy1741@comcast.net</a>



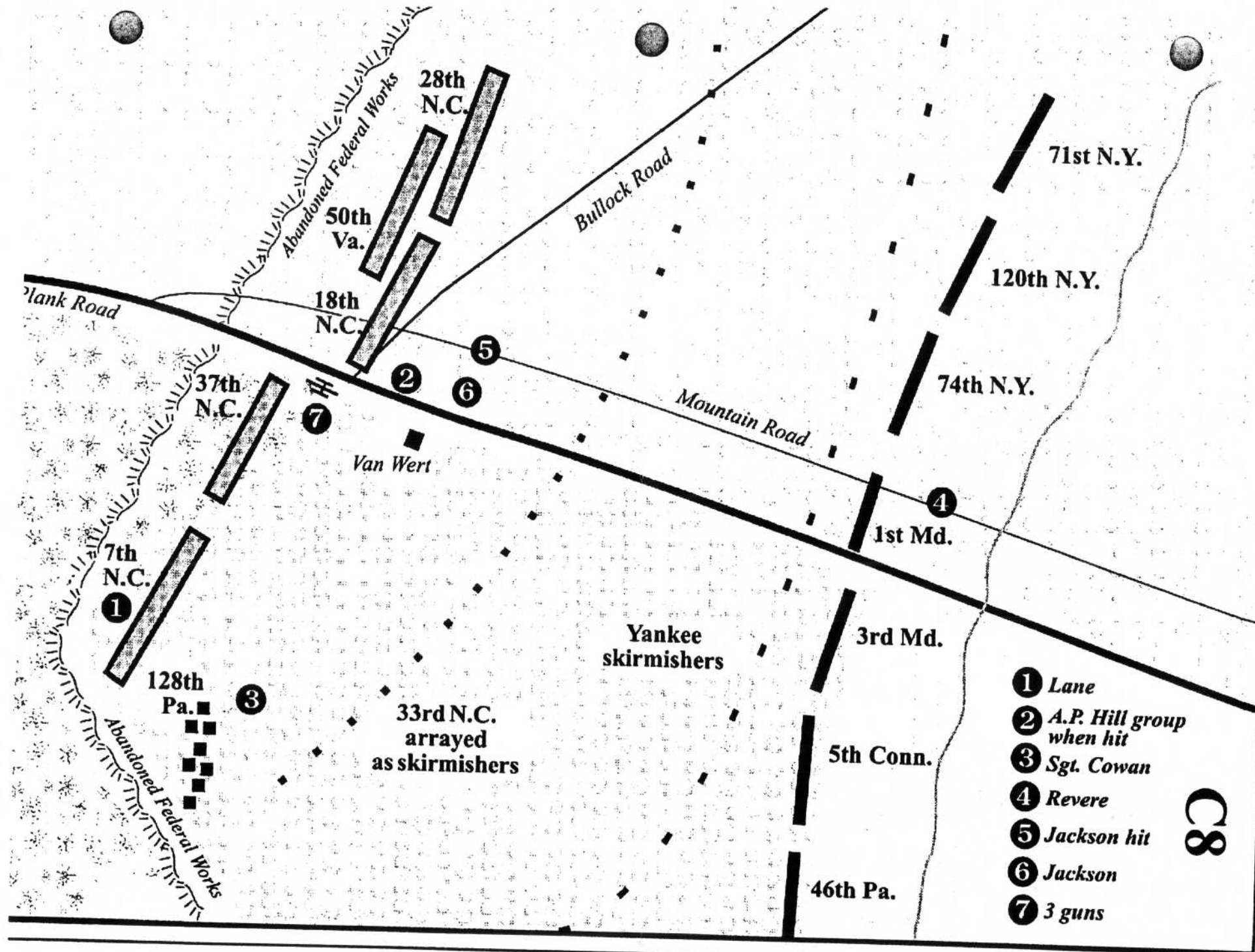






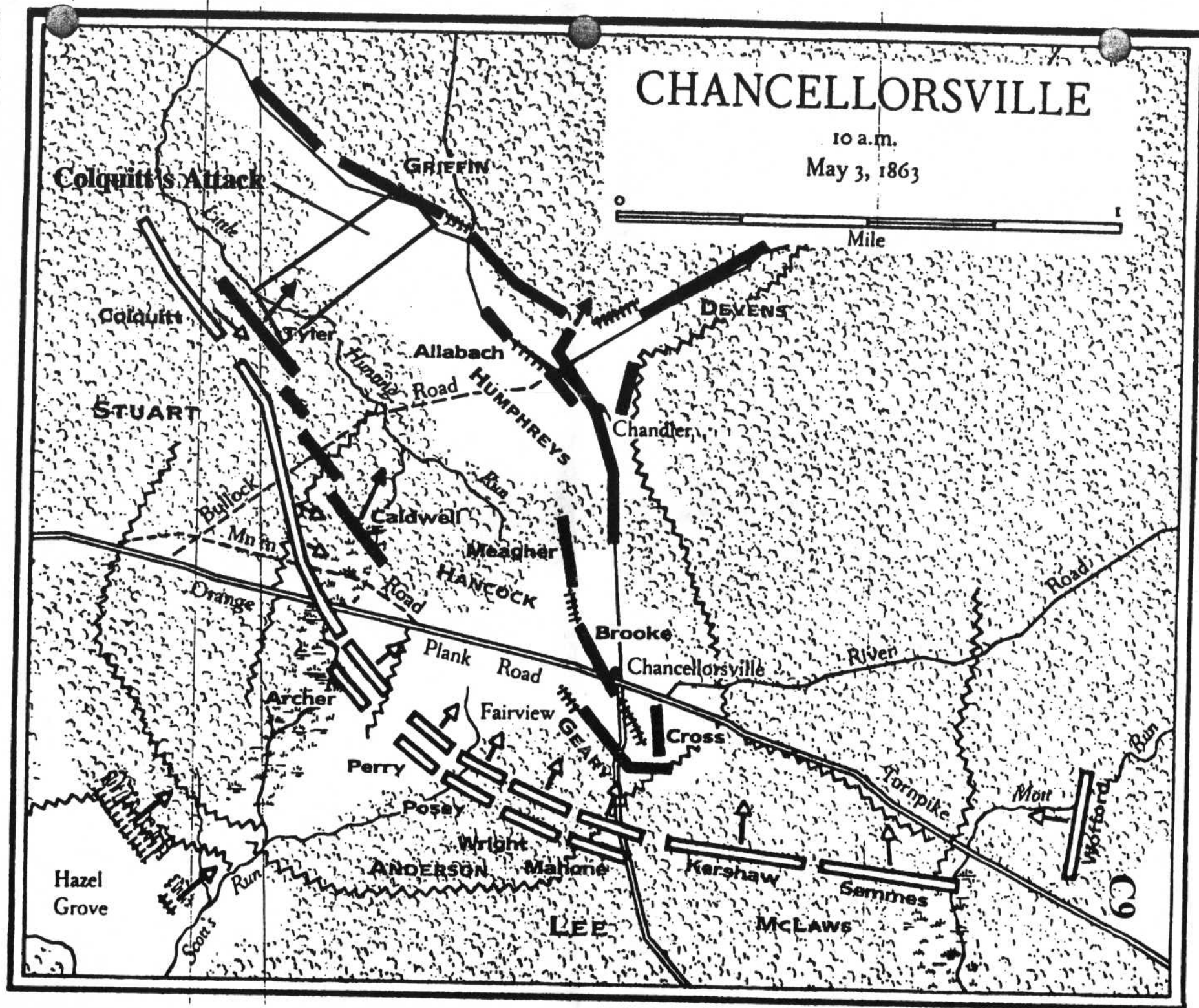


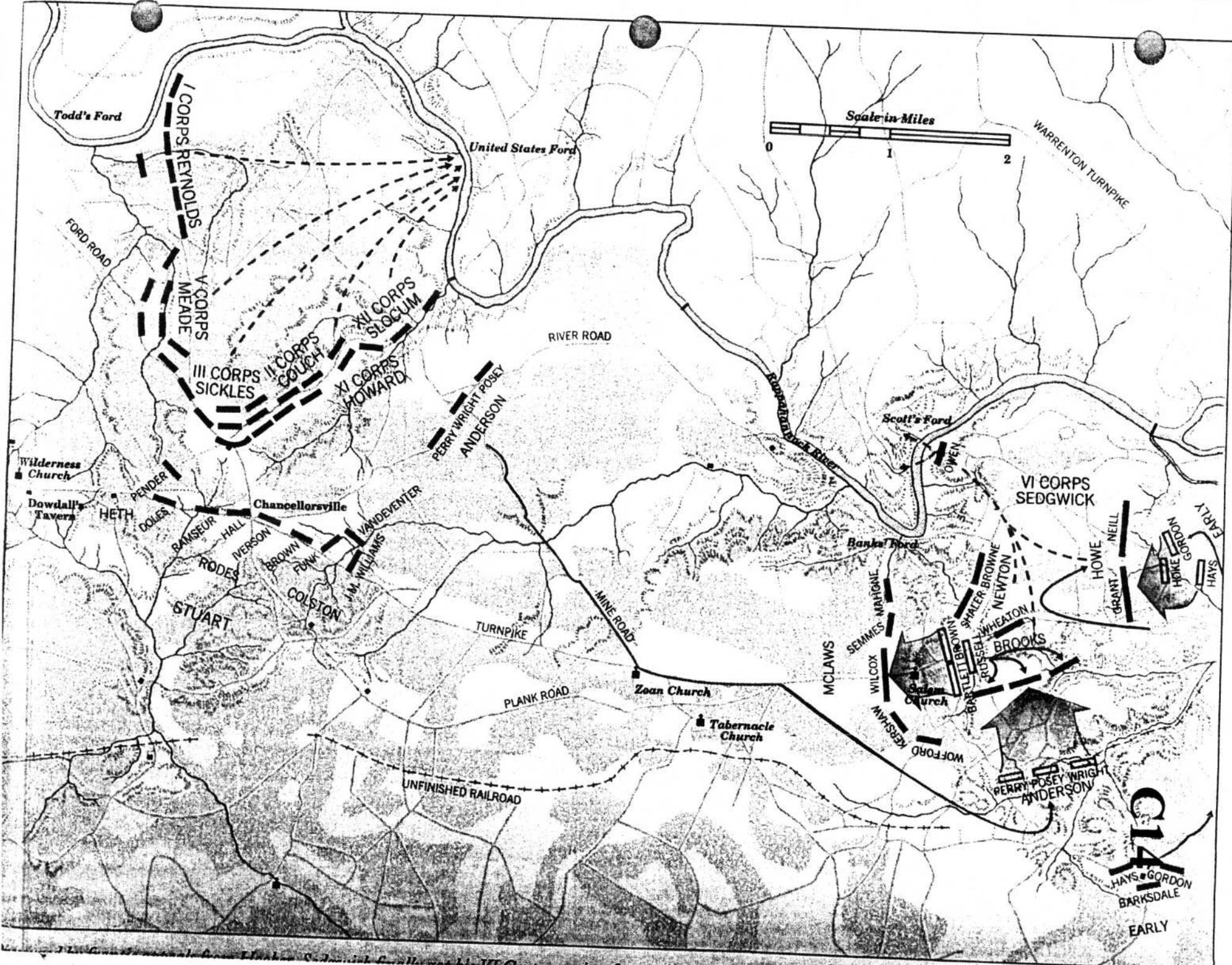




Area of Jackson's reconnaissance, night of May 2, 1863







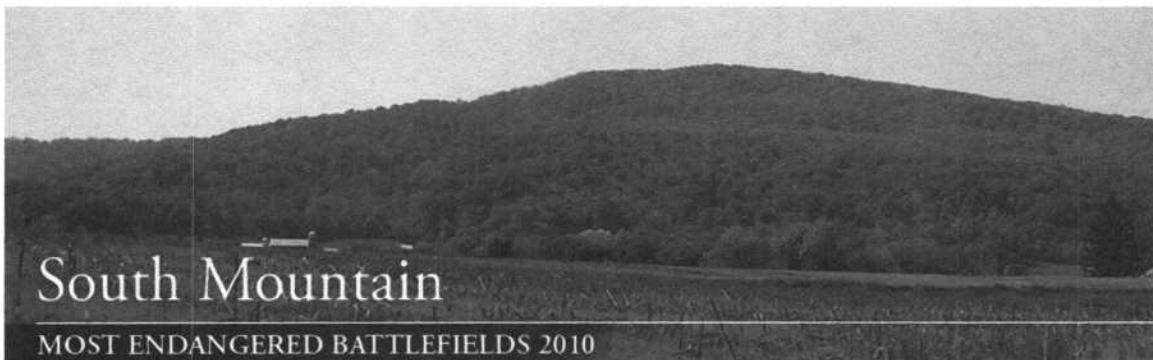
Map of the Battle of Chancellorsville, showing the positions of the Union and Confederate armies on the morning of May 3, 1863. The map is oriented with North at the top. The Union army is shown in black, and the Confederate army is shown in white. The map includes labels for various units, roads, rivers, and geographical features. A scale bar in miles (0 to 2) is located in the upper right. A compass rose is in the lower right.

# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**May 2012**



[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)



**John Hoptak Presents the May Program on South Mountain  
May 8, 2012**

## **The President's Message**

Spring 1862. Union armies in the West are gobbling up huge chunks of Confederate territory. Two state capitals and major stretches of the Mississippi, Tennessee, Cumberland and Ohio Rivers are in Yankee hands. That being said, President Lincoln cannot rejoice. Back East, he has turned to George B. McClellan, Little Mac, to rejuvenate the Army of the Potomac. Brilliant at organizing and rebuilding his army, McClellan hesitates to use it. Now numbering over 100,000 men, the Army of the Potomac will become known sarcastically as "McClellan's bodyguard". Lincoln prods Little Mac to strike quickly and destroy Joseph E. Johnston's army in Virginia. Johnston has barely half as many men. McClellan places more emphasis on taking the Rebel capital of Richmond. A grand armada of 400 ships is organized to move the massive Union army down the Chesapeake, depositing them on the Virginia Peninsula, from which point, they can march seemingly unopposed into Richmond. McClellan and Johnston, both known to never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity, finally battle at Seven Pines/Fair Oaks. Johnston is carried from the field with a devastating wound. Jefferson Davis replaces him with Robert E. Lee. McClellan is excited because he knows that Lee is "cautious and weak...likely to be timid and irresolute in action". Little Mac could not have been more wrong. Lee strikes immediately, commencing what will become known as the Seven Days battle. Some of the



hardest fighting of the war occurred on seven successive days at Chickahominy, Beaver Dam Creek, Gaines' Mill, Savage Station, Glendale and Malvern Hill. The Army of the Potomac wins or fights to a draw everywhere except Gaines' Mill, yet each night McClellan retreats. Finally at Harrison's Landing, under the cover of Union gunboats, Little Mac loads his army back on the transports and sails back to Washington with his tail between his legs. This is not the last time a Union general will pay dearly with the lives of his soldiers for underestimating Robert E. Lee.

Joe Schaeffer

### **Elections to be Held during May Meeting**

Elections for the Board of Directors will be held at the May meeting. At this moment, most of the Board members have volunteered to serve again. Please remember to thank them for their service. We may need to fill one or two positions, but I am not sure at this time. We will make an announcement at the meeting. If you or anyone whom you know would like to serve, please contact Joe, or put names in nomination at the meeting. Remember, this is your organization, and you may nominate and vote on any position. Thanks, Joe.

### **Round Table Business**

President Joe Schaeffer called the April meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. at Golden Oaks Golf Club by asking Rob Marks to offer a prayer and lead the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 94 members and guests present. All guests were introduced and welcomed. Thank you to those who brought guests along to hear our distinguished speaker, Ed Bearss. We hope that those guests will consider membership for our next campaign. All are most welcome.

Joe encouraged members and guests to buy raffle tickets. Errol Steffy noted that our round table has donated over \$20,000 for battlefield preservation which is made possible through the monthly book raffle.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Lori Border reported that our balance from March's meeting was \$3303.33. Receipts from the March meeting totaled \$1699.00. Expenses incurred totaled \$1839.83 leaving a balance of \$3159.50. The preservation fund has a total of \$1295.00 less a \$200.00 donation in Chris Heisey's name to the Civil War Trust Georgia Campaign with 67-1 matching funds.

### **The June South Mountain Trip**

The June 9 trip flyer/registration form has been emailed to those who receive the newsletter electronically; for those who have the newsletter mailed, hard copies were available at the April 10 meeting. Also, the flyer is available on our website under the "Trips" link.

Rob Marks announced that 20 members have signed up for the trip at this point. Seats will now be offered to the public so, if you intend to take this trip, send your registration to Don Stripling or Rob Marks as soon as possible.

### **May Trivia**

by Barbara Shafer

1. The Battle of South Mountain was part of what Campaign in the American Civil War?
2. What future US President was at Fox's Gap?

3. How many pitched battles were fought for possession of three South Mountain passes?

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**From Dale Kratzer:--**

Dale would like all members to remind us about the Army's Heritage and Education Center near Carlisle. You can check this impressive place on the web at <http://www.armyheritage.org>.

The museum currently has a well-done Civil War exhibit. It will be there until August after which the permanent, but rotating, exhibit dedicated to the "common soldier" will go on display. Even if you have been there, the Civil War exhibit is recent.

There will be a Civil War genealogy workshop on June 23rd. The walking trail is dedicated to and has a wide variety of exhibits from all wars--French and Indian through Iraq/Afghanistan.

**W. T. Sherman & the Press**

submitted by Mike Straus

Florus Plumpton of the Cincinnati Commercial presented himself to the general armed with a letters of introduction, including one from his editor and another from Sherman's brother-in-law and asked for an interview. Sherman not only turned down the request-- he summarily ordered the correspondent to take the next train back where he came from.

Plumpton protested, "But General ! The people are anxious. I'm only after the truth."

Sherman blew up. "We don't want the truth told about things here- that's what we don't want ! Truth, eh? No sir ! We don't want the enemy any better informed than he is." He added, "Make no mistake about that train. See that house? They will feed you- say I sent you- but don't miss that train !"

Murat Halstead, editor of the Cincinnati Commercial at odds with Sherman over the Plumpton incident, printed this clinical diagnosis on December 11, 1861:

**The painful intelligence reaches us, in such form that we are not at liberty to discredit it, that Gen. William T. Sherman, late Commander of the Department of the Cumberland, is INSANE. It appears that he was at times when commanding in Kentucky, stark mad.... The harsh criticisms that have been lavished on this gentleman, provoked by his strange conduct, will now give way to feelings of deepest sympathy for him in this great calamity. It seems providential that the country has not to mourn the loss of an army through the loss of mind of a general into whose hands was committed the vast responsibility of the command of Kentucky.**

April 7, 1863 Major General W.T. Sherman to New York Herald reporter T.W. Knox--

" Come with sword or musket in your hand, prepare to share with us our fate, in sunshine and storm, in prosperity and adversity, in plenty and scarcity and I will welcome you as brother and associate. But come as you now do expecting me to ally the honor and reputation of my country and my fellow soldiers with you, as a representative of the press, which you yourself say make no slight difference between truth and falsehood, and my answer is, Never!"



**FYI**--from Barbara Shafer

**Monday, May 28, 2012 (Memorial Day)** – Come to the center of Montgomery County's seat, Norristown, to Hancock Square right outside the Courthouse, for a 12 noon Decoration Day ceremony presented by the W.S. Hancock Society. For the past 16 years we have been at Montgomery Cemetery on this date but due to be "locked out", we have moved our very pleasing and well attended ceremony to a place just as fitting in honoring this Montgomery County hero along with those who gave their lives during the American Civil War. The Soldier's and Sailor's monument that sits in Hancock Square gives memory to those brave men from Norristown and, in keeping with the origins of Decoration Day, we will come together for this solemn and patriotic day to honor their lives.

As this is our first year at Hancock Square and the year that celebrates the bicentennial of Norristown's founding, we hope you'll come and rediscover the monumental history and beauty of a town with an incredible past.

Music by the Norristown Chorale. Narrative by W.S. Hancock Society Historian, Bruce Stocking with wreath laying. For more information call – 610-630-0912 or drop by our website at [www.wshancockociety.org](http://www.wshancockociety.org)

### **2012 Civil War Reunion at Pennypacker Mills,**

As always, this is a *free* event and one of the few Civil War events in Montgomery County. We hope you'll mark your calendars and plan to attend the many exciting events we are planning to offer.

Our annual event will take place on the following dates:

- Saturday, June 2, 2012 - **Civil War Reunion Event (10 am to 5 pm)**
- Sunday, June 3, 2012 - **Civil War Reunion Event (10 am to 4 pm)**

**Pennypacker Mills - 5 Haldeman Road, Schwenksville, PA 19473**

**Web Site: [historicsites.montcopa.org/pennypackermills](http://historicsites.montcopa.org/pennypackermills), Phone: 610-287-9349.**

### **Speakers**

Speaker: *Scott Mingus*

Title: *"Flames Beyond Gettysburg: The Gordon Expedition, June 1863"*

Date: *Saturday, June 2, 2012*

The definitive account of the movements of Jubal Early's division of the Army of Northern Virginia through south-central Pennsylvania during the Gettysburg Campaign, including the "first" battle of Gettysburg on June 26, the raids on Hanover and Hanover Junction, the surrender of York, and the burning of the strategically critical Columbia-Wrightsville Bridge (the world's longest wooden covered bridge).

Scott L. Mingus, Sr. is a product development director and executive in the paper and printing industry, as well as a published American Civil War author with several books to his credit. He is a frequent public speaker at professional events, as well as within the Civil War community. He is a member of the York County Civil War Roundtable and the Johnny Reb Gaming Society.

Speaker: *John A. Marx, Colonel, U.S. Army, Retired*

Title: *"The General and the Private"*

Date: *Sunday, June 3, 2012*

John Marx served in the U.S. Army for thirty years, retiring with the rank of Colonel in 2003. During his post graduate education at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces (ICAF), he became interested in the career of Brevet Major General Galusha Pennypacker, the major character portrayed in a John Paul Strain painting, Landing at Fort Fisher. The ICAF class of 1995 commissioned the painting and selected the topic. As the committee historian, Col. Marx employed his life-long love of Civil War history to determine the man and the unit contributing the most to the successful capture of Fort Fisher. Beginning with the basic facts, Col. Marx became well versed in every aspect of Galusha's life. Later, after a visit to Pennypacker Mills, he expanded his interest to include Governor Samuel W. Pennypacker, Galusha's cousin and contemporary. His presentation, "The General and the Private" will explore both men's Civil War experience.

*Songs & Stories of the Civil War*

*Saturday, June 2, 2012*

Dressed in period soldier's clothing, Matthew Dodd takes listeners back in time to feel what it was like to be a soldier, civilian, loved-one-at-home or escaped slave in the Civil War Era. Through period songs, excerpts from actual letters, and anecdotes (humorous and poignant) Matthew evokes the feelings and passions of that pivotal era of American history. Matthew bypasses the stories of the generals and the battle movements and concentrates on the feelings and stories of the individual soldier (North and South), the mother, father, or sweetheart left at home, and of the men and women who "followed the drinking gourd" to freedom.

*The 69th Pennsylvania Irish Volunteers*

*A Civil War Band*

*Saturday, June 2, 2012*

Since 1999, the 69th PA Irish Volunteers Band has been performing at Irish Pubs, Barnes & Noble, elementary & middle schools, Celtic Festivals, The Friends of National Park at Gettysburg and elsewhere with all proceeds going to benefit Irish & American history preservation (including the Philadelphia Irish Memorial & WWII Memorial), tombstone dedications on Veteran's Day (close 60 to date) as well as Civil War battlefield preservation projects. The first battlefield monument at the Battle of Glendale, VA (dedication: June 2010) was the result of these efforts along with their long-term partnering with the Civil War Trust. Jim Lightheiser, the president of the 60,000+ member CWT, has noted "that there is no group in the hobby like the 69th PA Irish Volunteers." The 69th PA Volunteers Reenactor Regiment, with the help of the 69th PA band and their CD sales, have raised over \$90K to date. Their two musical

CDs of 19 songs each were released in 2002 - "Rock of Erin" and in 2006 - "In Their Honor" which have received excellent reviews with a number of songs on each CD being written by band members George Levins and Brian Rock. The band is featured in the movie and sound track of "Placebo" (released in 2008- Anomaly Films).

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Civil War trading cards at Gettysburg National Military Park, originally designed for younger visitors, are available for any age by asking at the desk in the Visitor's Center.

Gettysburg has eight cards, with photos and stories about Amos Humiston; George Meade, Jeremiah Gage, Robert E. Lee, the 9th Massachusetts Battery, the Soldiers' National Cemetery, the Gettysburg Address, and the Battle of Gettysburg.

Two dozen national parks, including the Civil War battlefields as well as other parks with Civil War connections, are distributing their own trading cards.

The cards are free and collectors can travel to other national parks to collect a complete set. The collectible series commemorates people and places of the Civil War and makes connections to places you can visit today. The trading cards are a Civil War 150th project.

### **Reservations for the May 8, 2012 Meeting:**

**Dinner Reservation Procedures:** If possible, please make your meal choices/reservation on the website. Our meal choices for May include Vegetable Stir Fry, Broiled Haddock, Chicken Picata, and Meat Loaf .

**The price is \$22.00 for meals. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection at 610.478.1717 no later than Monday, April 30, 2012, which is also the deadline for online reservations. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. This phone number is Joe Schaeffer's business phone so we are asking you to be considerate about not calling until after 5:00 p.m.**

**\*NOTE\*** Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations. The Round Table will be billed for your meal whether you attend or not. Please understand that you will be asked to reimburse the RT should you not attend after having made a reservation.

### **2011-2012 Program Schedule**

**May 8, 2012**  
June 9, 2012

**John Hoptak-- South Mountain**  
Field Trip to South Mountain