

THE WASHINGTON VOLUNTEER

Vol. XII, #3 Bulletin of the Puget Sound Civil War Round Table November 1997



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Thanks!!

Our second meeting of the year was a great success as an overflow crowd gathered to hear an excellent talk by William Shea on why the Civil War in the Trans-Mississippi

area was not the hap-hazardous, unimportant area of conflict during the war as historians have presented it in the past. In his concise argument, Professor Shea demonstrated that while to the Confederate government the Trans-Mississippi was a minor theater of war, to the Union government it held strategic importance for its drive to reopen the Mississippi.

Next Meeting

Thursday November 13, 1997 at the Yankee Diner. 6 PM Social Hour with dinner at 7 PM. Choice of Teriyaki Chicken or Baked Ham with Hawaiian Sauce. The main entree is served with Caesar Salad, Biscuits, fresh vegetables, potatoes or rice with the chicken along with coffee or tea. Price is \$16.00 a person. Please write your menu choice, name and the name of any guests on the enclosed card and mail it ASAP. If you choose not to mail the card in be sure to call Dio Richardson if you plan to attend. The staff at the Yankee Diner can accommodate our needs if we can provide them with an accurate count of the number of dinners that they can expect to serve.

Program

Our November speaker will be Assistant Professor Joan Waugh of UCLA, who will speak on "A Sacrifice We Owed: The Shaw Family and the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts Regiment". Professor Waugh presented this speech last spring at a conference in Boston held in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Shaw monument where it was well received. Slides, video and music will make this a multimedia event. [The Shaw family and the 54th Massachusetts will also be the subject of a new book by Professor Waugh, which may appear this fall.] This promises to be another outstanding program.

Dues now payable

Members are reminded that only a few weeks remain to pay their dues. A single membership is \$15 and \$20 for a couple. If you need a new name tag then it is an additional \$5. Checks are to be made payable to PSCWRT and can be mailed to H. E. Crain, 17126 68th Ave. W, Edmonds, WA 98026-5206 or paid at the door. If dues are not received by December 31st, then non-paying members will be dropped from the roster & mailing list.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DRAWER

While the Sixth New Hampshire Volunteers was stationed at Russellville, in Southwestern Kentucky, the inhabitants of the surrounding counties were frequently annoyed by the incursions of guerrilla bands from Tennessee. News coming in one morning that a band of these outlaws had plundered one of the neighboring villages, Lieutenant-Colonel P-----, our active and efficient commander, immediately dispatched a small detachment of the regiment, commanded by Major Q-----, in pursuit of them. On arriving at the village of Middleton it was discovered that we were too late to intercept the marauders, and the Major ordered the horses unsaddled and fed. Now the Major's hostler was a son of Emerald, entirely ignorant of every thing pertaining to the equestrian art, and coming in from half an hour's scout through the village in a state closely bordering on intoxication, he put the Major's saddle on facing to the rear. When the horses were brought up for a fresh start, the Major, instantly discovering the mistake, demanded with a scowl why the saddle was put on in that manner. "An' sure," said Pat, a little terrified, "an' sure, Major, an' I didn't know which way you was going! An explosion followed, and Pat escaped without further rebuke.

Harper's New Monthly Magazine 4/65

THE CRAVEN

On that might day of battle, 'mid the booming
and the rattle,
Shouts of victory and of anguish, wherewith
Malvern's hill did roar,
Did a General now quite fameless, who in these
lines shall be nameless,
Show himself as rather gameless---gameless on
the James shore,---
Safely smoking on a gunboat, while the tempest
raged on shore,

Only this, and nothing more.

The Congressional Committee sat within the
nation's city,
And each Congressman so witty did the General
implore:
"Tell us if those at that battle, ' mid the booming
and the rattle,
Wert on a gunboat or in saddle, while the
tempest raged ashore?"
Answered he: "I don't remember---might have
been." What more?

Only this, and nothing more

"By the truth which is eternal, by the lies that
are diurnal,
By our Abraham paternal, General we implore,
Tell the truth, and shame the devil,---parent of
old Jeff, and evil'
Give us no more of such drivel, Tell us were
thou on the shore?"
"Don't remember,---might have been; " thus
spoke he o'er and o'er, ---

Only this, and nothing more

"On that day, sir had you seen a gunboat of
the name Galena,
In an anchorage, to screen a man from danger
on the shore?
Was a man about your inches, smoking with
those three French Princes,
With a caution which evinces care for such a
garde decorps?
Were you that man on the gunboat?" "Don't
remember,---might have been. The bore"

Only this and nothing more

Alfred Andhison in Evening Post

NEW BOOKS

Despite the recent efforts of historians during the past few decades to emphasize the importance of the Western theater in the Civil War, the battle of Gettysburg continues to hold readers fascinated. Almost monthly new books appear on the subject and this month is no exception as two fine studies on the battle have arrived in local bookstores. Carol Reardon's **Pickett's Charge in History & Memory**. [Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997. \$30] is an exhaustive study of how "Northerners and Southerners alike--shaped, revised and even sacrificed the "history" of the charge to create "memories" that met ever-shifting needs and spoke to deeply felt values." Gabor S. Boritt has edited another fine collection of essays by noted scholars in **The Gettysburg Nobody Knows** [New York: Oxford University Press, 1997 \$27.50] Eight thought provoking essays by experts such as Joseph T. Glatthaar, Emory M. Thomas Richard M. McMurry and our own roundtable member Amy J. Kinsel focus on controversial aspects of the battle. Both of these books are recommended to members seeking fresh insights into Gettysburg.

Preservation News

Vandalism and damage from acid rain have caused havoc with monuments at the East Cavalry Battlefield site at Gettysburg. In an efforts to restore and protect these monuments the Little Big Horn Association is undertaking a fund raising effort this year. If you would like to contribute please mail a check made out to LBHA Gettysburg Monuments and mail to LBHA, P.O. Box 1160 Legerange Park, Illinois 60526. If you would like additional information contact Stan Petraschuck, P.O. Box 328, Odessa, DE, 19730.

Subscribers Wanted.

Its time once again for those members who wish to renew or subscribe to the fine historical quarterly Civil War History and receive the discount rate for Civil War Round Table members to contact Marc Duval. Marc needs at least 5 members to renew or sign up for this fine periodical to get the discount rate. Please contact Marc by the next meeting.

On the Net

More and more Civil War resources are now available on the internet. One such service is the Civil War Virtual Archive Ring at www.webring.org. Through this site one can access [currently 54 sites] documents relating to a number of Civil War regiments such as the 6th Texas Infantry, or the 22nd Massachusetts Vol. Infantry. Poetry and Music relating to the Civil War as well as documents relating to individuals such as James Longstreet, or individual states can be found by using this site. An interesting site to browse.

Notices to be placed into the bulletin should be sent to Jeff Rombauer, 22306 255th Ave SE, Maple Valley, WA 98038 or by E-mail at jeff.rombauer@foxinternet.net

"images of God carved in (ebony)"

Civil War Book Notes

"let us vindicate our Manhood"

100 years ago on a misty spring morning in Boston, 65 aging veterans marched past a reviewing stand on Boston Common. In their honor, one of the most eloquent monuments to human courage and sacrifice was being dedicated to them, the surviving members of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Volunteers. Capping an effort of almost 34 years a memorial to the first black Union regiment from a northern state was finally being consecrated. But as these black veterans were being honored, the principles and ideals they had fought and died for were being abandoned. It was the era of "Jim Crow" with all the evils of second class citizenship, racism and discrimination being revisited upon African-Americans. White Americans, both North and South in their rush to patch up old sectional hatreds "reduced the contributions of black soldiers to a negligible level." As Joseph Glatthaar notes in his excellent study **Forged In Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers** the military legacy of USCT troops in the Civil War "was mostly negative. Military authorities simply did not believe blacks would fight despite the performance of USCT troops during the Civil War, and the practice of having segregated units in the US Army continued until after World War II.

It is fitting then that *The Shaw Memorial* by Augustus Saint-Gaudens, decades after its dedication, would play a role in changing the public perception of African American contributions during the Civil War. Inspired by the monument several books were published in the 1960's and 70's on Robert Shaw, the 54th Massachusetts and the Shaw Memorial. These books served as the basis for one of the most successful and realistic Civil War movies

Glory, which re-educated millions of Americans to the important contributions of black troops during the war. For members wishing to read more on Shaw, the 54th Massachusetts and the memorial the following books are recommended.

➤ **History of the Fifty-Fourth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry 1863-1865.** Luis F. Emilio. Boston: The Boston Book Company, 1894

The standard history of the regiment written by one of its white officers.

➤ **One Gallant Rush: Robert Gould Shaw & His Brave Black Regiment.** Peter Burchard. New York: St Martins Press, 1965.

A fine modern account of the 54th Massachusetts and its part in the attack on Battery Wagner in 1863. This work along with the one below served to inspire the screen writer of the movie *Glory*.

➤ **Lay This Laurel: An Album on the Saint-Gaudens Memorial on Boston Common Honoring Black and White Men Together Who Served the Union Cause with Robert Gould Shaw and Died with Him July 18, 1863: With Photographs by Richard Benson and an Essay by Lincoln Kirstein.** New York: Eakins Press, 1973.

An eloquent pictorial work on the Shaw monument as it appeared in the early 1970's, along with a history behind its construction.

➤ **"The Black Soldier of the Civil War in Literature and Art" in American Studies in Black and White: Selected Essays 1949-1989.** Sidney Kaplan. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1991.



In this lengthy essay, documented with 78 pictures, Kaplan examines how black soldiers were depicted in American art and literature and the important contribution of The Shaw Memorial.

➤ **The Work of Augustus Saint-Gaudens.** John H. Dryfhout. Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1982.

A massive catalog of all the works of Saint-Gaudens. The Shaw Memorial is depicted on pages 222 to 229 with numerous photos showing the evolution of the design for the monument.

Civil War Surgeon in a Colored Regiment. Walter De Blois Briggs. Berkeley, 1960.

Blue-Eyed Child of Fortune: The Civil War Letters of Colonel Robert Gould Shaw. Edited by Russell Duncan. Athens & London: The University of Georgia Press, 1992

On The Altar of Freedom: A Black Soldier's Civil War Letters From the Front. Corporal James Henry Gooding. Edited by Virginia M. Adams. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1991.

A Voice of Thunder: The Civil War Letters of George E. Stephens. Edited by Donald Yacovone. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997.

Four important collections of letters from members of the 54th Massachusetts, the first from a surgeon in the regiment; the second letters of its first commander, the last two collections being letters written by black soldiers of the regiment.

LETTERS HOME: EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS OF THE CIVIL WAR

Folly Island, SC June 6, 1863
Sixth Reg., Co. A, Conn. Vol.

Dear Sister

I received your very kind and welcome letter today. (for we had a mail here) and was very glad to hear from home. I am well as usual. It is very warm weather here. I suppose you have similar weather at home now. Our company are housed at the Point doing work on the Batteries. they are fortifying very strong here. I shall have to dispense with news this time. Our furloughs don't go on very brisk yet but they will let me go home soon and I shall come home. Some time this season I want to come home when fruit is ripe about September. I can wait until then If I choose. When I do come home I hope to have a good time along with you for I expect to be at home thirty days and we can have a good time while I am at home if we are a mind to. Well I will not count chickens before they are hatched. I wrote George a letter some time ago but he as not answered it yet. I don't see why he don't write one. Why Chris how much do you weigh. I don't weigh but 130 lb.. You weigh more than I do. You wish to know how old my chum is. He is twenty-five years old in his boots. He and I are going to try to get a furlough together. If we do he is coming home with me and you can have all the chance in the world to see him but I hope there will be something strange happen when he comes (if he comes). He and I are going to get our pictures taken together and have them sent home so you will get one of them and probably he will ant yours but I don't know as you will fancy him.

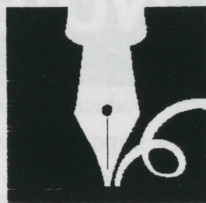
You send me down some of your Poetry in every letter and you . I got a transcript today of date 21 May. Then I read you letter I thought that you were getting to be very lively for a girl of nineteen years. I don't know about Elizabeth that is your sending me [illegible] to see her. I can go without your sending me if I choose and If you wish to take a boat ride with my chum I will not hinder you but no more of this hoping to see you soon. I now close. My love to all. A good share of it to you and mother . Is is getting to be late and I will close.

From your loving brother
Halsey Bartlett.

Hilton Head, S.C. Aug. 1 1863
Sixth Reg., Co. A, Conn. Vol.

Dear Sister

I received your very kind letter in due time and now hasten to answer it. I am well and in good health. I received a letter from Mother today of date 15 of last month which I have answered today. Well Christina was very much pleased to find you so well. I have told mother all about the charge on Fort Wagner and the Battle on Morris Island. How terrible is war. While in the Fort I could see men fall wounded and dying and when I came of the fort the Beach was lined for more than a mile with dead and wounded and such a sight. I never wish to see another such a sight. They throw shot and shell out one [after] another on both sides nearly every hour of the day. Our Reg. one night accompanied with two other regiments were on detail drawing up a large pair of wheels with a large mortar attached. A



shell came from [a] rebel battery and hit the wheel and busted wounding 19 out of the different Regs. The night before I started away from there, there was thirty killed and wounded at our batteries. Such is war. You will see by mothers letter how I got out of the scrape. Our blockade has moved further up, nearer Charleston and everything looks as if Charleston must fall soon.

One thing is sure I am out of danger now, no fear of getting hit by [illegible] My chum was on guard the night of the charge and was not in the battle but he was in the one of the tenth. Our gunboats at the blockade near Charleston burned one boat trying to run of Charleston. I saw her burn and last week they took another captive prize there and at Warsaw River our men took a capitol Prize. She had four Whitworth guns on Board. My chum washed me a pair of stockings today. He says "He and I will go down next week and have our pictures taken so you can have your wish. So you may expect one fore long. My chum has sent mine home and it is no more than right that we should exchange. When we have each of us so good looking sisters but you need not tell Elizabeth of this, keep dark. I would like to have Elizabeth's picture but you need not tell her so. I see by your letter that you are all taken up with Geo. Martin. Well George is a good fellow and I don't wish you to have a better friend than him. When I left Folly Island to go to Morris I left my knap sack and I had a book with Judson's picture and about a dozen postage stamps taken out. I am sorry they are gone but my chum will let me have some to put on this letter. My Love to Ellen. My Love to my dear sister.

From your loving brother Halsey.

Halsey Bartlett enlisted as a private in Company A, Sixth Connecticut Volunteers. August 21st, 1861 from the town of Killingly, CT. The Sixth Connecticut saw extensive duty along the coast of South Carolina and Georgia during the first three years of the Civil War. It participated in the Capture of Port Royal, in November 1861, the siege of Fort Pulaski in April, 1862. During the summer of 1863 it participated in the operations around Charleston, SC including the attack at Fort Wagner July 18, 1863, where it participated along with the 54th Massachusetts and other units in the charge against that fortification. It the charge against the sea-face of Fort Wagner, the Sixth took into action about 400 men and "its loss was about one hundred and forty, or 35 percent of the number engaged." In the spring of 1864 the regiment was transferred to Gen. Ben. Butler's army near Petersburg, VA where it saw action for the remainder of the year. It was made part of the 2nd expedition against Fort Fisher in January 1865 and finished out the war by participating in the capture of Wilmington, N.C. in February of that year. As for Halsey Bartlett he would re-enlist in December 1863, only to be killed by a rebel sharpshooter June 17, 1864 at Bermuda Hundred, VA.

Our thanks to member Jim Dimond for sending us these two letters from his collection.

If you have letters or diaries from soldiers who fought or served in the Civil War and would like to share it with the round table please submit a transcript to Jeff Rombauer, 22306 255th Ave SE, Maple Valley WA 98038