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.Meets @ Civic Center Library

.3839 N Drinkwater Blvd Scottsdale

.on the 3rd Tuesday of the month

6:45 PM—8:45 PM

.September thru May

.\$25 Annual Dues (Due every Sept)

.\$35 Annual Dues for Mr & Mrs.

.Everyone Welcome



Colonel Keith E. Gibson

-presents-

THROWING AWAY THE SCABBARD:  
THE VIRGINIA MILITARY INSTITUTE  
IN THE CIVIL WAR

October 16th, 2007 6:45 PM

Civic Center Library

Colonel Gibson is Executive Director of Museum Programs and Architectural Historian for the Virginia Military Institute. As Director of Museum Programs, Colonel Gibson is responsible for the operation and development of the VMI Museum in Lexington, Virginia and the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park in New Market, Virginia. Growing up near Richmond, Virginia, on land contested during the Civil War, kindled Keith Gibson's interest in history at an early age. Receiving his bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from the VMI in 1977 and after a brief tour of duty as a Naval Officer, Colonel Gibson returned to VMI as Curator of Exhibits for the VMI Museum. Colonel Gibson has worked as a consultant on several historical documentary and feature films including: *Gods and Generals*, *The Civil War Journal* and *Gettysburg* as well as writing numerous book reviews and articles on the Civil War. He was instrumental in the development of *The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields National Historic District And Commission Act* passed by Congress in 1996.



FROM WES' DEN...

In September, we had a nice opening attendance of 88, to hear a fascinating presentation of General Pickett and his wife. Since our average per meeting last year was 77, this is a very promising start. Let me remind you that we are a Non-Profit Corporation and your dues and any gifts are tax deductible. It costs close to \$900 to fly a speaker in from the East, so your support is crucial. With all the new faces in attendance, I will remind all that the officers, board and speakers do not receive any remuneration.



Also in September, Paul Buser represented us at a workshop held at Fort Union National Monument in New Mexico. Travelers, please stop by and see our Bearss Memorial frame. It is nicely displayed. Superintendent Marie Sauter would be very happy to meet you. My wife and I toured the other Fort Union last summer. This was not a union fort but rather a base of the John J. Astor American Fur Company. It was built in 1828 near the joining of the Yellowstone River and the Missouri River and now straddles the Montana-North Dakota state line. It has been beautifully restored.

I remain your most obedient servant..... *Wes Schmidt*

DID YOU KNOW?

.The residence of the Mayor of the City of New York, Gracie Mansion, was formerly the property of the Gracie family, an old aristocratic New York clan, whose most prominent representative in the Civil War was Archibald Gracie, a *Confederate* general.

.Not until August 1861 did Congress get around to providing for the retirement of senior officers, a provision that was immediately invoked by Colonel William Whistler of the 4th Artillery, who had been continuously on active duty since 1801.

.Mary Todd Lincoln's closest confidant during the war was Mrs. Elizabeth Keckley, a black seamstress who had once been employed by Varina Davis.

## **Stealing the General: The Great Locomotive Chase and the First Medal of Honor**

by Russell S. Bonds

Published by Westholme Publishing. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. 2007. 444 pp. \$29.95

Reviewed by Don Swanson, SCWRT Member

On April 12, 1862 – exactly one year after the firing on Fort Sumter – 18 Federal soldiers and one civilian, led by a smuggler and spy, jumped on the idling locomotive steam engine *General* in Big Shanty, Georgia and headed north for Chattanooga, Tennessee. Within minutes the *General's* determined conductor began the pursuit which would become known as “The Great Locomotive Chase”.

Union spy James Andrews devised the far-fetched plan to infiltrate 120 miles into the Confederacy, steal a train and head back north to Chattanooga burning bridges and cutting telegraph lines along the way. He convinced Union General Ormsby Mitchel who had 8,000 troops under his command in eastern Tennessee to approve the plan and allow him to recruit volunteers. Andrews' hope was to disrupt the Western & Atlantic Railroad that traveled from Atlanta to the important railroad junction in Chattanooga long enough to delay critical supplies and reinforcements to Confederate forces occupying the area allowing Mitchel's forces to take the town.

After a bit of a slow start setting up the Union situation in eastern Tennessee in 1862, the author gets rolling when Andrews enters the story and implements his plan. The volunteers' journey deep into Confederate territory dressed in civilian clothes (knowing that they could be hung if discovered) quickly pulls the reader into this incredible story. The story “picks up steam” though once the now twenty man force – two members joined the Confederate army to elude capture and two members amazingly overslept the morning of the locomotive theft – takes possession of the train for its 6 hour ill-fated journey with the *General's* conductor in pursuit. While the chase at times has comic overtones (imagine the pursuing conductor pushing a commandeered maintenance car along with a pole - the see-saw lever hand car seen in movies were not in use on that railroad) the tale of the raiders' abandonment of the train, attempted escape, trial and horrific hangings of

eight of the raiders quickly reminds us how serious the stakes were. For eight other raiders the amazing saga continued with their escape from a Confederate prison and a harrowing journey back to Union territory. The author then explains in fascinating detail how six of these eight became the first recipients of the Medal of Honor.

For many, Buster Keaton's silent screen classic “The General” or the 1956 Walt Disney movie “The Great Locomotive Chase” has provided all they know about this unique event of the Civil War. Hopefully, Russell Bonds' book will change that. While it's doubtful that even a successful conclusion to the raid would have significantly altered events in eastern Tennessee in 1862, **Stealing the General** documents the creativity and heroics of a small number of people – both Union and Confederate – that was to become so common in this “great civil war” as Lincoln would call it a year and a half later in Gettysburg. Bonds' book not only should be the definitive telling of the “Great Locomotive Chase” for some time to come, but it is also a wonderfully entertaining tale of intrigue, imprisonment, retribution and reward.



### FROM THE AUCTION BLOCK

- General Grant's bejeweled sword presented by citizens of Kentucky in 1864, just sold for \$1,673,000.
- Custer's personal battle flag carried from Appomattox to the Little Big Horn sold for almost 1 million.

### NEW THIS SEASON....

You now have a choice to receive your Grapeshot by regular mail or by e-mail. Everyone will continue to receive their *Grapeshot* by regular mail unless you specifically request receiving it by e-mail by notifying the editor at [kkbcraft@qwest.net](mailto:kkbcraft@qwest.net) to be put on the e-mail list.

**Please help share the knowledge  
by bringing a friend to our Round Table Meetings!**



## THE CIVIL WAR LIBRARY

By Paul J. Buser

Scottsdale Attorney & SCWRT Member

### LEADERS TO OBLIVION” – THE FATE OF TWO CIVIL WAR LEADERS IN THE NEW MEXICO/ARIZONA TERRITORY – JAMES CARLETON FOR THE NORTH, SHEROD HUNTER OF THE SOUTH

(Part 2 of 2 Parts)

In our September 2007 issue we concluded that two famous soldier leaders – General James Carleton for the Union and Major Sherod Hunter for the Confederacy – planned for an historic confrontation against each other and their respective troops in the Arizona desert. Their highly anticipated face to face battle was never realized.

This month’s issue tells of Carleton’s and Hunter’s individual destinies after it became clear that Major Hunter could not hold Arizona for the South. Both men’s military careers essentially ended outside of Arizona.

#### Picacho Peak & Tucson

On April 15, 1862 a fearsome and deadly skirmish took place between a handful of Confederate pickets and a handful of advance troops from the 2,350 strong approaching column of California Volunteers. The site was Picacho Peak. The Confederate lookouts were on guard there to warn their larger contingent in Tucson, 40 miles south of the peak.

Picacho occurred less than three weeks after the March 26-28, 1862 defeat of the Confederates at Glorieta Pass, near Santa Fe. This defeat marked the beginning of the 1,000 mile retreat of more than 2,000 Confederate soldiers from New Mexico Territory to Texas. When news of the retreat reached Sherod Hunter in Tucson, with his own troops he abandoned Arizona to join Confederate fighting in Louisiana.

Concerning the Confederate flight from Tucson, a San Francisco newspaper, Alta California, published the following military respondent’s report:

**“Upon our arrival in Tucson, we found it lively with California volunteers but abandoned by its former population. Since then, they have been returning daily and a better pleased set of people cannot be found. Some who have returned have been required to take the oath of allegiance. That portion of the community, which could be best spared, left with Hunter a few weeks ago and will be sure not to come back unless forced to.**

**Immediately upon his arrival General Carleton went to work to renovate and straighten out the affairs of the territory. His first move was to arrest eight or ten suspicious characters who had been prowling about the place ever since Hunter’s departure.”**

#### Martial Law Declared by Carleton

On June 8, 1862 – 10 weeks after Glorieta Pass and a little more than 8 weeks after Picacho Peak – General Carleton of the California Volunteers declared martial law in Arizona Territory.

Here are some of his proclamation’s salient points:

➤ “Now, in the present chaotic state in which Arizona is found to be, with no civil officers to administrate the laws, indeed with an utter absence of all civil authority and with no security of life or property within its borders, it becomes the duty of the undersigned to represent the authority of the United States over the people of Arizona as well as over those who compose or are connected with the column from California.”

➤ “Until civil officers shall be sent by the government to organize the civil courts for the administration of justice . . . trials for capital offenses shall be held by a military commission. The rules of evidence shall be those customary in practice under common law. Trials for minor offenses shall be held under the same rules.”

➤ “All matters in relation to right in property and lands, which may be in dispute, shall be determined, for the time being, by a military commission. Appeals from the decisions of commissions can be taken to the civil courts when the latter have been established.”

➤ “No man ho has arrived at lawful age shall be permitted to reside within this territory who does not, without delay, subscribe to the oath of allegiance to the United States.”

➤ “No words or acts calculated to impair that veneration which all good patriots should feel for our country and government, will be tolerated within this territory or go unpunished if sufficient proof can be had of them.”

➤ “No man who does not pursue some lawful calling or have legitimate means of support shall be permitted to remain in this territory.”

➤ “From and after this date a monthly tax of five dollars for license to trade shall be levied upon all merchants in Tucson, Arizona . . . whose monthly sales of merchandise amount to five hundred dollars or under, and an additional tax of one dollar per month for each additional sale of one hundred dollars.”

➤ “Every keeper of a gambling house shall pay a tax of one hundred dollars per month for each and every table whereon any banking game is played.”

➤ “Every keeper of a bar shall pay a tax of one hundred dollars per month to keep said bar.”

Carleton then issued orders to arrest all Arizonans who had previously assisted or were thought to have assisted the Confederacy before its defeat in the Arizona Territory.

#### Hunter in Louisiana, Tennessee, Mexico

Sherod Hunter was traveling eastward when Carleton pronounced Arizona’s martial law. This law also included enforcement of a “Confiscation Act”, an order created by Brigadier General George Wright of the United States Army of the Pacific.

The Act stated that real estate and personal property were each subject to taking by the United States military if the owner of the property was proved to have held public office for the Confederacy or to have aided and abetted “enemies of the United States”. Consequently, while Hunter was riding to join



Confederate forces in Louisiana, his farm and ranch land in the Mimbres Mountains were left subject to this new legalized taking.

One year later, in the spring and early summer of 1863, Hunter and his men were fighting in south central Louisiana near Pattersonville, Brashear City (also called Morgan City), an important railroad yard, and the United States' Fort Buchanan. The North-South battles in the area centered in a land and water triangle fronting Bayou Boeuf, Louisiana.

**“This low, water-logged region was a far cry from the desert that the Arizonans and Texans had expected to invade when they joined the Arizona Brigade.”** [Yet, Hunter’s men captured the commander of Fort Buchanan], **“overwhelmed the fort, and tore down the Stars and Stripes.”** (Quotes from Finch, Major Sherod Hunter and Arizona Territory, C.S.A., ppgs. 182 & 187, The Arizona Historical Society 1996).

Hunter and his men went on to invade and invest nearby Brashear City. Hunter reported that with his command, in two columns, they “waded ashore in water two to three feet deep and shoved their boats into deep water, thus cutting off all means of retreat.” Forty-five U.S. troops were killed and 40 were wounded. Thirteen hundred Union troops surrendered. Hunter’s command tolled three dead and 18 wounded. In his June 26, 1863 report on battle, Hunter stated:

**“We have captured eleven 24 and 32 pounder siege guns; 2,500 stand of small-arms (Enfield and Burnside rifles), and immense quantities of quartermaster’s commissary, and ordnance stores, some 2,000 negroes and between 200 and 300 wagons and tents. I cannot speak too highly of the gallantry and conduct of the officers and men under my command. All did their whole duty, and deserve alike equal credit from our country for our glorious and signal victory.”**

Sherod Hunter was touted by many Southern generals for his great leadership at Bayou Boeuf. The word of his “gallant conduct beyond all praise” even led other Confederate leaders to postulate that Hunter would be able to lead them back to retake the New Mexico and Arizona Territories. This was not to be.

As the Civil War ground down the Confederacy in the war’s final two years, Hunter and his men saw few additional victories. After the Civil War essentially came to a halt in April and May of 1865, Hunter had no home to go back to in Arizona. He visited his birthplace in Fayetteville, Tennessee but saw that it, too, had been completely changed by the ravages of the war.

Hunter became one of several thousands who composed the Confederate diaspora to Mexico. There they gave themselves and their lives to a new land which was not their own. Hunter disappeared into Mexico at the young age of 32 years. His last known letter was written to a Fayetteville newspaper in July 1868. He may have been living in a small town near Veracruz, Mexico. No one knows for sure.

### **Carleton’s Shame – The Bosque Redondo**

After Carleton declared martial law in Arizona Territory, he left for New Mexico Territory. It was still 1862. He became Commander at Fort Union, on the Santa Fe Trail. From 1862 to 1866 he also served as head of the Department of New Mexico.

During this period of time Carleton ordered all-out U.S.

military attacks on Navahos and Apaches who were living within this Department. Granted, the Indians were wreaking their own havoc on white settlers within the Department. But Carleton planned either to round up all of them or exterminate all of them. He made this very clear in his official orders to the officers and soldiers in charge of this round up.

Carleton’s remedy to stop Indian raids was to create what became the model for Indian reservations in the Far West. He forcibly moved over 500 Apaches (from south central New Mexico) and approximately 12,000 Navahos (from NW New Mexico and NE Arizona) to the same “reservation”.

The reservation was staked near a new military installation (Fort Sumner) on a plains area east of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, not far from present day Las Vegas, New Mexico. The reservation was named the Bosque Redondo” (Round Forest). It was located on the Pecos River, with many trees for shelter and wood burning.

Carleton’s Bosque Redondo experiment was a total failure. The forced movement of the Navahos was called “The Navaho Long Walk” of approximately 500 miles with different routes to the 40 square miles of reservation. Not only did approximately 2,400 Navahos die on their trek to the reservation, while they were there many more died of new illnesses and disease, their crops failed, their water source was considered unhealthful, they did not adjust to living in pueblos that Carleton required, and they fought with both the Apaches at the Bosque Redondo as well as with nearby Comanches, who saw the Navahos without weapons or protections taken from them by Carleton.

Finally, in 1866 Carleton was dismissed as head of the New Mexico Department. A United States Congressional investigating committee had condemned his conduct toward the Navahos and Apaches.

On April 30, 1866 General Carleton was also relieved of his duty at Fort Union. He was appointed a Second Lieutenant Colonel of the Fourth U.S. Cavalry and was transferred for duty to Louisiana and to Texas.

Two years later -- on May 28, 1868 -- U.S. Army General William Tecumseh Sherman also condemned Carleton’s reservation experiment.

General Sherman arrived at Fort Sumner and the nearby Bosque Redondo as a Peace Commissioner, to negotiate a new way of life for the Navahos and Apaches. In a later report Sherman wrote, “the Navahos had sunk into a condition of absolute poverty and despair.”

**“Within two days [Sherman] had drawn up a treaty with a hundred-square-mile reservation that included at least part of the [original] Navaho homeland, in particular Canyon de Chelly and Canyon del Muerto.”** (Quote from Clark, The Navaho Long Walk, p. 42, Rio Nuevo Publishers/Tucson, Arizona 2004)

Five years later, in 1873, Carleton died at age 58 in San Antonio.

The Library of Congress Civil War Desk Reference mentions neither the names or the military exploits of Hunter and Carleton.

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