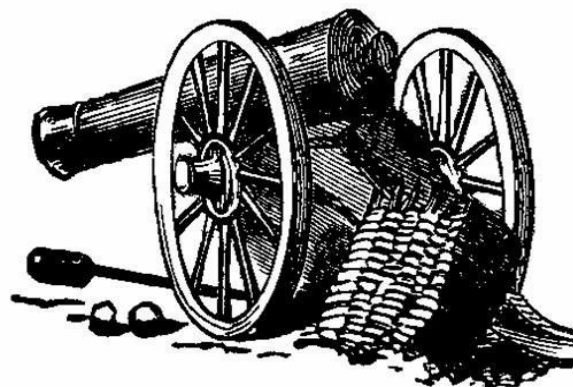


The Grapeshot

October 2019



Linda Barnickel

This month's guest speaker:

Don't miss our award-winning author Linda Barnickel's presentation "Milliken's Bend: Forgotten Battle On the Mississippi"

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Scottsdale Civic Library

Auditorium 6:00 p.m.

October 15, 2019

Please join us for social hour
and book sales at 4:30

About Our Speaker

On October 15, the Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable will present award winning author Linda Barnickel to speak on Milliken's Bend: Forgotten Battle on the Mississippi. Her presentation will begin at 6pm at the Scottsdale Civic Center Library Auditorium and she will be available beforehand to meet guests and sign books.

The battle took place on June 7, 1863 about 10 miles from Vicksburg. Long overshadowed by the titanic conflicts at Vicksburg and Gettysburg, Milliken's Bend was significant as one of the first battles in which African-American troops took part. The majority of the Union forces were composed of freshly recruited black men, scarcely trained and just weeks from bondage in the cotton fields. Rumored post-battle executions of black and white Yankee prisoners in Confederate hands played an instrumental role in halting prisoner exchanges between the two powers.

Ms Barnickel will discuss the events leading to and surrounding the battle from both the Union and Confederate perspectives as well as the surprising story of how the battle has been remembered over the years.

Linda Barnickel is an archivist and freelance writer, with Master's degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and The Ohio State University. Her book, Milliken's Bend: A Civil War Battle in History and Memory, was heralded as "Stellar" by Civil War Times, and On Point: Journal of Army History declared it a "must-read." It received the Jules and Frances Landry Award from LSU Press for the "most outstanding achievement in Southern studies," and the A.M. Pate, Jr. Award from the Fort Worth Civil War Round Table for "outstanding research and writing on the Tran-Mississippi."

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings are held at the Scottsdale Civic Center Library Auditorium on the third Tuesday of every month Sept. thru May. Each meeting includes these activities: 4:30 Social Hour and Book Sales, 5:00 Movie, 6:00 lecture



Oct 15 - Linda Barnickel, “Milliken’s Bend: Forgotten Battle On The Mississippi”

Nov 12 - Dennis Frye, “Antietam Shadows: Mystery & Myth”

Dec 10 - Peter Carmichael, “The War for the Common Soldier”

Jan 21 - David Ward, “Mr Lincoln Goes To Gettysburg”, with Spielberg, Daniel Day-Lewis & Ed Bearss”

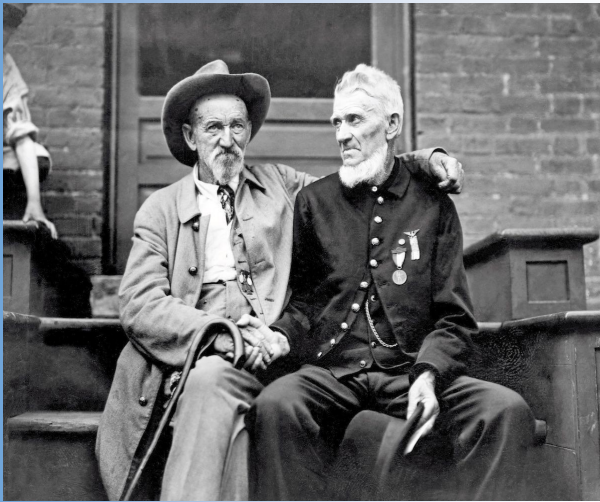
Feb 18 - David Stewart, “The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson”

March 17 - Eric Wittenberg, “Holding The Line On the River of Death: Union Calvary at Chickamauga”

April 21 - Chris Mackowski, “The Bloody Angle at Spotsylvania”

History Discussion Groups

Didn't get enough Civil War at our speaker meetings? Here is the schedule for our History Discussion Group for this season. We encourage you to join us. Our meetings are casual and engaging with a lot of information. Not to mention it's a blast. The discussion group meets in the Gold Room at the Scottsdale Civic Center Library from 6 P.M. to 7:30 P.M.



9/26 Lee's Lieutenants, An Open Discussion on R.E. Lee's Principal Commanders Facilitator: Brad Cox

10/24 United States Colored Troops. Facilitator: Dick Cox

11/21 Open Discussion on the Battle of Antietam. Facilitator: TBA

12/19 The Real Lives of Billy Yank and Johnny Reb, Facilitator: Dick Cox

1/30 What It's Like Consulting on a Civil War Movie. Facilitator: David Ward

2/27 Annual Trivia Contest

3/26 Open Discussion on the Battle of Chickamauga. Facilitator: TBA

4/30 Open Discussion on the Battle of Spotsylvania. Facilitator: TBA

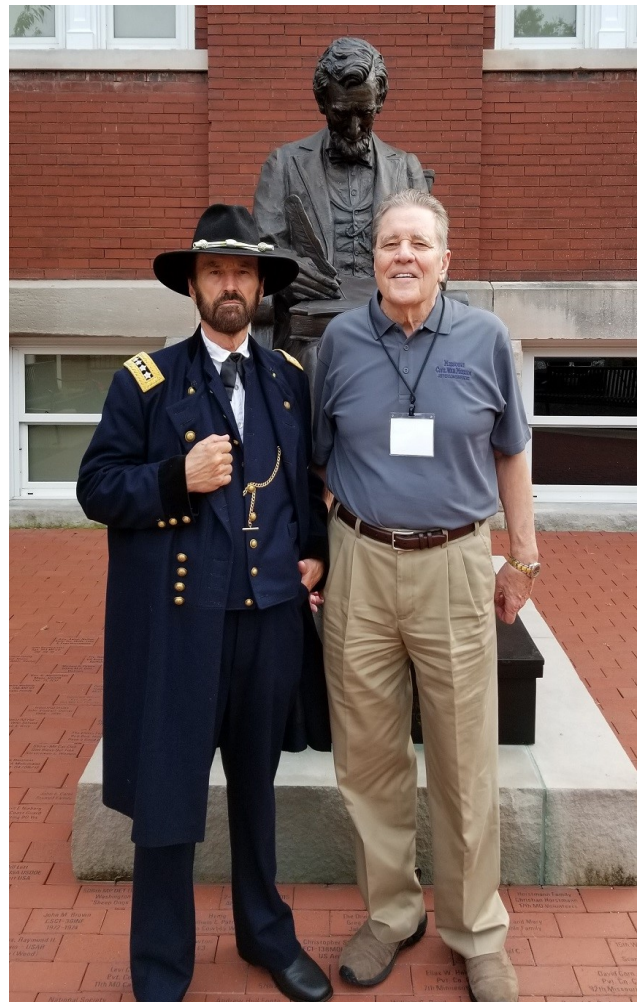
From Around the Campfire...A Message from Our President John Bamberl



For this month's message Mr. Bamberl presents several photos taken by him during his recent trip east to attend the Civil War Congress.



Curt Fields, Ph.D., as Gen. U.S. Grant



Curt Fields and John Bamberl pose in front of the only statue depicting Lincoln signing the Emancipation Proclamation



Curt Fields as Gen. U.S. Grant



Desk at which Gen. Grant wrote his memoirs.

Desk at which Grant wrote his memoirs



Gate Way Arch also known as the Gate-
way to the West in St. Louis, MO.

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Meetings @

Scottsdale Civic Center Library (Auditorium)

3839 N Drinkwater Blvd

Scottsdale AZ

3rd Tuesday of the month

September thru May

5:40 PM - 7:30 PM \$35 Annual Dues (individual)

\$45 Annual Dues (family)

EVERYONE WELCOME

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I Didn't Know That...

Editor's note: For the October *Grapeshot* our resident Civil War scholar Mr. Gary Dorris presents his essay on the progress toward Secession in the State of Texas titled "The Texas Secession."

"Do not join these others and secede from the United States. They welcomed us in 1845 and protected us from invasion, and to separate now is dishonorable."

Despite this plea from Governor Sam Houston in January 1861, Texas soon joined other southern states to form the Confederate States of America.

In early 1861, there was little doubt that 8 or 9 southern states would secede; however, many in the north still held a slim hope that Virginia and Texas might decide to remain in the Union. Virginia was a Border State which had many economic ties to the Union, and Sam Houston, the popular Governor of Texas, had recently been re-elected and was expressly pro-union. Most observers in the north, including Lincoln, did not understand the political winds in this bastion of independence. There were three major factions at work in Texas.

The first was led by Governor Houston, who was instrumental in Texas winning independence from Mexico. When Texas declared its independence in 1836, the Mexican army was sent to put down the uprising and had initial success at the battle of the Alamo. However, General Houston soon led the Texas Army to victory at the battle of San Jacinto and negotiated a treaty under which Mexico eventually relinquished claims to Texas; but the treaty left some border lines in dispute. Houston subsequently became the President of the sovereign nation of Texas, and in 1845, he led the movement for Texas to join the United States; in part because he feared a new government in Mexico might try to invade Texas over the lingering border issues. He next became a U.S. Senator from Texas, then its Governor, and was a staunch Unionist.

The second faction were early settlers to Texas, mostly ranchers, who originally aligned with Sam Houston, but who had opposed giving up their hard-won sovereignty as an independent nation when Texas sought to join the United States in 1845. They believed Texas could thrive as a small nation trading both with the United States and Mexico. Since the new Confederate Constitution provided a method for states to legally secede, some thought that Texas might later choose to leave the Confederacy and once again be an independent nation.

The third faction was comprised of many transplants from other deep southern states and included most of the slave-holders in Texas, who were planters concentrated in the prime agricultural areas along the eastern border with Louisiana and the nearby gulf coast. This group was disappointed in the outcome of the Mexican War of 1847, when they thought that the United States should have annexed even more Mexican territory to create future states in which slavery would be authorized. They also believed that the Confederate States of America would protect their right to own slaves.

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Governor Houston warned these two opposition factions, saying (in part): *“Let me tell you what is coming. Your fathers and husbands, your sons and brothers, will be herded at the point of the bayonet. You may, after the sacrifice of countless millions in treasure and hundreds of thousands of lives, as a bare possibility, win Southern Independence. But I doubt it. The North is determined to preserve this Union. They are not a fiery, impulsive people as you are, but when they begin to move in a given direction, they move with the steady momentum and perseverance of a mighty avalanche. And what I fear is, they will overwhelm the South.... and Texas with it.”*

In December 1860, the second and third factions, which disagreed on almost all other issues, except secession, formed a fractured coalition long enough to demand that Governor Houston convene a special session of the Texas legislature to vote on secession from the United States. Houston simply ignored the request, but within weeks, the momentum within the state shifted dramatically and other government officials, who were part of the new coalition, by-passed the Governor and declared an immediate statewide election for delegates to a Secession Convention to be held on January 28, 1861. To counter this internal rebellion, Houston called a special session of the legislature which he expected would invalidate the Secession Convention.

Instead, the legislature approved the establishment of the Convention by a vote of 140-28 and, when Houston vetoed the action, quickly over-rode his veto. However, the Governor still had enough friends in the legislature to pass a motion which required a vote of the people to confirm (or reject) the Convention’s decision; and Houston hoped that he might be able to rally voters to keep Texas in the Union.

On February 1, 1861, the Secession Convention delegates voted 166-7 to recommend secession. Now, it was left to the voters of Texas to decide.

Texas had a total population of over 420,000 free citizens and 160,000 slaves. On February 23rd, amid threats of violence at polling places from all three factions, only 61,000 Texans voted out of the probable 100,000 “adult men of substance” who were eligible to cast ballots. Of those, 46,000 voted to secede from the United States; so, while 75% of those voting chose to leave the United States, the matter was decided by less than 50% of eligible voters.

Houston now accepted the fact that Texas would secede from the Union. However, his patriotism to Texas (or stubbornness as others thought) led him to ask that the state legislature reject membership in the Confederacy and revert Texas back to its former status as an independent nation. Then, as a sovereign country, Texas could remain neutral in the looming Civil War.

But Houston was again wrong. Texas officially joined the Confederate States of America on March 4, 1861; and, for Governor Houston, the situation soon became even worse.

The secessionist legislature quickly passed laws which required that any Texan who held office, political appointment, military commission, or wanted to vote, must sign a loyalty pledge to the Confederacy. When Houston refused to sign the oath, the legislature declared the position of Governor “vacant” and, after thirty years of service, Houston was a private citizen.

Before his death in 1863, Sam Houston contacted many who had stood by him in opposition to secession and wrote: *“There comes a time (when) a man’s section is his country. I stand with mine. I was a conservative citizen of the United States. I am now a conservative citizen of the Southern Confederacy.”* However, he could still not bring himself to sign the oath.

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At first, Texas thrived as a primary supplier of food crops, cattle, and horses to the rest of the South. Texas also provided over 60,000 men into the war (about 3,000 for the Union) and, tragically, over 21,000 did not come home. But, by late 1863, the Mississippi River and many gulf ports came under Union control, and Texas commerce gradually ground to a halt. As the war came to a close, the market for Texas cattle collapsed, and the state's economy went into a depression from which it would not recover for nearly twenty years.

During the War, and for several years thereafter, the two surviving political factions could not agree on even basic political or economic policies, so the state's government was usually chaotic. Further, since one group hoped for greater autonomy for Texas (or even independence), and the other group wanted preservation of slavery and more control over Mexican territory, neither ever achieved their very different objectives.

And, Houston's worst scenario had been realized. He had said, "*... You may win Southern Independence. But I doubt it. And what I fear is, they will overwhelm the South.... and Texas with it.*"

So, after all was said and done, and despite being wrong several other times, Sam Houston's most dire expectation, was right.

Contact the author at gadorris2@gmail.com and see other articles under BLOGS at the website www.alincolnbygadorris.com



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