

THE FLAGBEARER

Greater New Bedford Mass Civil War Round Table

Tuesday January 28, 2020 7:00 pm

at the Fort Taber~Fort Rodman Military Museum

1000c Rodney French Blvd. New Bedford

Open to the public , no fees, no reservations needed

....News from the New Bedford Civil War Round Table

...Please check your records to be sure you have paid your 2019-2020 Round Table Dues. If in doubt, call me ...Bob Lytle 508-542-7630

...This is our first publication since the Dec Holiday dinner at Century House. It was a fun evening; - 47 of us in attendance. Thank you for coming out on a rainy evening.

...Congratulations to Larry Monastesse, a new RT member , - he won the 50-50 Raffle at the Holiday Dinner.

... Larry Roy continues to amaze us with his harmonica medleys. Thank Larry.

... Check out Peter Rioux's latest Civil War essay in this month's Flagbearer. We always look forward to Peter's work.

...General Joshua Chamberlain , a.k.a. Rev Bob Macfarlane, emailed me his best regards to the Round Table members. Bob was a founding father in our Round Table organization. He sent his photo for inclusion in this Flagbearer.

January 20, 2020

Jack Richer

Subject: Lee's Maryland Campaign and the Battle of Antietam .

Jack is one of our newest members and we are fortunate to have him active with our Round Table. He is also a member of the Rhode Island Civil War Round Table and has spoken at several area Round Table and Historical organizations.

He retired as principal of Charles E. Shea Senior High School, after a 33 year career with the Pawtucket School Department. Prior to his seven year administrative career, Jack taught French and English at Shea High School and Lyman B. Goff Junior High School. He also served as the boys' varsity hockey coach at Pawtucket West/ Charles E. Shea High School for eleven years, and as French Club advisor for ten years. He also was the senior class advisor for nine years.

Jack studied at Providence College and received his degree in Education with certifications in French, English, History, and English as a Second Language. He received his Master's Degree from Providence College in Secondary School Administration. He also received a Middle School Endorsement in Administration from Bridgewater State University.

He is now fully retired, but remains on the Executive Board of Pawtucket Credit Union. He also is a member of the Rhode Island Civil War Round Table, as well as the Varnum Continentals in East Greenwich. He also is active with the East Providence Historical Society, serving on the education and fundraising committees.

As you already know, the Battle of Antietam took place on September 17, 1862, and had the highest number of casualties of any one day battle in American history. This clash was also known as the Battle of Sharpsburg, and was part of General Robert E. Lee's first Maryland Campaign. Lee's successes in Virginia led him to believe it was time to invade the North. As part of the discussion on Antietam, some helpful background will be given in Jack's talk, on the discovery of the Lost Order Number 191, the Battle of South Mountain, the capture of Harper's Ferry, and the Battle of Shepherdstown.



Round Table member Jack Richer

2019-2020 Executive Board

Joe Langlois—President

Bruce Baggaly—V President

Martin Flinn—Treasurer

Bobby Watkins—Board of Directors

Bob Macfarlane—Board of Directors Emeritus

Peter Rioux—Board of Directors

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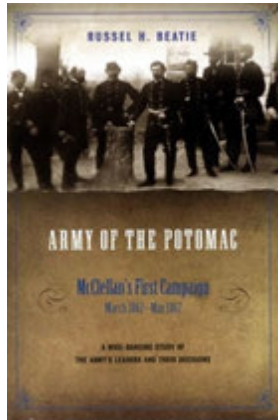
Bob Lytle—Flagbearer/Programs

Cell # 508-542-7630

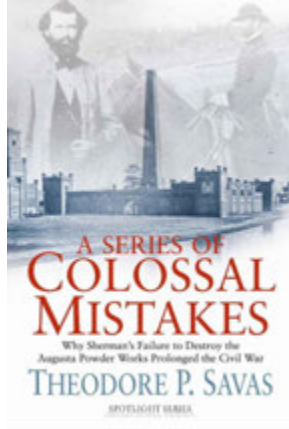
bobbylee76@comcast.net

New Books for your Library

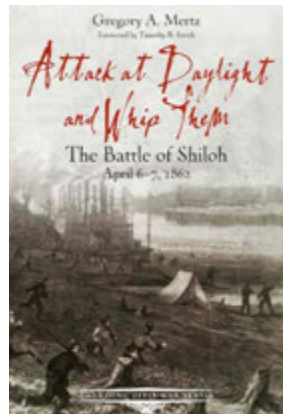
McClellan's First Campaign, the 3rd volume of Russel Beattie's masterful series, covers the pivotal early months of his Peninsula Campaign thru the siege of Yorktown, the pursuit toward Richmond, and the fighting at Williamsburg. Beattie tells the story thru the eyes of the high ranking officers, staff officers, and politicians. In some respects this book rewrites the history of Little Mac's effort to push his way up the Peninsula and capture Richmond.



Few students of the Civil War realize that almost all of the South's gunpowder was produced at a single location in Augusta, Georgia. The large and impressive facility made thousands of pounds each day. If it was captured or destroyed, the war would have necessarily ended in eight to ten weeks because there was no way to replace the gunpowder. The Augusta works began operations in April 1862 and from that day it was the single-most important military industry in the world.



Attack at daylight and whip them- that was the Confederate plan on the morning of April 6, 1862. The unsuspecting Union Army of the Tennessee commanded by Major General Ulysses S. Grant, had gathered on the banks of the namesake river at a place called Pittsburg Landing, ready to strike deep into the heart of Tennessee Confederates, commanded by General Albert Sidney Johnston's. Johnston's troops were reeling from setbacks earlier in the year and had decided to reverse their fortunes by taking the fight to the Federals.



Spring 2020 Speaker/Meeting Schedule

February 25, 2020

Mark Mello

Subject:
 "Abolitionists, Pacifists, and the Dilemma of the American Civil War in Hopedale, MA." As always, Mark's lectures are well re-searched and delivered.

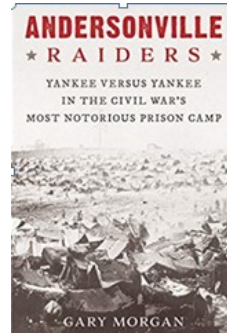


May 26, 2020

Mary Gorman A.K.A. Gary Morgan

"The Andersonville Raiders"

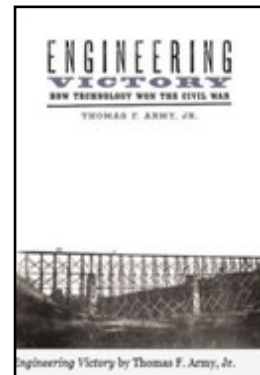
The first book devoted exclusively to the Andersonville Raiders.



April 21, 2020

Tom Army Jr.

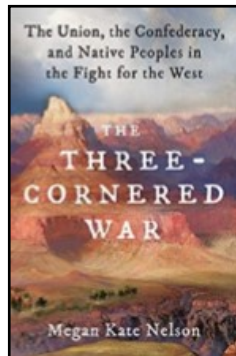
How technology won the war for the Union



Latest news from Megan Kate Nelson

...A frequent speaker and friend of this Round Table , Dr. Megan Kate Nelson, is kicking off her 2020 book tour with a visit to the New Bedford Civil War Round Table, September 22, 2020. Her new book, Three Cornered War, is set for a spring release; - Feb 11. This is her third book.

For a preview of her book , pick up a copy of “America’s Civil War” magazine. Her book is featured on the cover, with an excerpt of the book and intro by Ms. Nelson



...More from The Round Table headquarters.....

As mentioned on the first page of the Flagbearer, General Joshua Chamberlain, a.k.a. Rev Bob Macfarlane, Dir. Emeritus of our Round Table sends his regards to our Round Table members. He is retired ; lives in Chambersburg, PA , and walks the many battlefields near home.



... Please visit our new Facebook page , and “like” our page, as well as turn on “notifications”. In this manner we can communicate important news such as snow cancellations of meetings. I also maintain a robust digital email file. If you have not been receiving communications via this email digital file , please let me know and I will add your email address to the file.

Bob Lytle bobbylee76@comcast.net

This month in Civil War history - 1861

Jan 1....New Year’s Day was gloomy in Washington D.C. At the White House there was the usual reception, colorful and gay on the surface, but surface only. In Charleston, S.C. , preparations were underway to open the war.

Jan 4...Southern Sates began to seize federal forts and arsenals. Salmon P. Chase , prominent Republican from Ohio, arrives in Springfield, Ill, to discuss cabinet appointments with Mr. Lincoln.

January 9...”Star of the West” Union ship fails to resupply Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. Southern State Conventions begin to authorize succession. Mass meetings continued North and South.

Jan 14... The House of Representatives Committee of Thirty Three, like the Senate Committee of Thirteen were unable to agree on any compromise proposals.

Jan 18... President Buchanan named Joseph Holt of Kentucky as Secretary of War to succeed John B. Floyd, who had resigned under fire.

Jan 21... Five Senators withdraw in a dramatic and moving scene, leaving the chamber. Rumors continued to fly everywhere.

Jan 28... President-elect Lincoln was preparing his inaugural address and making plans to leave Springfield, Ill.

Jan 29... Kansas was admitted to the Union by Congress as the thirty-fourth state. The Wyandotte Constitution prohibited slavery and the state was largely Union in sentiment.

The events of January had tumbled one after the other until many felt both frustration and confusion.

...From the American Battlefield Trust

Trust event—"Park Day 2020" Mark your calendars and be sure to join the American Battlefield Trust personnel on April 4, 2020 for their 24th annual Park Day volunteer event. Sites from Maine to California will participate in this cooperative program, readying battlefield parks, museum, and other historic venues for the upcoming tourist season. Last year some 7,000 volunteers took part, spread across 160 locations nationwide. For more information go to their website www.battlefields.org/parkday

The Friends of Gettysburg , a.k.a. The Gettysburg Foundation , has announced the dates for the annual Work Day and Spring Muster. The Work Day will be June 6, 2020, and the Spring Muster dates are April 24, 25, and 26. The Work Day , June 6, 2020 will include fence painting , fence rebuilding, building painting, cleaning headstones, and so on. The Spring Muster will have Licensed Battlefield Guide talks throughout the weekend. This will include a Saturday night banquet, and a Sunday morning breakfast. See the program details at the Gettysburg Foundation website.

Www.gettysburgfoundation.org or call 717-339-2148

Gettysburg National Park announces their Winter Lecture Series. I have attended a couple of these and they are excellent. Also, you can find prior year Winter Lectures on You Tube. The lectures are held Sat and Sun afternoons at 1:30 pm at the Visitor Center. Here are examples of the speakers and topics for 2020.

Jan 11—Ranger Matt Atkinson, Freemasonry at Gettysburg, Fraternal Bonds Tested in Battle

Jan 12– Ranger Bert Barnett, Gettysburg– Recovery, Memorialization, Preservation, & Commercialization

Jan 18– Historian Codie Eash, Pray for the Oblivion to His Memory: Frederick Douglass on the Legacy of Robert E. Lee

Jan 19– Prof. Kent Graham, Gettysburg: The Living and the Dead

Jan 25-Ranger Steve Phan, The Defence of Washington during the Gettysburg Campaign

Jan 26-Ranger John Hessler, Neglected Heroes of Gettysburg: The Army Mule

Feb 8-Ranger Troy Harman, Is Gettysburg the High Water Mark?

Feb 9-Ranger John Hoptak, South-Central Pennsylvanians in the 54th Massachusetts Infantry

NEW BEDFORD CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

2019-2020 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership is valid for 2019-2020 Program Year, beginning September 1, 2019. Please complete this form, along with check payable to "New Bedford CWRT" and mail to:

New Bedford Civil War Round Table, C/O Martin Flinn, Treas., 39 Little Oak Road New Bedford, MA 02745

Name(s): _____ (Please print)

Type of membership: Individual (\$25.00) _____ Family (\$30.00) _____

Home Address: _____

City, State, & Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email Address: _____

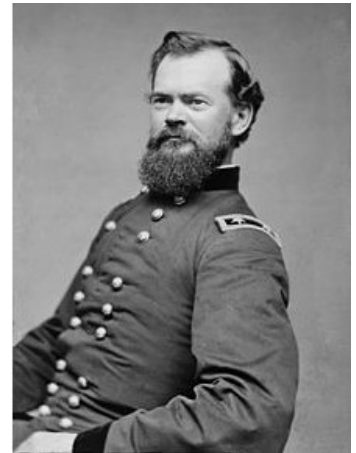
General James Birdseye McPherson, by Peter Rioux

Among all of the Union military leaders serving in command positions during the Civil War, few men evoked as much abiding respect from his superiors and troops as **James Birdseye McPherson**.

He was born in 1828 to a devout Methodist family on a small farm in Clyde, Ohio, later laboring as a youth both on the farm and a backwoods store to support his mother after his father had been declared mentally incompetent. He received his high school education at Norwalk Academy, subsequently receiving an appointment to West Point at an older age of 20. Four years later in 1853, he graduated along with Philip Sheridan and John Bell Hood, earning the distinct class ranking of first.



McPherson's house in Clyde



Upon graduation, McPherson served as the youngest assistant instructor in practical engineering at West Point, and then he was later assigned to the army's engineering division where he served on both continental coasts and supervised the construction of the defense installations in New York, Fort Delaware, and the Alcatraz Fortification. This coastal fortification, completed in 1859, was located near the mouth of the San Francisco Bay and was used to muster and train new recruits and new units during the four-year period of the war.

During the early period of the Civil War, he served as First Lieutenant of Engineering, but in recognition of his extensive ability, he was soon promoted as Superintendent of Volunteers, Commander of a division of the Thirteenth Corps and aide-de-camp to General Henry Halleck. In 1863, Halleck appointed him as Chief Engineer to General Grant in support of the Union's Fort Henry and Fort Donaldson campaigns. Upon his appointment, Halleck had instructed him to keep a close and observing eye on Grant due to the rumors associated with Grant's drinking. While serving this assignment, McPherson refused to provide any such report to Halleck, having developed a strong and loyal relationship with Grant. He continued to provide strong support to Grant during the successful Shiloh and Vicksburg campaigns when he commanded the Seventeenth Corps. During this campaign, while walking with Grant, both men were fired upon, requiring them to scramble to safety together after McPherson's horse had been shot and killed. Citing his performance, Grant expressed his strong view that McPherson would make one of the most brilliant officers in



the military service, regarding him as part of his own personal family. Upon receiving his appointment as Lieutenant General and assuming overall command of the Union Army, Grant wrote that he regarded Sherman and McPherson "as men to whom, above all others, I feel indebted for whatever I have had of success." He felt that Sherman, Sheridan, and McPherson were the three generals that he admired most. Sherman felt that if Grant and he were to die during the course of the war, McPherson should be appointed as Commander in Chief of the Union Armies.

In August of 1863, McPherson's rapid rise through the leadership ranks continued with his appointment as Brigadier General, in which he would be responsible for the command of Sherman's former army, the Army of Tennessee. Sherman had been designated to lead the Union attack into northern Georgia and Atlanta. As part of Sherman's drive toward Atlanta, McPherson led Sherman's right flank of 25,000 men originating from Chattanooga. McPherson had requested a brief leave of absence to marry his fiancée, Emily Hoffman, a request that Sherman denied due to his view that McPherson's leadership would be indispensable.

On July 22, 1864, while conferring with Sherman to prepare specific attack plans, McPherson heard shots emanating down from behind the Union line. Riding along a dense wooded area road with ridges and ravines he thought had been vacated, he was unexpectedly trapped by Confederate skirmishers who ordered him to surrender. Instead, McPherson quickly turned in an attempt to escape and return to his troops, but in doing so, he was fatally shot in the back falling from his horse. General McPherson was thirty-five years old.

The sight of McPherson's death deeply affected Sherman, as his body was carried on an unhinged door. He then appointed John Logan as McPherson's replacement, who subsequently ordered a massive counterattack upon Confederate troops crying, "McPherson and revenge, boys, McPherson and revenge," successfully forcing John Bell Hood and his Confederate troops to retreat.

Sherman wrote a tribute to McPherson's fiancée saying that "This Army will mourn his death and cherish his memory, that of one who, though comparatively young, had risen by his merit and ability to the command of one of the best armies of the nation. Few so blended the grace, faith, and manliness of the soldier. Those whom he commanded loved him even to idolatry. Every patriot, upon hearing the news of his death will feel a sense of personal loss. We have lost not only a great military leader, but a man, had he survived, was qualified to heal the national strife. His heroic qualities shone out as a star in the darkest night."

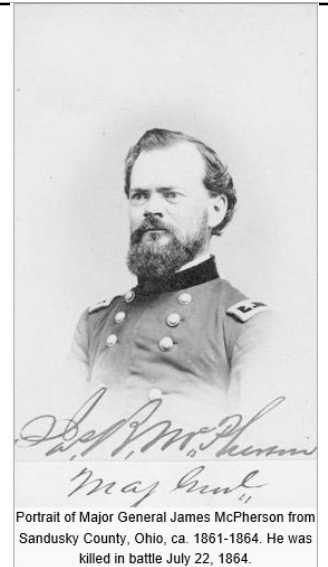
Grant, upon hearing of McPherson's loss, broke down, subsequently writing to the fallen general's grandmother, "A nation grieves. A nation had more to expect of him than almost any man living. I add a grief of personal love. Your bereavement cannot exceed mine."

James Birdseye McPherson, the second ranking Union officer to be killed in action during the war, was buried in an orchard in Clyde, Ohio, located where he once played in the farmlands as a boy. His bereaved fiancée Emily passed away 27 years later in 1891. She never married.

In 1881, a monument was erected over James McPherson's gravesite during a ceremony attended by former President Hayes and General Sherman. Lasting tributes to General McPherson are also located in east Atlanta at the site of his death, McPherson Square in Washington, D.C., Fort McPherson in Atlanta, and counties and towns located in Kansas, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Minnesota.

General McPherson's heroic, but early passing, leaves unanswered what rare and distinct post war leadership he would have been able to provide to a nation struggling to achieve its restoration.

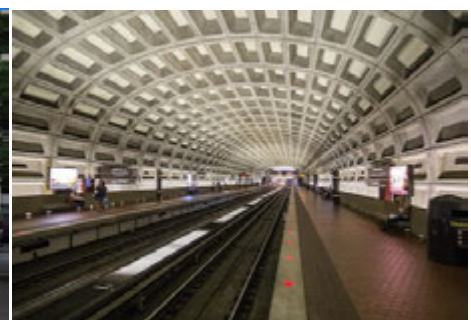
....Peter Rioux



Grave Site, Sandusky County, Ohio



Sculpture in McPherson, Kansas



McPherson Metro Station Washington, D.C.