



HARDTACK



Indianapolis Civil War Round Table Newsletter

<http://indianapoliscwrt.org/>

Monday, March 11, 2024 at 6:45 p.m.
Meeting at MCL Cafeteria Township Line
2370 W. 86th Street

The Plan of the Day



Hannah, Julia, and Nellie Grant

“The Life & Legacy of Ulysses Grant and the Women Who Molded the Man”

Ulysses S. Grant was born an ordinary westerner, but he possessed extraordinary energy, commitment, resolve, and love of family. Several women in his life foresaw the man he was destined to become, well before the nation ever knew he existed.

They stood by him through his challenges and triumphs as he reached the pinnacle in both the military and political arena. With their support, his improbable accomplishments placed him on a level with Lincoln by the end of the 19th Century.

Our Guest Speaker



Chris Burns

Chris Burns is a Civil War historian and lifelong Cincinnati resident. In 2016, Burns completed 16 years of research for an upcoming book about Ulysses S. Grant with noted historian Dr. James A. Ramage. He currently speaks on various aspects of Ulysses S. Grant's life, as well as the Siege of Cincinnati. Burns is a former adjunct history faculty-member at NKU and is currently employed as Marketing and Education Manager at Encore Technologies. His passion is researching history and touring battlefields, as well as working with educators to prepare students for college and career readiness.

Remainder of the 2023-2024 Campaign

April 8, 2024 – Kent Brown - “General George G. Meade”

May 13, 2024 – Scott Britton – “But Not for My Children”

June 10, 2024 – Phil Spaugy - “19th Indiana & the Iron Brigade”

Roster of Officers and Committees for the 2023-2024 Campaign

Officers:

President: Pete Benner

Vice President: Chris Smith

Secretary: Eric Dove

Treasurer: Pete Mohr

Immediate Past President: Steven Magnusen

Committees:

Preservation: Andy O'Donnell

Website: Ed Pope

Program Selection: Chairman Steve Magnusen; Members: Bob Gottschalk, David Finney, & Tony Trimble

Publicity: Peg Bertelli

Quiz Master:

Tony Trimble

Book Raffle Master

Tony Roscetti

HARDTACK Newsletter:

Editor: Bob Gottschalk

Other Camp Activities

Hamilton County Civil War Roundtable: Wednesday's (3/11.24) meeting will be the last in Carmel City Hall.

Madison County Historical Society Civil War Roundtable: Meetings take place on the third Monday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Bowman Room at the Museum of Madison County History, 15 West 11th Street, Anderson, Indiana.

Official Records

November Attendance: 32

Alan T. Nolan Memorial Youth Scholarship Fund: The Executive Board of the Indianapolis Civil War Round Table has established this fund to provide membership dues, annual tour expenses or other worthwhile purpose for any full-time student of any age. Please see Tony Roscetti to donate to this fund.

Facebook: The Indianapolis Civil War Round Table is on Facebook. We invite you to join our group. Feel free to post Civil War related messages on our site.

Charitable Sponsors: In an effort to upgrade our speakers and programs, the board of ICWRT is asking members and organizations with which they are involved (companies or charitable organizations) to consider sponsoring one or more speakers. This could be done as a gift now, or a person could opt to make a bequest in a will for that purpose. Because of our limited membership, we can't bring in as many national speakers as we would like to. If you are interested or want more info, call Chris Smith at 450-7430.

This Month In Civil War Era History

March 3, 1861- Alexander II of Russia freed the serfs, and granted full rights of free citizens with the signing of the Emancipation Manifesto.

March 9, 1864 - Ulysses S. Grant was named Commanding General of the Union Army.

March 10, 1862 – The United States issued its first paper money in \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, \$500 and \$1000 notes.

March 25, 1863 - U.S. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton awarded the first U.S. Army Medal of Honor to Jacob Parrott for his role in James Andrew's unsuccessful raid on the Western & Atlantic Railroad in April 1862.



Test Your Civil War Knowledge (with Trimble's Trivia)

by Tony Trimble

1. On February 26, 1863, an ordinance of secession was repealed, slavery was abolished, and support for the Union was proclaimed. By whom?
2. What engagement was known as the "Battle Above the Clouds"? Why?
3. What is panada?
4. What Confederate general was beaten to Louisville by Don Carlos Buell in 1862?
5. Where did Grant establish his permanent headquarters in Virginia?

Answers to the February Quiz:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. The attendees were pro-Confederate. | 4. A soldier's reference to the fiery temper of George Meade. |
| 2. USS Thomas Jefferson | |
| 3. Confederate Senator Louis T. Wigfall | 5. Logan County, Kentucky |

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Victory at Chancellorsville!

It's no secret that land on and near where the 1863 Battle of Chancellorsville raged in Virginia is often threatened by new developments, which is why we are especially pleased today to tell you we've had a big win in the area. As a result of your help, we can now declare victory on nearly 44 acres of land at the Flank Attack of the Battle of Chancellorsville, including land associated with the original Chancellor plantation and Dowdall's Tavern.

When we began the fight to preserve these threatened acres, Historian Bob Krick said, "The survival, undeveloped, of a tract this large in this crucial location is nothing short of miraculous. Saving it will be a spectacular preservation coup." Well, folks, we like to perform miracles. And, with your help, we have. Thank you!

Landmarks of Battle

The first tract is 42 acres in the heart of the Chancellorsville Battlefield. At the time of the war, the property was part of Wilderness Baptist Church pastor Reverend Melzi A. Chancellor's plantation. The parcel we've saved likely includes the former site of Chancellor's residence, known as Dowdall's Tavern. During the 1863 clash, Dowdall's Tavern was a prominent landmark and was used as headquarters by Maj. Gen. Oliver O. Howard, commander of the Union XI Corps. Union regiments and batteries under the command of Col. Adolphus Buschbeck were positioned in entrenchments on the southern edge of the property, facing south. When Lt. Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson launched his massive flank attack from the west on May 2, the XI Corps was not in position to confront the Confederate assault and its forces were rapidly rolled up and forced into full retreat down the Plank Road to the Chancellorsville intersection three miles east. A granite monument commemorating the 154th New York Infantry Regiment, which was one of the units driven from the property by Jackson's attack, stands here. The Union retreat also crossed over the nearly two additional acres of now preserved land located just east of the historic Dowdall's Tavern property and farm. The land here, which was heavily wooded at the time of the battle, was behind the Confederate lines and these acres we have now saved likely served as a staging area for renewed Confederate attacks throughout May 3.



Dowdall's Tavern

In the wake of the XI Corps' rout, Dowdall's Tavern became a field hospital for wounded Union soldiers, who were by that time prisoners behind Confederate lines. Surgeon George Suckley, medical director of the XI Corps, remained at Dowdall's Tavern and oversaw the care of an estimated 1,100 Union wounded.

Preserving these acres is a special victory as they help us tell a fuller story of the Civil War in Virginia. We can't thank you enough for helping us do so!

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The Misunderstood Life of Gen. Fitz John Porter

Clay Hoffman, February 26, 2024, blueandgrayeducation.org

Born in 1822, Fitz John Porter was a member of an illustrious family that was prominent in U.S. Naval history. Known as the "Fighting Porters," they included Commodore David Porter, who famously unfurled a banner over the USS Essex on July 2, 1812, proclaiming the words: "Free trade and sailor's rights," which became the American rallying cry during the War of 1812. Other family members included Adm. David Dixon Porter, who served in the Navy during the Mexican-American War and the Civil War, and Rear Adm. David G. Farragut, who memorably gave the order in 1864 at the Battle of Mobile Bay to "damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead."

Breaking with family tradition, Fitz John Porter pursued a career in the army after graduating from Philips Exeter Academy. Standing eighth out of 41 cadets in West Point's class of 1845, he became an artillery officer and served in the Mexican-American War, distinguishing himself at several battles.

In one case, to penetrate Mexico City, heavily armed garitas, or gates, had to be overcome. As a storm of musket and cannon fire was unleashed against American soldiers who were charging the gates, Fitz John Porter "moved a single eight-inch howitzer in front of the infantry and, although injured by a cannon ball, advanced to within 100 yards of the fortification, repulsing a Mexican sortie with canister and grapeshot." Due to this act of bravery, he was breveted a major, for "Gallant and Meritorious Services."

Remaining in the army, Major Porter became chief of staff and assistant adjutant general for the Department of Pennsylvania at the start of the Civil War. He was soon promoted to colonel of the 15th Infantry, and a few months later was made a brigadier general of volunteers, which was backdated so he would be senior enough to receive divisional command in the newly formed Army of the Potomac.

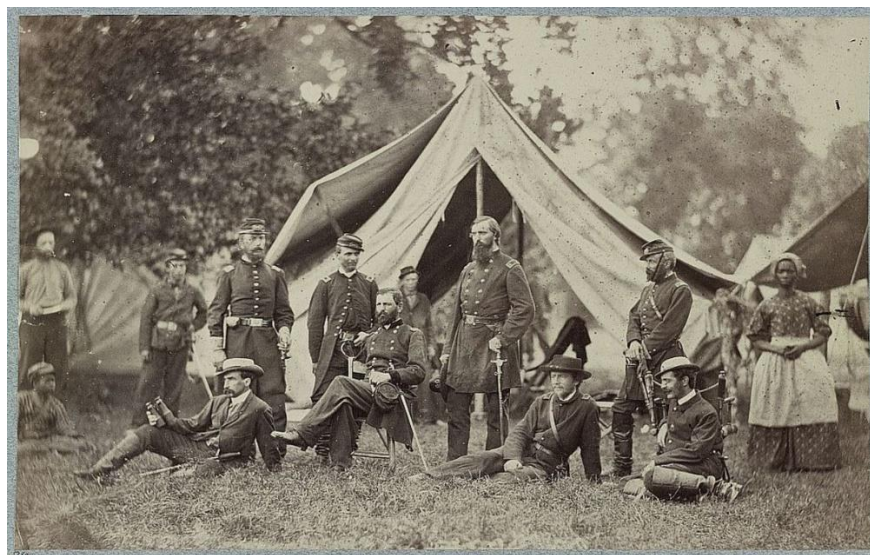
General Porter led his division at the beginning of the 1862 Virginia Peninsula Campaign, seeing action at the Siege of Yorktown, and when Union general McClellan created two provisional corps within the Army of the Potomac, he was assigned to command the V Corps. During the 1862 Seven Days Battles in Virginia, he served with distinction, demonstrating his leadership talent, particularly at Gaines' Mill and Malvern Hill.



However, his military career soon took a dramatic turn. Following the 1862 Second Battle of Bull Run, he was accused by commanding Gen. John Pope of failing to obey orders during the Union defeat. It led to Porter being court-martialed and found guilty in January 1863, before being cashiered from the army. The punishment was likely part of an effort to improve the declining reputation of Pope.

In the coming years, Porter worked to clear his name. In 1878–1879, a committee appointed by President Rutherford B. Hayes spent nearly seven months taking testimony from almost 150 witnesses—many of them former Confederates—and officially concluded that Porter was not guilty of the crimes for which he had been convicted.

With his good name restored, Porter went on to hold several government positions, including New York City Commissioner of Public Works and New York City Police and Fire Commissioner. In addition to being a founder of the Military Order of Foreign Wars, he was an original member and president of the Aztec Club of 1847, a military society composed of officers who served during the Mexican-American War. Maj. Gen. Fitz John Porter died on May 21, 1901, in Morristown, New Jersey, at the age of 78.



This Civil War Dispatch has been brought to you by the Blue and Gray Education Society, a non-profit 501-3C educational organization. Please visit us at www.blueandgrayeducation.org.