

2016
DECEMBER

THE GRAPESHOT

JOHN QUARSTEIN

The Last Days of the Monitor

December 13, 2016

6:40 PM

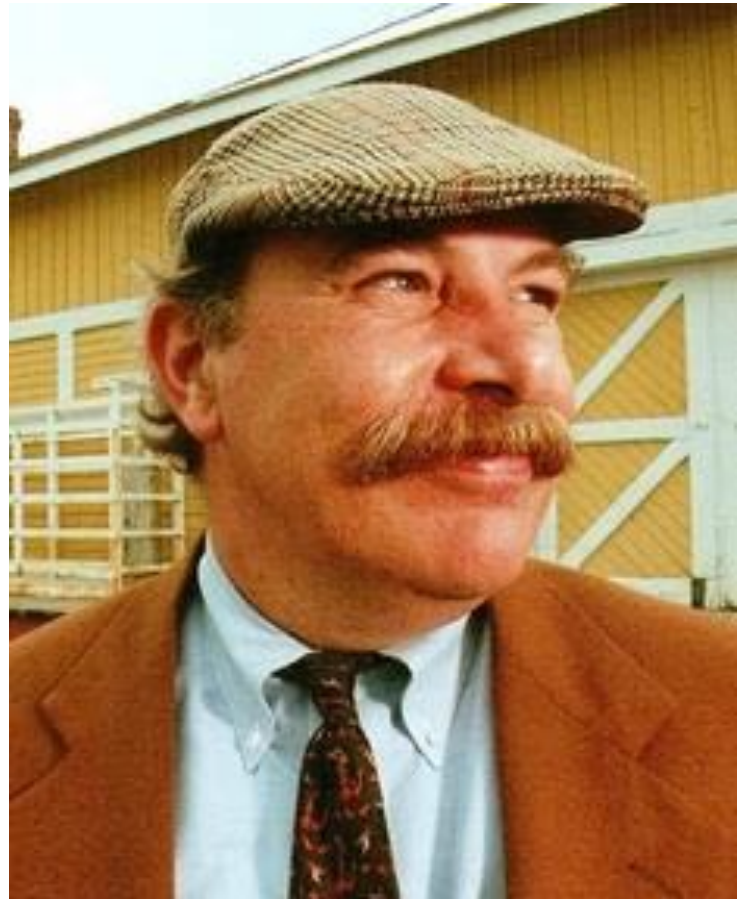
Scottsdale Civic Center Library
(Auditorium)

John V. Quarstein is an award-winning historian, preservationist, lecturer, and author. He served as historian for the city of Hampton's 400th anniversary and previously worked for thirty years as the director of the Virginia War Museum and as a consultant to The Mariners' Museum's Monitor Center. Quarstein is now serving as the Chief Development Officer for the USS Monitor Foundation at The Mariners' Museum.

Quarstein has been involved in a wide variety of historic preservation initiatives including the creation of Civil War battlefield parks like Redoubt Park in Williamsburg and Lee's Mill Park in Newport News as well as historic house museums such as Lee Hall Mansion and Endview Plantation. His current preservation endeavors feature the Rebecca Vaughan House, Lee Hall Depot, Causey's Mill, Big Bethel Battlefield and Fort Monroe. John Quarstein also serves on several boards and commissions such as Virginia Civil War Trails, Virginia War of 1812 Bicentennial Commission Advisory Council and the Newport News Sesquicentennial Commission.

John Quarstein is the author of fifteen books. His volume, *The Monitor Boys: The Crew Of The Union's First Ironclad*, received the 2012 Henry Adams Prize for excellence in historical literature. He also has produced, narrated and written several PBS documentaries, of which the film series *Civil War In Hampton Roads*, was awarded a 2007 Silver Telly. His latest film, *Hampton: From The Sea To The Stars* is a Bronze Telly winner.

Quarstein is the recipient of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 1993 President's Award for Historic Preservation; the Civil War Society's Preservation Award in 1996; the United Daughters of the Confederacy's Jefferson Davis Gold Medal in 1999; and the Daughters of the American Revolution Gold Historians Medal in 2009. Besides his lifelong interest in Tidewater Virginia's Civil War experience, Quarstein is an avid duck hunter and decoy collector. He lives on Old Point Comfort in Hampton, Virginia; and on his family's Eastern Shore farm near Chestertown, Maryland.



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UPCOMING MEETINGS



- Jan 17 **Ed Bearss...**Another Evening With Ed Bearss:
Your Questions Answered
- Feb 21 **Eric Wittenberg...**The Devil's to Pay: John Buford at
Gettysburg
- Mar 21 **Kyle Wichtendahl...**To Care He Who Has Borne the
Battle: Medicine in the American Civil War
- Apr 18 **William C. "Jack" Davis...**The Confederate Kardashian:
Loreta Janeta Velasquez, Media Celebrity,
Con Artist, and the Making of a Civil War Myth
- May 16 **William Bonekemper...**The Myth of the Lost Cause:
False Remembrance of the Civil War

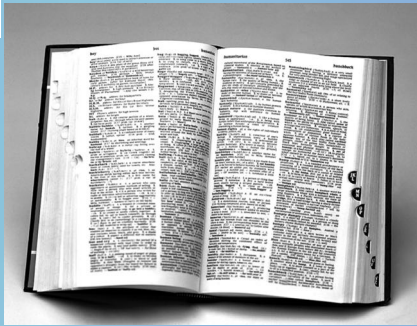
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GUEST !

And pickup a free
book from the book
table. Just notify
Richard (book table
guy) or John
(President)



NAME BADGES

If you are a new member or have requested a replacement badge... please pick up your new badge at the next meeting. They will be displayed on one of the tables in the lobby.



IMPROVE YOUR CIVIL WAR VOCABULARY

Caliber: The distance around the inside of a gun barrel measured in thousands of an inch. Bullets are labeled by what caliber gun they fit.

Cartridge: Roll of thin paper which held a small amount of gun powder in the bottom and a ball or bullet in the top. A soldier needed to tear off the top of the cartridge in order to fire his weapon... part of the nine steps to fire a muzzle loading gun (or five to fire a breech loading gun).

Cash Crop: A crop such as tobacco or cotton which was grown to be sold for cash—not grown for food like corn or wheat.

DECEMBER DURING THE CIVIL WAR

1862..

-Dec 1 On the 1st day of the new Congress, President Lincoln proposes 2 amendments to the U.S. Constitution. First, all slaves would be gradually emancipated until 1900. Second, slaves freed during the war would remain free. Third, The United States would pay for consensual colonization.

-Dec 7 .Battle of Fayetteville

John Hunt Morgan captures a Federal garrison in Hartsville, killing and wounding 1000 before 1800 men surrender.

-Dec 10 U.S. House passes a bill allowing the creation of the state of West Virginia.

1863..

-Dec 14 Federal forces probe Longstreet's lines near his winter camp. After several days of heavy skirmishing, Longstreet struck the Union line on this date, driving Brigadier General James Shackleford back about 1.5 miles before he made a stand. Union forces withdrew that evening.

-Dec 22 Leonidas Polk ordered to take command of the Army of Mississippi.

-Dec 27 Joe Johnston takes command of the Army of Tennessee in Dalton.

MEMBER GENEALOGY PAGE

This article was sent in by SCWRT member, Joey Tickle.

Private James Tickle, Co E, 53rd North Carolina Infantry

1864

53rd Regiment, North Carolina Infantry

53rd Infantry Regiment completed its organization in April, 1862, at Camp Mangum, near Raleigh, North Carolina. The men were recruited in the following counties: Guilford, Mecklenburg, Chatham, Surry, Alamance, Stokes, Union, and Wilkes. It served in the Department of North Carolina, then was assigned to General Daniel's and Grimes' Brigade, Arm of Northern Virginia. The 53rd fought in many conflicts from Gettysburg to Cold Harbor, participated in all the battles in the Shenandoah Valley, and was active in the Appomattox Campaign. It lost thirty-six percent of the 322 engaged at Gettysburg, had 1 wounded at Bristoe and 2 killed at Mine Run. The unit surrendered 6 officers and 81 men. Its commanders were Colonels James T. Morehead and William A. Owens, and Majors James J. Iredell and John W. Rierson.

James Tickle was captured Sept 22, 1864, Fisher's Hill per Confederate Muster Roll.

James was sent to Point Lookout Prison and he then joined the U.S. Military.

Fisher's Hill

Other Names: None

Location:

Shenandoah County

Campaign:

Sheridan's Shenandoah Valley Campaign (August-December 1864)

Date(s):

September 21-22, 1864

Principal Commanders:

Maj. Gen. Philip Sheridan [US]

Lt. Gen. Jubal A. Early [CS]

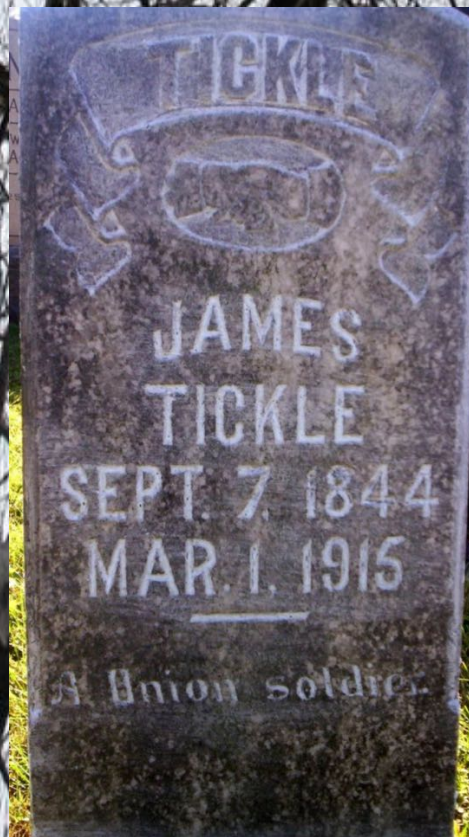
Forces Engaged:

38,944 total (US 29,444; CS 9,500)

Estimated Casualties:

1,763 total (US 528; CS 1,235)

Description: Early's army, bloodied by its defeat at Opequon (Third Winchester) on September 19, took up a strong defensive position at Fisher's Hill, south of Strasburg. On September 21, the Union army advanced, driving back the skirmishers and capturing important high ground. On the 22nd, Crook's Corps moved along North Mountain to outflank Early and attacked about 4 pm. The Confederate cavalry offered little resistance, and the startled infantry were unable to face the attacking force. The Confederate defense collapsed from west to east as Sheridan's other corps join in the assault. Early retreated to Rockfish Gap near Waynesboro, opening the Valley to a Union "scorched earth" invasion. Mills and barns from Staunton to Strasburg were burned in what became known as the "Burning" or "Red October."



THE FIRST AIRCRAFT CARRIER
BY
SCWRT MEMBERS:
FRED RUOTOLO AND MICHAEL RUOTOLO

The first use of a ship or more correctly a barge outfitted for aerial observation was in the Civil War on November 11, 1861. The barge was initially built as a coal barge. The Union Navy purchased a shallow draft, 122 foot long by 15 foot beam coal barge and christened it the *USS George Washington Parke Custis*. It was converted to a balloon barge by Captain John A. Dahlgren (later promoted to Rear Admiral) with winches and gas generating equipment at the Washington Navy Yard. The gas generating equipment producing hydrogen gas from iron filings and sulfuric acid was developed and provided by Thaddeus Sobieski Constantine Lowe. An illustration of the barge and balloon is shown in Figure 1.

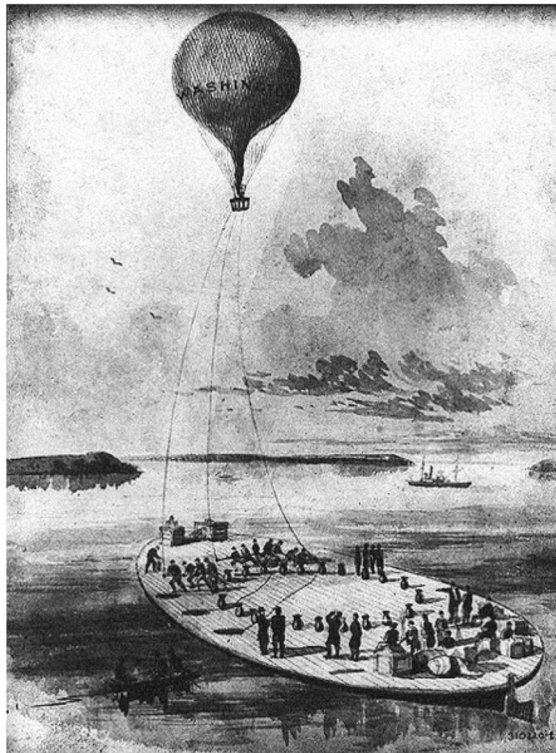


FIGURE 1.
USS GEORGE WASHINGTON PARKE CUSTIS WITH OBSERVATION BALLON WASHINGTON

The barge was towed by the steamer *Coeur de Lion* down the Potomac River to observe Confederate positions in Richmond. Lowe and General Daniel E. Sickles went up in the balloon and observed the Confederate forces in Virginia. Lowe stated: *"We had a fine view of the enemy camp fires during the evening and saw the rebels constructing batteries at Freestone Point."*

The balloon vessel went on to serve in a number of operations on the Potomac. Later in 1862 the vessel was used in the Peninsula campaign.

This was not the first instance of a balloon being launched from a vessel. Earlier, on August 3, 1861 John La Mountain launched a balloon from the *USS Fanny*. It is not considered the first aircraft carrier, since it was not specifically outfitted as a balloon launching vessel. The honor of first dedicated aircraft carrier goes to the *USS G .W. P. Custis*.