



THE LIGHT POST

MAY 2026



CIVIL WAR FRIENDSHIPS: PAST & PRESENT

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By Mark Terry

Going through some boxes of Civil War books, I found a worn paperback book titled *Bull Run Remembers...* by Joseph Mills Hanson. It was personally dedicated "To my dear friend from World War One, Francis M. Van Natter," dated November 10, 1953. There was an original typed poem by Hanson glued in the contents page titled "BALLADE[sic] OF OLD BATTLE-FIELDS." Below the poem, he signed his name and wrote, "To Van, a real fighter of the 1st Division, World War I, Nov. 11, 1953." The book, a history and battlefield guide for First and Second Manassas, had just been published.

Flipping through the book, I stopped dead at page 59. There was an old newspaper clipping, yellowed with age, tucked into the page. It had been there so long the acid had stained the page. The headline read "Civil War Round Table Honors Major Hanson," dated April 11, 1956 - 70 years ago!

It described a dinner meeting much like any current meeting of a CWRT today. This meeting presented Hanson with the Civil War Round Table of the District of Columbia's annual Gold Medal

Award. I was impressed by the VIPs who were present—an active-duty U.S. Army General who was a personal representative of President Eisenhower, Ulysses S. Grant III, grandson and namesake of the general, the granddaughter of Stonewall Jackson, and the grand-nephew of Gen. George Pickett. A lineup that any current CWRT would be honored to host.

Curious, I contacted Mike Movius, president of the Civil War Round Table Congress to see if this Round Table still existed. Mike said yes and provided email addresses for officers and a website. The CWRTDC confirmed the newspaper article. Their past president provided a weblink to a Yearbook, which included a list of all their speakers and topics from 1951-1956, including officers, bylaws, members, and even a list of known CWRTs across the country (17 at that time). It also listed both Hanson and Van Natter as members, which made the connection of the newspaper clipping to the book.

What do we know about these men?

Joseph Mills Hanson was born in 1876 in the Dakota Territory. He attended a military school in New York where he graduated in 1897.

"... a personal representative of President Eisenhower, Ulysses S. Grant III, the granddaughter of Stonewall Jackson, and grand-nephew of George Pickett."

He was a writer of poetry and history, both in periodicals and books. In May 1916, Hanson joined the South Dakota National Guard and served under General Pershing during the Border War against Pancho Villa in Mexico. When America joined the Allies in World War I, he was a member of Pershing's staff until 1919.

(Continued on Page 3)



Joseph Mills Hanson



Francis Marion Van Natter

WHAT MAKES CWRTC TICK?

By Mike Movius, President

Unlike most Civil War Round Tables whose season runs from September through May, the CWRT Congress' year is January through December. Since our last *Light Post* in February, we completed closing out 2025 by sending out donation statements, renewing our corporate status and paying the dues gods with the IRS and State of Washington, continuing to plan for our August conference in Petersburg, becoming a sponsor for the Carnegie CW Symposium, updating our Sustainability Challenge and awards recognitions, and launching our Annual Fund campaign.

There are a lot of small things that add up to big-time commitments that any nonprofit must do to keep the doors open and to provide services. And it is because of the variety and depth of knowledge needed that we have a large board.

For example, Bill Miller, otherwise known as the president of the Williamsburg CWRT, is our secretary-treasurer. Providing minutes of our meetings and advising about financial reports is one of the many things he does. He has also become the liaison between the CWRTC and the caterer for our conference and liquor license provocateur.

Carol VanOrnum continues to do excellent service preparing our annual impact report, the quarterly *Light Post*, and conducting research into areas of interest of the various CWRTs. She is also our

front person who is in conversation with our grant recipients, encouraging them to submit status reports and inviting them to speak at our events.

Steve Rauschkolb is the mastermind behind our marketing efforts. It is through his creativity that our marketing tools are developed. Perhaps you've seen our trifold describing our organization and services, our rack cards that talk about our events, or one of the many innovative videos he's developed using historical figures to encourage CWRTs to be involved. But you haven't seen him dealing with printers to get the best prices and quality of the above or mailing materials to board members.

Curt Fields is our roving ambassador. Because of his great following, Curt makes his way across America spreading our printed word to every nook and cranny of Civil War interest. Moreover, it is through his videos and spoken word encouraging CWRT leaders to become engaged that many find him to be super encouraging and inspiring.

David Hamon recently retired and is devoting a great deal of his time developing the updated Sustainability Challenge, planning the case studies for the conference, developing the facilitated discussions for our portion of the Emerging Civil War Symposium, and becoming the recognition guru of the Congress.

Jared Peatman, Andrew Mizensak, and Melissa Winn are all committed to their professional careers as they are still employed. And yet, they

have found time to spread the word of sustainability to their CWRTs and those in their region, offer critical insights into how best to fulfill the needs and expectations of event attendees, and to facilitate meaningful conversations during those same events. It should also be noted that the CWRTC grant program was Jared's idea and that he and David serve on the grant rating and selection committee. Finally, Melissa is our Swiss Army knife. She delivers material physically, purchases last-minute items, photographs events/marketing videos, and facilitates interviews and the like.

Cheryl McAuley is our newest and perhaps most energetic board member. She volunteers for virtually everything. Despite her and her husband John relocating from Huntsville to Gettysburg, she is offering a plethora of new ideas on program expansion and service



IMPROVEMENT THROUGH EDUCATION AND NETWORKING

renewal. As immediate past president of the Tennessee Valley CWRT, she has lived the challenges of managing, growing, and developing non-profit organizations.

If you are interested in becoming an adjunct to our merry little band, please connect with one of us. Your knowledge skills and abilities may be just the thing to help us tackle those challenges we are currently looking to take on.



Major General George G. Meade and staff posed in front of a Wallack's House, Culpeper, Va. www.loc.gov

CIVIL WAR FRIENDSHIPS: PAST & PRESENT (CONTINUED)

(Continued from Page 1)

A-22 ** THE EVENING STAR, Washington, D. C.
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 1956

Civil War Round Table Honors Major Hanson

Maj. Joseph Mills Hanson, authority on Civil War battlefields, last night was presented with the fourth annual Gold Medal Award of the Washington Civil War Round Table.

The retired superintendent of Manassas National Battlefield Park was hailed for outstanding achievement in Civil War history by nearly 400 members and their guests in ceremonies at the Madison Arms.

Gen. Charles L. Bolte, personal representative of President Eisenhower, read a message from the Chief Executive congratulating the five-year-old organization for its contributions, not only to military science, but to good citizenship.

The award presentation itself was an affair of Virginians. Maj. Hanson, who lives in the locale he venerates, received the gold medal from Representative Tuck, Democrat of Virginia, and former Governor of the State, who praised Maj. Hanson as a true Virginian, though the master of ceremonies, Gen. Karl S. Betts, reminded him that Maj.

Hanson is a native of Yankton, S. Dak.

Uniforms of Civil War

While the presentation was being made an honor guard, in authentic Union and Confederate uniforms, stood at salute behind Maj. Hanson.

In a moving acknowledgment Maj. Hanson conveyed to the dinner meeting his deeply reverent love for the battlefields of the 1861-1865 conflict, which he said stand as monuments to the rebirth of the Nation.

Maj. Hanson retired as superintendent of the nearby battlefield park in 1947 after many years with the National Park Service. A veteran of the American Expeditionary Force in

France in World War I, Maj. Hanson has written a "History of American Combat Divisions," "Pilot Knob, the Thermopylae of the West" and the recent "Bull Run Remembers," a definitive account of the history, traditions and landmarks of the Manassas campaigns of 1861 and 1862.

Col. Henry Speaks

Principal address of the evening was delivered by Col. Robert Selph Henry, noted "Southron" historian and biographer. Col. Henry, a vice president of the Association of American Railroads, took occasion in his talk to suggest that a "recent work of fiction", MacKinley Kantor's best selling "Andersonville," depicted suffering and death in the notorious Georgia prison camp which was common to all such camps, Union and Confederate, in the Civil War, not only to Andersonville.

Bruce Catton, Round Table Award winner last year and Pulitzer Prize author of "Stillness at Appomattox," wired his congratulations to Maj. Hanson.

Among the many distinguished guests present were retired Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, grandson of the Union commander; Mrs.

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Randolph Preston, granddaughter of Confederate Gen. Stonewall Jackson, and Mr. Charles Pickett of Fairfax, Va., grandnephew of Confederate Gen. George Pickett who led the ill-fated charge at Gettysburg.

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OUR

Francis Marion Van Natter was born in 1892 in Indiana, and by 1916 graduated from the University of Illinois. During WWI Van Natter served in France as a Captain with the 28th Infantry, 1st Division. In 1917 he received two Silver Stars (Oak Leaf Cluster), a Brigade Citation, and the Purple Heart. After recovering from his wounds, he was assigned to AEF Headquarters, where I assume he and Hanson probably became friends. By the early 1950s both men lived in the Washington, D.C. area. Hanson was the Manassas Battlefield Park's superintendent from 1942 to 1947, when he retired.

Bull Run Remembers..., was Hanson's last book. Ironically, both friends died in 1960 – Hanson in February and Van Natter in May. My hope is that their friendship will spur a "Washington Friendship" between our [Puget Sound Civil War Round Table](#), which began in Seattle, Washington in 1985 and just celebrated 40 years, with that of the [CWRTDC](#) from Washington, D.C., established in 1951, celebrating its 75th Anniversary this year!

Mark Terry is currently the president and newsletter editor for the Puget Sound Civil War Round Table in Seattle, WA. He also served as president from 2008-2010. He and his wife Kim have been members since 1994.

Photo credits:

Van Natter https://www.suncommercial.com/lifestyle/article_d2167ede-a503-5845-89ad-eee673d19570.html

Hanson: Copyright 2014 by the South Dakota State Historical Society, Pierre, S.Dak. 57501-2217 ISSN 0361-867, 188, South Dakota History, Vol. 44, No. 2

HUZZAH! FORT DICKERSON GATEWAY CANNON IN PLACE

By Jim Doncaster

Fort Dickerson is a Knoxville treasure. One of 16 earthen forts and battery positions surrounding the city, the fort represents the last best example of the Civil War fortifications that were hastily laid out and constructed in the fall of 1863 by the Army of the Ohio's chief engineering officer, Captain Orlando Poe. These fortifications withstood Confederate Gen. Longstreet's assault at Fort Sanders after which Gen. William T. Sherman declared them "nearly impregnable."

Today Fort Dickerson sits within a city park that bears its name and is managed by the City of Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department and the [Knoxville Civil War Roundtable](#). Since its founding in 1983, the Roundtable has worked tirelessly to protect and preserve the fort and enhance visitor experience through interpretive signage and the provision of memorial benches and replica artillery pieces. The Roundtable not only maintains the fort with the City but also conducts educational and commemorative activities there during our annual living history weekend.

In 2017, the Fort Dickerson Park Gateway was completed and gifted to the city by the Aslan Foundation. At long last the park had an entranceway worthy of the historic fort within. The entry portal was majestic and the stonework magnificent, but the entry circle next to Chapman Highway at the base of the hill seemed somehow incomplete.

That incompleteness gave rise to a Roundtable Board decision to place a Civil War cannon in the center of the gateway circle, a cannon that would be both easily visible from the highway and suggestive of the historic nature of the park beyond the portal. To make it a reality three things had to happen.

First, a cannon had to be found. Tom Wright knew of an ex-Brit, Graham Reed, in Hermitage, Tennessee, that fabricated sturdy replica cannons of steel and cement for public display. Tom and Sue Wright as well as Tammie and Brian Burroughs then made a trip to Middle Tennessee, examined Reed's handiwork, and declared it perfect for the purpose at hand.

Next the money to purchase the

cannon had to be raised. A fundraiser was launched in October 2025, and the Roundtable membership responded with vigor. Over \$9,000 was raised in a matter of months, enough to purchase the cannon and have it and a memorial stone mounted in the circle.

Approvals from the City and the Aslan Foundation represented the final act, and both were garnered in short order. Both the City and Aslan have proved to be excellent partners in the process of commemoration and preservation.

On the cold afternoon of February 24, 2026, all of the pieces of the puzzle came together marvelously. The cannon was delivered, and with the help of half a dozen Board

members, was unloaded, and secured in place by Mr. Reed and his associate. A formal dedication will follow in the spring.

Jim Doncaster is the Director of Programming. This article first appeared in the March 2026 Scout newsletter.

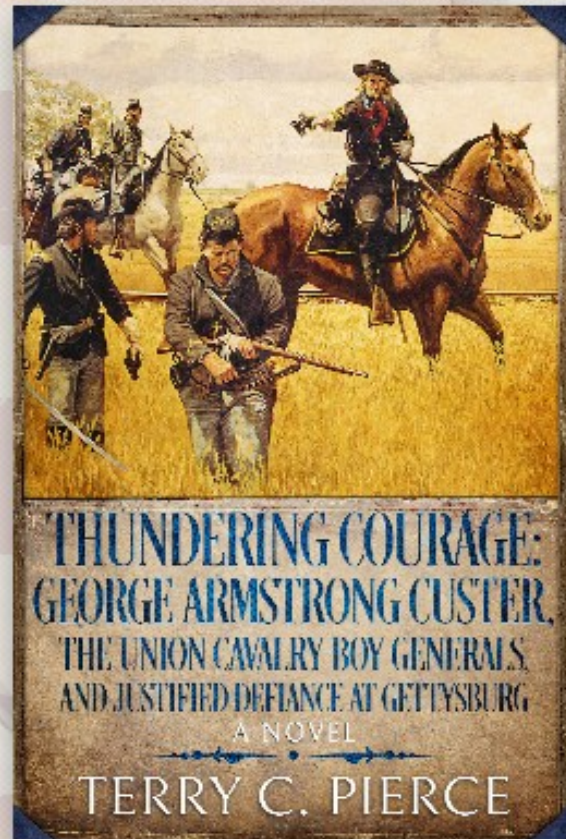
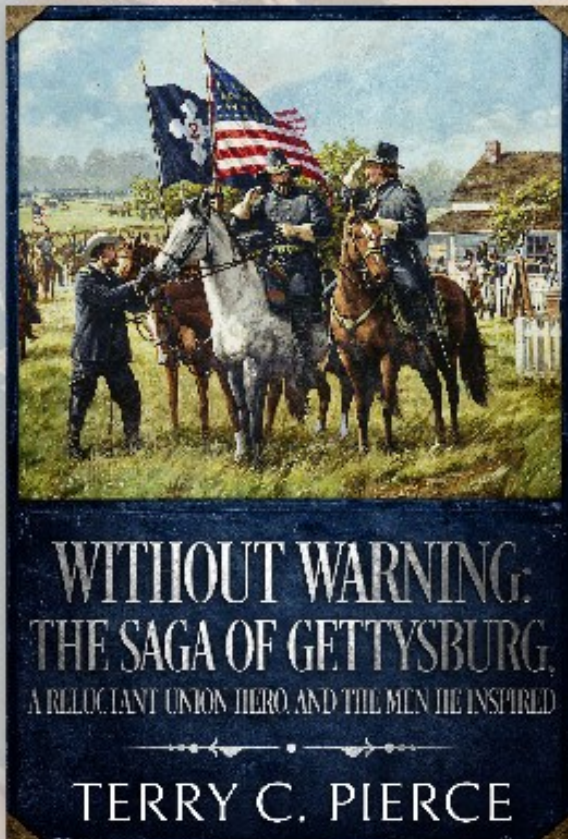


From L to R: Brian Burroughs, Tammie Burroughs, Bill Nicolai, Jim Doncaster, Graham Reed, Tom Wright, Tim Vane

Why is "*character*" the heart & soul of leadership?

How do you respond to a "*Without Warning*" moment?

Can a battlefield order ever be "*Justifably Defied*?"



To learn the answer to these thought-provoking questions, read the first two novels of Dr. Terry C. Pierce's (Captain USN, retired) Gettysburg Trilogy. Both meticulously researched works examines the battle through the lens of the character and leadership displayed by the key Union soldiers and officers during this pivotal battle.

To reach Terry Pierce or arrange for him to speak at your CWRT email him at: PierceTerryC@gmail.com or at:

www.terrycpierce.com

THE DAVE TOOLEY CIVIL WAR RESEARCH ESSAY CONTEST

By Gordon Gidlund

Last year, the [San Diego Civil War Round Table](#) was presented with a wonderful outreach opportunity when a local professor approached us with an exciting idea. Edward J. Blum, of San Diego State University, an award-winning scholar of 19th century U.S. history, asked if our Round Table would sponsor a research essay contest open to his college students and addressing a Civil War topic. Our Board delightedly agreed to the suggestion as a means of involving the younger generation with our particular field of study. We were also involved in designing the contest parameters.

Essays were to be of no more than 5,000 words and would be judged on originality and clarity of thesis, quality of writing, and effective use of primary sources. Suggested topics included, but were not limited to, the origins of the war, military strategies, experiences of soldiers and civilians, political/economic considerations, foreign policy aspects, and postwar impacts. More specific prompts were set forth in the contest announcement. Submissions were due by December 31, 2025.

Originally, Professor Blum suggested that even a prize of \$100 would be sufficient to generate interest among the students. We certainly

committed to underwriting that amount from our modest treasury but also solicited our membership for additional contributions. To our happy surprise, we ended up amassing a fund of \$1,000, thus enabling the offer of a first prize of \$500, a second prize of \$300, and a third prize of \$200.

A judging panel was established consisting of Dr. Brian Wills, former Director of the Center for the Study of the Civil War Era and formerly a Professor of History at Kennesaw State University; Col. Wade Sokolosky (Ret.), the Executive Director of the Blue and Gray Education Society; and Gordon Gidlund, Esq., President of the San Diego Civil War Round Table.

After deliberation over the six submissions received by the due date, our panel announced the following award recipients:

First Prize

“The Tragedy of the Civil War First Lady: An Evaluation of Mary Todd Lincoln’s Case of Mental Illness Placed in the Context of Civil War Era Medicine,” by Michael Raska. This thorough essay highlighted the stark reality that her son, Robert, the insanity trial lawyers, and even her own doctors were all simply ill-equipped to provide Mrs. Lincoln with the support and treatment required for her condition.

Second Prize

“Divided Orchestra,” by Dehrich S. Moore. An engaging analysis of several popular songs from both sides, comparing Union and Confederate responses, and foregrounding African American perspectives to show how Civil War music articulated and contested ideas of American nationhood and freedom.

Third Prize

“The Third Army: Contagion during the American Civil War,” by Gabriel Eskew. The experiences of soldiers and doctors are described in saddening detail as they faced the rampant sickness of many varieties that plagued both armies and that influenced the course of the war so profoundly.

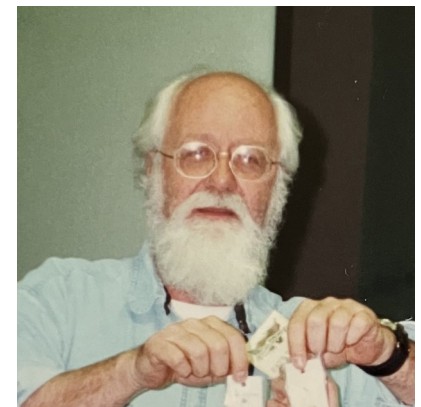
We were especially gratified to embark on this project, as we had it formally named “The Dave Tooley Civil War Research Essay Contest” in honor of our long-time President who passed away last summer. We hope to make this a continuing project in Dave’s memory.



To our happy surprise, we ended up amassing a fund of \$1,000.

Gordon Gidlund is currently President of the San Diego CWRT, Secretary of the African Americans in the Civil War Era Round Table, and a Director of the Inland Empire CWRT.

Past President
Dave Tooley



INTRODUCING THE CEDAR VALLEY CWRT

By Frank McCaw

The [Cedar Valley CWRT](#) of Cedar Falls, Iowa, founded in 2001, is proudly celebrating our 25th anniversary this year. Our membership is holding steady around the 40 mark, which is small but mighty. Like most Round Tables, we're long on years but have recently welcomed a 40-year-old member as a trending youth movement.

We attribute our success to providing excellent quality programming with in-person speakers while also simulcasting our presentations to members at home. Like many Round Tables, we focus somewhat upon programming to feature our home state boys.

Examples include the 4th Iowa Cavalry Regiment and the 45th Iowa, dubbed the "Hundred Days Men" when organized in May 1864. But we also share the stories of neighboring units like the 6th Wisconsin and other aspects of the Civil War. We've found that the vast library of speakers and topics maintained by the CWRT Congress has served as an excellent source for our program development.

Our governing body consists of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Our officers serve terms of two years with the opportunity for the rotation of new leadership. Our Round Table meetings are scheduled monthly for the third Wednesday at the Community

Foundation of Northeast Iowa. We hold an Annual Meeting every April which features a social hour, a catered dinner, and an awards ceremony. Annual recognition of significant contributions in promoting and preserving Civil War history is made to a member of the Round Table or to a member of our area Civil War community.

The Cedar Valley CWRT has established a community partnership with the Waterloo Veterans Memorial Hall. Our community partner requires a member of our Round Table to serve on their governing Commission.

Members participate with a day trip each Spring to visit Civil War sites. This year we plan to visit the Iowa Soldiers Home, which was

founded by veterans of the Civil War.

We're proud to share our Cedar Valley CWRT celebration story with new friends through the messaging offered by the CWRT Congress. Please feel free to contact us at cvcwrt9@yahoo.com for more information.

Frank McCaw is President of the CVCWRT.

Photo Below: Roundtable rededication of a local Civil War soldier's grave.



JOIN US FOR OUR 2026 SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE!

Petersburg, Virginia, will be the site of our 2026 Sustainability Conference. The event will begin on **Friday, August 28, 2026**, at the Pamplin Historic Park Museum, where you'll check in to receive conference credentials, enjoy adult beverages and hors d'oeuvres, tour the Museum, visit with your favorite authors, and hear a delightful presentation about Petersburg from author/historian A. Wilson Greene.

Saturday, August 29th will begin at the Education Center with breakfast and coffee, followed by Problem Session #1 and Session #2 in the afternoon. We will be exploring some of the challenges that CWRTs are facing, including CWRT Governance, The Meeting Experience, and Member and Community Partnerships. Lunch and networking follows and a trivia contest. Following Problem Session #2, we will have a wrap-up discussion.

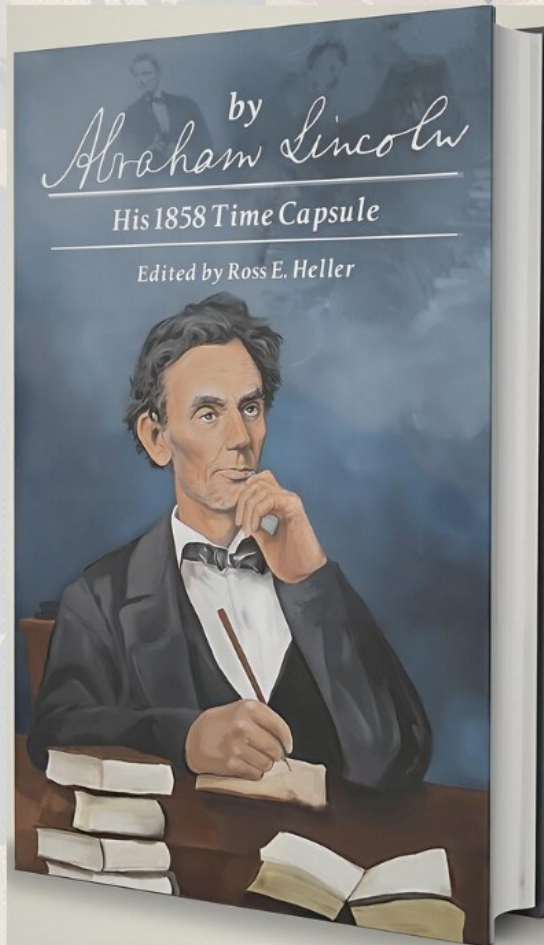
Saturday evening will feature an Awards Dinner, with networking and a presentation by General Grant, followed by a raffle drawing and closing remarks.

Sunday, August 30th will feature two tours: The morning will feature a three-site tour by A. Wilson Greene of Battery Five, Fort Stedman, and the Crater. You'll learn about what happened there, the objectives of Army commanders and their significance.

The afternoon tour will be at City Point. You will meet General Grant at his headquarters at City Point in the afternoon, where you'll learn about the logistics involved in serving the Union Army, the significance of City Point, and the major issues General Grant faced. Also, there will be a tour of Eppes Plantation Mansion with the NPS.

Discover Lincoln's 1858 Time Capsule

by Abraham Lincoln: His 1858 Time Capsule



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Teach American history?

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It contrasts Lincoln's 1858 views on slavery and negro equality with those of Sen. Stephen A. Douglas.

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"Unearthing Abraham Lincoln's 1858 Time Capsules."

He can be reached at info@byabrahamlincolnbook.com.

SPOTLIGHT ON A CWRT BOARD MEMBER DR. JARED PEATMAN

By CWRT Congress

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “Once you make a decision, the Universe conspires to make it happen.” But Emerson emphasized that focus must be paired with action and self-reliance. This is the life that Jared Peatman is living.

Jared was born and raised in a small town in central Maine. From the age of ten, as can be proven by a photo of a boy dressed in woolen sweat pants and a kepi, he has been obsessed with the Civil War. When he discovered that Gettysburg had a college, he had a plan. He applied and began his undergraduate degree in history, minoring in education. Gabor Boritt, a renowned Lincoln scholar and founder of the Civil War Institute, hired Jared as a research assistant for four years. This enabled his involvement in the Civil War Institute’s annual conference, which he still attends. His senior thesis was *Profound Silence, Followed by Hearty Applause: Gettysburg Responds to Lincoln’s Address*. After graduating, Jared taught history and math to middle school students at Danville, Virginia, the site of the last Confederate capital (April 3-10, 1865).

Jared was drawn to Virginia Tech for his master’s because of two professors—William C.



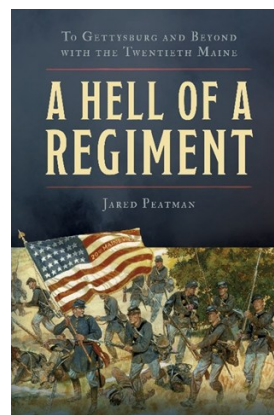
“Jack” Davis and Bud Robertson. His assistantship included indexing Civil War newspapers under Professor Davis. This time, his master’s thesis looked at the Southern response to the Gettysburg Address, with a focus on Richmond where more newspapers existed. “They didn’t like it very much,” Jared concluded.

Jared chose Texas A&M for graduate studies. By now, he had a solid teaching background, and he continued his involvement with the Civil War Institute. His Ph.D. dissertation gave birth to his first book, *The Long Shadow of Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address*, in 2013.

Toward the end of his graduate work, he was asked to deliver some history-based sessions as a part of a series of leadership development programs for a government agency. Focusing on leadership, Jared said, “I was understanding history better by reading leadership books. I really enjoyed using history to think about leadership and using leadership to think about history.”

One example Jared uses to illustrate a positive outcome is found through Joshua Chamberlain’s command of leadership. Chamberlain believed that people are motivated when they have autonomy – choices, and a sense of belonging. Think of the scene from *Gettysburg* when Chamberlain addressed the mutineers. In reality – not the movie version – Chamberlain knew well in advance that the mutineers were coming, and he rode to General Meade to ask for some latitude with the men. Chamberlain made his pitch to these mutineers, then he left the decision in their hands, giving them time to sort through their emotions to make their own choice. Ultimately, all but one man dropped their dissent.

This new direction of blending history with leadership led to the creation of Four Score Consulting, www.historyleadership.com. Jared’s programs use history, historic sites, staff rides, and many battlefield-based programs to think about leadership and performance. His participants are mostly from the U.S. government



Chamberlain believed that people are motivated when they have autonomy — choices, and a sense of belonging.

agencies versus the corporate world.

The last 12 years, Jared has worked on a second book, *A Hell of a Regiment: To Gettysburg and Beyond with the Twentieth Maine*, which is due out in June 2026. Not to be all work and no play, however, he is also an avid soccer player and fan, playing twice weekly with his teams. Jared can be reached at jared@historyleadership.com.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES FROM THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

By Jared Peatman, Ph.D.

(Editor's note: This article was originally written and published several years ago by Dr. Peatman.)

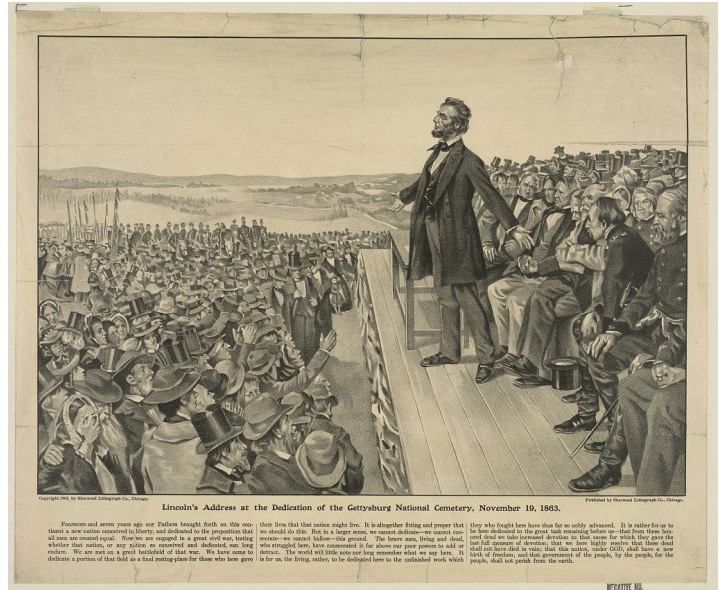
On the 155th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address it is worth pausing for a moment to consider Lincoln's message on that November day. Arguably the greatest speech in world history, there is much we can learn from those 272 words about inspiring a shared vision, creating a culture of change, and tapping into universal values. All of those things, however, were only possible because of Lincoln's masterful use of some basic communication techniques that ensured that his message was received, read, and understood near and wide. Here are four of those techniques that we can emulate.

Brevity. In the last week, have you started reading an email or memo and *stopped* before you got to the end? Part of the genius of the Gettysburg Address is that it is so short that no one should have a problem getting to the end. If, however, anyone does, Lincoln put the entire takeaway in the very first sentence. In the military they call this BLUF, or bottom line up front. *The next time you have to write an email or a memo, is there a way to make it briefer, and to put the bottom line up*

front for those who may not take the time to read all the way to the end?

Medium. Lincoln's true audience was not the 15,000 people present at the dedication ceremony, but the 20 million people of the North. To get the Address out, Lincoln knew reporters would have to use the telegraph – a very expensive proposition. Only by keeping his speech short would the newspapers bear that expense. Lincoln's plan worked – 85% of the nation's papers carried his speech. *What is the medium by which your messages get out? How might you adapt your message to the medium?*

Clarity. Lincoln wanted to ensure that everyone understood his message, so he used simple words in common usage that everyone understood. Of the 272 words in the speech 190 are monosyllable words, and the few that might appear uncommon to us today – words like score and consecrate – were prevalent in the King James version of the Bible that people in Lincoln's era read daily. Writers often look for fancier words, more precise words, a greater variety of words. Lincoln, by contrast, looked for words that could not be misunderstood. *Are there places where you can simplify your language to ensure that your meaning is crystal clear?*



Lincoln's address at the dedication of the Gettysburg National Cemetery, November 19, 1863
Chicago : Sherwood Lithograph Co., c1905. www.loc.gov

On the shoulders of giants. In the opening sentence of the Gettysburg Address, Lincoln called for a return to the nation's founding principle of equality found in the Declaration of Independence. In the final sentence he paraphrased Daniel Webster in calling for a government of the people, by the people, for the people. Lincoln knew that his argument and call to action would be more powerful if he could invoke already accepted sources of authority rather than asking people to adopt completely new and foreign ideas. *Are there ways you can bring in accepted sources of authority to bolster your arguments?*

It may be that no one ever refers to one of your memos as “among the glories and treasures of mankind,” as Earl (later Lord) George Curzon once described the Gettysburg Address, but by keeping Lincoln's strategies in mind perhaps you can ensure that they are read and understood.

FROM A SIMPLE LIST TO A GLOBAL DATABASE

By Fernando Bastidas

What began four years ago as a modest survey of about 40 film productions has transformed into a comprehensive archival project. With the invaluable contributions of the Hispanic community at the beginning, that initial list grew to 80, and today, it stands at nearly 1,400 titles related to the American Civil War. Managing this data has allowed me to oversee two vibrant digital communities on Facebook: "[Civil War Movies & Series](#)" (a community with more than 16,000 members) and "[Guerra Civil Americana en español](#)" (with more than 7,000 members at present).

The former saw a significant surge in engagement in October 2023, coinciding with the 30th Anniversary events of the film *Gettysburg* (1993). Our members include directors, actors, and producers, but the backbone of the group is



the dedicated community of Civil War reenactors.

The Urgency of Film Preservation

Our discussions cover everything from Hollywood blockbusters to independent films currently in production. Many of these indie projects are low-budget "labors of love," supported heavily by the Civil War community. However, my primary focus has shifted toward the fragile history of the Silent Era.

It is a staggering fact that over 75% of silent-era films are currently cataloged as lost. Just as preserving physical battlefields is a race against time and urban development, preserving silent film is a race against chemical decay. Nitrate film is a volatile, degradable material; after more than a century—often stored in inadequate conditions—the risk of losing this history forever is high.

Furthermore, Civil War films from the 1910s held more than just artistic or commercial value; they served a critical military purpose during World War I. Various armies utilized these films as essential war supplies for studying military tactics and troop training. These productions achieved

a high level of authenticity because they often featured actual Civil War veterans working as technical consultants and, in some instances, as extras, using original 1860s weaponry. Cinematic productions by pioneer directors such as D.W. Griffith, Sidney Olcott, Keanu Buel, Thomas Ince, Francis Ford, and Charles Giblyn, among others, were produced but are now lost, and we must seek to rescue them by all possible means.

Current Investigations and Future Goals

In recent months, my digital research has led to promising leads regarding a film currently cataloged as "lost." I have identified clear clues about its potential location, and I am working to activate support from various institutions to recover it. Furthermore, I am investigating films that are technically "located" in archives both inside and outside the United States, but remain unavailable to the public.

To address this, I am currently developing a formal protocol to identify these lost or mislabeled




films in detail, alongside the specific technical requirements needed to recover those that have already been located. The ultimate goal is to promote a standard for new independent cinema that includes long-term preservation criteria. We must ensure that the visual record of the Civil War receives the same level of protection and respect as the land upon which the history was made. We must prevent a repeat of what happened to the earliest Civil War films, while also protecting modern independent productions that often lack the attention required to ensure they are preserved for future generations.


Fernando Bastidas lives in Venezuela. He is administrator of two Facebook pages: [Civil War Movies and Series](#) and [Guerra Civil Americana en español](#).



Ulysses S. Grant

Portrayed by
E.C. Fields, Jr., Ph.D.

HQ:  generalgrantbyhimself.com

E-Telegraph:  curtfields@generalgrantbyhimself.com

Signal Corps:  (901) 496-6065

Facebook:  [Facebook@Curt Fields](https://www.facebook.com/Facebook@CurtFields)



CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE EXEMPLARY FOLLOWERS

By Dr. Cheryl McAuley

Civil War Round Tables can offer a great source for team leadership and followership studies. My approach to leading teams, whether it be a church choir, civilians and military at the Pentagon, or contractors and military in Baghdad, was that we required a common purpose to succeed. Teamwork is paramount – without it, struggles abide. We also required trust, above and beyond all else. We currently strive to achieve that teamwork model in the operation of the [Tennessee Valley CWRT](#).

Thaddeus Lowe, the Chief Aeronaut for the Union Army, had a vision that leaders should emulate today. He possessed the ability to market his skillset and to gain the attention of the Federal decision-makers in order to achieve his goals.

Unfortunately, Lowe failed to promote a sense of teamwork among his peers, which led to his failure to achieve long-term success with respect to the military utilization of balloons for observation purposes.

The short-lived success of Professor Lowe's military balloon experience serves as a case study of the benefits of leadership and followership as they relate to management of CWRT leadership and membership. Trust is the most important element to the success of any organization. While leaders must have vision, they must

remember those whom they are leading and endeavor to develop a trusting followership with them. Without followers, leaders can do nothing but talk to themselves!

To build that trust, CWRTs must keep their membership informed through timely communications, to include newsletters, updated Facebook and website notices, and brief announcements at monthly meetings.

Members should be treated as valued individuals, recognizing them for their unique abilities, providing opportunities for them to engage in new activities, and potentially building stronger teams. Board member delegation is key to getting various activities accomplished.

Self-awareness is essential. Board members should be aware of what type of leaders and followers they might be. It is the intent of this leadership assessment to focus upon followers since followership is just beginning to make its mark in academic circles.

In *Praise of Followers* (1988), Dr. Robert Kelly of Carnegie Mellon University, described five types of followers. You no doubt know people who represent each of these types: the exemplary, the sheep, the yes people, the alienated, and the pragmatics. The followers that we all desire to be part of our team are the exemplary followers who “contribute with eagerness, intellect, and independence while working toward the objectives of



Photo: LOC.gov

the organization.” Coworkers are to be viewed as colleagues, not competitors.

Here are three qualities that Kelly wrote that are shared by exemplary followers:

1. They are able to manage themselves, anticipating what needs to be done for the mission.
2. They are committed to the organization (or a purpose, principle, or person outside themselves).
3. They are courageous, honest, and credible, giving credit where it's due, while “admitting mistakes and sharing successes.”

“Courageous followers can keep a leader honest – and out of trouble.”

Another favorite quote is by Van Dierendonck and Patterson (2010). They wrote about leader-

follower relationships, noting followers are attracted to leaders who accept them, not disregard them.

As CWRT leaders, let's be intentional about valuing our board members and our followership.

We will hopefully continue to share our common heritage with each other and keep learning about our precious history together during America 250!

Dr. McAuley is past president of the Tennessee Valley CWRT and a member of the Board of Directors of the CWRT Congress.

GRANT INITIATIVES PROJECT UPDATES

By CWRT Congress

In 2025, the CWRT Congress awarded six \$250 grants to Civil War Round Tables which proposed initiatives in the areas of Fundraising, Marketing, and Historical Research. The recipients provided the following updates on their projects.

Marketing Initiative

Quincy Gillmore CWRT

By Kelly Boyer Sagert

We greatly appreciate the marketing grant received from CWRT Congress! We created business cards for each of our officers who are looking for opportunities to hand them out to the greater community. I recently spoke in front of a group of retired teachers and at a writer's conference, making the cards readily available. This summer, we will use the remaining funds to design and print a brochure for distribution before the fall season, further promoting the group.



Louisville CWRT

By Julie Bartlett

Our goal was to attract approximately seven high school AP history scholars from a nearby district to write an essay to be

judged by the school staff and narrowed down by our March speaker. The students would then be invited to one of our meetings, sit with the speaker to discuss their essays (the #1 winner was to receive \$250) and also be required to post on social media reactions to said meeting. The underlying premise was to get their peers interested/aware, possibly parents and teachers, etc. We have several current members that developed their love of history by completing history projects during their middle/high school years.

There was absolutely no interest from the teachers that we queried. Our point person is the director of the advanced/gifted programs for that school district whose written proposal was excellent.

That leaves us with two options: Try again in the fall semester (2026). With more advanced notice, maybe the teachers will be more enthusiastic and get on board. Our point person for this is still VERY excited and committed to trying again. Or, put money toward a different sustainability project that we have lined up in May.

Fundraising Initiative

Tennessee Valley CWRT

By Richard Caniglia

We are actively working on the advertising effort. Since my initial report, we have added \$135 of our own funds to print more rack cards, having distributed the entire first tranche. We have put

cards and the 8x11" schedule card in another half-dozen locations, to include a doctor's office, our local visitors center, two public libraries, and an arts venue that is well attended. In addition, I am continually, both at meetings and in our newsletter, exhorting the membership to solicit members from among those they interact with. It is hard to assess how many have done so.

Unfortunately, I cannot report any new memberships. We have not given up nor have we slackened our effort. Further, we will discuss the status at each of our Board meetings along with how we might adjust. We intend to celebrate when the first new member attributable to this initiative is enrolled and will instantly inform you of that success. Unfortunately, this is destined to be in the future.

We are looking for public events that are history-related, clubs that have some interest in history, and the like. One failed attempt from several years ago was to seek to cooperate with schools and universities. We are exploring an adjusted second attempt along this line and will spread cards and schedules as part of it. One possible venue for distribution is to the private defense-contracting firms that fill this city. They have a significant population of former military that may be catalytic.

On the non-material front, we have also had anemic cooperation from community media organizations. The three major television networks are not interested in

posting or advertising community events unless they are something exceptional; routine meetings do not qualify. We have had success with our local public radio station and with a couple of websites that specialize in local activities.

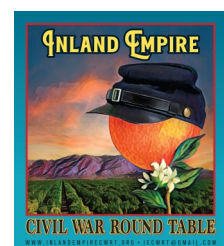
Inland Empire CWRT

By Mike Hoover

The fundraising for the Watchorn Lincoln Memorial Association is off to a good start. So far, 19 people have donated over \$1,500, including contributions from the North Jersey CWRT and several nationally recognized individuals. This event offers a rare opportunity to directly influence the acquisition of historical artifacts related to Abraham Lincoln.

I am currently serving as a docent at the Lincoln Memorial Shrine in Redlands, CA. It is incredibly rewarding to watch visitors react to letters and documents signed by Lincoln. Each of these items was acquired through the generosity of donors who understood the importance of preserving rare historical documents.

(continued on Page 16)



GRANT INITIATIVES PROJECT UPDATES, CONTINUED

(continued from Page 14)

Historical Research Initiative

CWRT of Mid-Ohio Valley

By Leight Murray

We are in the process of planning the 2026 Annual Battle of Buffington Island Commemoration & Marietta Militia Historical Marker Dedication Ceremony for Saturday, July 18, 2026.

We did secure a permit from Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to erect a marker at the location of the redoubt but, to the best of our knowledge, the Ohio History Connection, owner of the property, is not aware of this

development. So, full speed ahead and it will be interesting to see who is subject to arrest as we move forward with these plans!

I think the more important stay for us at this stage is a brief account of the decades of neglect imposed on the Buffington Island Battlefield by all involved parties, including the State of Ohio, the Ohio Historical Society and its successors including the Ohio History Connection and the Ohio Preservation Office. Most importantly, the foremost concern was posed at last year's Annual Battle of

Buffington Island Memorial Service when Jim Oiler, Camp Commander, Cadot-Blessing Camp #126 SUVCW closed his comments with the question, "If we don't save it now, when will we?"

Knoxville CWRT

By Tim Vane

The City of Knoxville still wants us to work on the markers by developing the story on each panel along with the artwork. They also want us to determine the best location for placing the markers. The dilemma the City has is that none of the funding they'd planned on using this year happened. Knoxville citizens voted down a local tax and federal

grants they'd applied for didn't come through.

So, the bottom line is to keep moving on what we can do while Knoxville waits for the money to materialize in 2027. They still want to complete the Battlefield Loop because they recognize it'll be a great recreational/learning feature for the city.

Given all that, we'll use the time to continue researching the battle and its participants, to ensure that when we utilize the grant money it will be applied accurately and appropriately.



Kiosks at the Buffington Island State Memorial provide context and interpret the people and events related to the Battle of Buffington Island on July 19, 1863.

The Buffington Island Battlefield Preservation Foundation has requested the Ohio History Connection, owner of the 4-acre park property, to make repairs to the monument's damaged stonework.



One-third of the battlefield is permanently lost due to open-pit sand and gravel mining operations. Despite opposition by numerous historical preservation organizations, mine operations began here in the late 1990s under permits issued by agencies of the State of Ohio and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

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