



THE COURIER



Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table



Tuesday, November 12th, 2013 Meeting #138

Dino's Restaurant at I90 & State Rt. 306 Willoughby, Ohio

Guest Speaker: David R. Bush, Ph.D.

Topic: The Life of the POWs at the Johnson's Island Civil War Prison

Canteen at 6:00 pm Dinner at 7:00 pm Guests are welcome

Reservations required Please call Mike Sears

Phone 440 257 3956 e-Mail: mikeanddonnas@roadrunner.com

The Courier is the monthly newsletter of the Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table

To contact or send an article to The Courier – e-mail it to neocwrtcourier@yahoo.com

Carl Dodaro, Editor

John A. Sandy, Editor

Staff writers: Franco Sperrazzo Ted Karle Tom Horvath Norton London

Arlan Byrne Bill Meissner Dr. R. Stabile Joseph Tirpak Scott Hagara

Richmond, Virginia Correspondent: Brent Morgan



David R. Bush, Ph.D. – The study of archaeology allows Dr. David R. Bush to honor history, humanity and the Earth. “It’s so important to understand that the ground contains your history and to be respectful of it. My goal is to make people think about what the Earth and archaeology represent.”

Professor of Anthropology at Heidelberg University, Dr. Bush also directs the Center for Historic and Military Archaeology in 1998 to focus exclusively on the Johnson’s Island Prisoner of War Depot. Prior to this, he served as director of the University of Pittsburgh’s Center for Cultural Resource Research from 1991-1998 and as director of Case Western Reserve University’s archaeological laboratory from 1980-1991. Dr. Bush has been a national lecturer for the Archaeological Institute of America. He has been immersed in the investigation of the Johnson’s Island Prisoner of War Depot — a Union prison confining Confederate Officers—located in Sandusky Bay, Lake Erie. His work led to it being recognized as a National Historic Landmark in 1990. Dr. Bush has led thousands of students and volunteers of all ages in exploring this Civil War prison site and is an emphatic advocate for diligent awareness and constant evaluation of the overall context in which material culture is found.

Dr. Bush directs the Experimental Learning Program in Historic Archaeology which uses the Johnson's Island Prisoner of War Depot site to introduce 5 – 12 grade students to the science of archaeology and the history of the Civil War.

Since 2001, Dr. Bush has been Chair of the Friends and Descendants of Johnson's Island Civil War Prison. This not-for-profit historic preservation organization has purchased 17 acres of the prison compound and Fort Johnson for education, research and interpretative use. These are the only acres of the prison preserved, besides the 2 acres owned by the Federal Government protecting the cemetery.

Dr. Bush's research has included many years and a great deal of energy gathering and reviewing documents from museums, historical societies, and living relatives of the prisoners and guards to help in the understanding of this complex site. Combining the archaeological and historical records has allowed Dr. Bush to publish several articles on Johnson's Island and his first book, one of several planned, "I FEAR I SHALL NEVER LEAVE THIS ISLAND" was published in 2011, based around a set of letters written by Wesley Makely, a POW at Johnson's Island, for his wife Kate.

The Life of the POWs at the Johnson's Island Civil War Prison – Historical and archaeological evidence from the Johnson's Island Civil War Military Prison allows examination of the choices that POWs had during the American Civil War. Over 10,000 Confederate Officers were imprisoned at one time or another on Johnson's Island during the Civil War. Newly confined Confederate Officers had to cope with thoughts about survival, escape or assimilation into the prison community. This well illustrated presentation summarizes the results of twenty plus years of research exploring prisoners attempting to cope with these choices and highlights the latest discoveries both in the field and from primary documents drawn from all over the United States. ***The NEOCWRT is honored to present Dr. David R. Bush and "The Life of the POWs at the Johnson's Island Civil War Prison"***.



CIVIL WAR JOURNAL by Franco M Sperrazzo Event Coordinator

Oct. 8th Meeting John C. Fazio, Esq: “Francis and Arabella, John and Fanny: Love and War”.

John C. Fazio did a magnificent job reflecting on the lives of two Civil War generals in his power point presentation. Union General Francis C. Barlow, his wife Arabella and Confederate General John B. Gordon and his wife Anna showed how dedicated military men and their spouses performed as professionals and civilian soldiers during a tumultuous era in our American history. Mr. Fazio chose not to address the controversy surrounding whether or not an incident during combat in Spotsylvania ever happened or may have been an exaggerated myth. Rumors have persisted as to the meeting between Barlow and Gordon ever occurring on the battlefield. John Fazio is thoroughly engaging as he addresses his audience as though he is sitting across from you in your living room.

WRHS Membership Passes 2013-2014: Passes for free admission for Western Reserve Historical Society will be available at our November 12th meeting. This is prime season for main exhibits to be on display at the “Treasures of the Western Reserve”. Regular fee for touring this museum is \$10.50 per person. If you have a talk you would be willing to share at the history society, inform me and I will help to make arrangements for your worthy presentation.

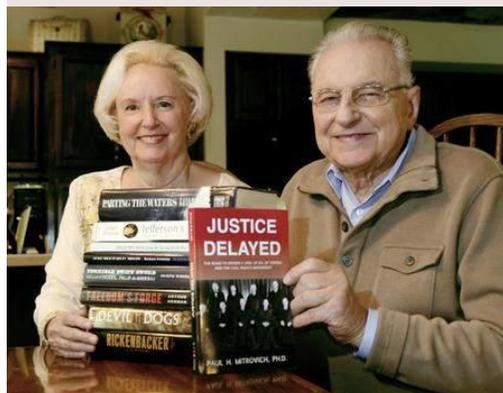
Major Battles of the Civil War: On Wednesday, Nov.13th, the James A. Garfield/ Mentor Library programs will resume from noon to 1:15pm. JAG park service staff will present “The Battle of Lookout Mountain”. This Union victory in November 1863 became part of Ulysses S. Grant’s Chattanooga campaign against confederate forces. The program is free of charge in the Garfield room at: 8215 Mentor Ave. Bring a lunch to enjoy and phone the Mentor library at: (440) 255-8811 to reserve your seat.

Friends of James A. Garfield Organization National Historic Site:

The newly created volunteer organization held its first meeting in February 2013. Since then, the support group has achieved non-profit 501.3c status this November. Fundraising efforts will begin in 2014. Invitations to those who wish to become charter members will be extended. To anyone interested in planning efforts, the next meeting will be Thursday, November 14th at 6:30pm in the JAG/NHS Lawnfield Visitor Center. You can reach Andrew Mizsak, staff coordinator or Todd Arrington, JAG director of interpretation. For more details call (440) 255-8722. Arlan Byrne, Steve Abbey, John Sandy and Franco have joined forces for this meaningful undertaking. For more information, visit the JAG website: www.nps.gov/jaga



Lawnfield photo by Sandy Mitchell



Judge Paul H. Mitrovich speaks at Wildwood Cultural Center:

NEOCWRT member and 30 years of service on the bench, the Honorable Judge Mitrovich of the Court of Common Pleas, has created and developed the Lake County Forensic Crime Lab and Lake County Narcotic Bureau. Judge Mitrovich has Authored his book “Justice Delayed –The Road to Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka and the Civil Rights Movement”. Judge Paul will sign copies of his book when he presents his program on **Thursday, November 7th**, from 7:00- 9:00pm in the **South Wing of the Wildwood Cultural Center**. Pre-registration is required and more details/information can be obtained by calling: **(440) 974-5735**. The Wildwood Cultural Center is located at **7645 Little Mountain Road, Mentor, Ohio**.

Photo of Judge Paul Mitrovich & Wife Jean courtesy of the News-Herald

On the road to recovery: Scott Longert is progressing and hopes to be on hand for our NEOCWRT Holiday gathering. Arlan Byrne will be able to read more effectively as he recently underwent successful corrective surgery on both eyes. Kindly keep both members in your thoughts for complete recoveries.

December 10th meeting: Holiday Gala.

THE ROAD TO GETTYSBURG by Arlan Byrne

PART II

In part I General Lee convinced President Davis and the Confederate Government that a successful invasion of the North was the only way the South could force the Union Government to negotiate a peace.

In June, 1863, General Joseph ‘Fighting Joe Hooker, commander of the Union Army of the Potomac, was positive Confederate General Robert E. Lee was up to something; and Hooker was worried.

He knew that after the Confederate victory in the Battle of Chancellorsville, a few months earlier, Lee had reorganized his army into three parts instead of the two parts he had before the battle. He kept James Longstreet in command of the First Corps and gave the Second Corps of the now dead Stonewall Jackson to Richard Ewell. Lee created a new Third Corps and put A.P. Ambrose Powell Hill in command. This could have been just a simple reorganization of the Confederate Army after Stonewall’s death; but Hooker didn’t think so. Then when Lee sent the cavalry of JEB Stuart to Culpeper, Virginia, to effectively screen his army; Hooker was sure of it. And now, in the first weeks of June, the Confederate army had disappeared into the Shenandoah Valley. Lee and his army were going somewhere. Hooker didn’t know where, and because of what had happened last year, Hooker had plenty of reasons to be worried.



Last summer, in 1862 when General Pope was in charge of the Army of Virginia, Lees’ army had also disappeared into the Shenandoah Valley. When it had finally emerged, it was between Pope and Washington D.C. and the result was the Northern defeat at the Battle of Second Manassas. Pope had been relieved of command after he lost the battle and was now chasing Indians out west. Hooker did not want this to happen to him; so he had to find Lee’s army before any battle took place. *Photo on the left: Fighting Joe Hooker*

But Hooker had something to help him this year that Pope hadn’t had last year. When Hooker had assumed command he had reorganized the Union cavalry along the lines of the Confederate cavalry and now they were turning into an effective fighting and scouting force. Unfortunately their commander, General George Stoneman, had to take a medical leave of absence because of a severe case of hemorrhoids which made horseback riding extremely difficult. But his second-in-command, General Alford Pleasanton, was highly capable. So, in the early hours of June 9th, 1863, the day after Stuarts cavalry review at Brandy Station, Hooker sent Pleasanton and his cavalry to attack the Confederates at Brandy Station, find out where Lee’s infantry was, and where it was going. A day long battle resulted and although Pleasanton was finally forced to withdraw without finding Lees’ infantry; the battle proved that the Union Cavalry was at last equal to the formerly superior Confederate Cavalry. From now on Stuart and the Southern Cavalry

would not have everything their own way.

For the next week or so General Pleasanton continued to try to find Lee’s army in the Shenandoah Valley through the gaps and passes in the mountains. The first clash occurred at Aldie on June 17th, followed by another one two days later at Middleburg, and then an attack on June 21st at Upperville but Stuart always managed to block him.

Nevertheless, Hooker became convinced Lee was moving his army North through the Shenandoah Valley. This left Hooker with no choice. He had to start moving his army slowly northward also; keeping between Washington and the Valley until Lee disclosed his destination. At one time, on June 17th, Lee’s army was spread out over 100 miles, causing Lincoln to remark, rather sarcastically, that “if the animals head is in Pennsylvania and its feet are at Fredericksburg, it

must be pretty thin somewhere in its middle.” He probably hoped Hooker would take the hint and attack. However, Hooker didn’t take the hint; and both Lincoln and Stanton decided it was time for Hooker to go. The problem was, by this time in the war Union Generals did not consider it a good career move to command an army opposite Robert E. Lee. Both the leading candidates for Hookers job, George C. Meade and John Reynolds had refused the command when it was offered to them; so on June 28th Lincoln ORDERED Meade to assume Command of the Army of the Potomac. Meade immediately replaced the still ailing General Stoneman and put General Pleasanton in command of the Union Cavalry. He also insisted Pleasanton remain at headquarters; although Pleasanton would have much preferred field action. This resulted in George A. Custer, Judson Kilpatrick and John Buford becoming the actual field commanders of the Union Cavalry. *Photo below right: Custer and Pleasanton*

By the end of June the 100 mile long animal, whose head had been terrorizing Pennsylvanians, was starting to draw together. Lee had ordered his army to assemble in the Cashtown-Gettysburg area before seeking his decisive battle of the war.

Gettysburg was like the hub of a giant wheel with spokes [roads] emanating from it in every direction, making it easy to approach. When John Buford heard from his scouts and Cavalry patrols that the Confederates were headed toward Gettysburg and were expected to arrive there about July 1st, he and Corps Commander General John Reynolds visited Gettysburg looking for defensive possibilities. They found some outstanding ones. West of the town both Herr and McPhersons’ Ridges provided excellent defensive positions. Then, if you were forced to retreat through town, Cemetery Ridge, on the Eastern side of town, with Evergreen Cemetery and Culps Hill at one end, and the Round tops at the other end, offered even better positions. And lastly, they decided that since Buford’s cavalry was already here, it would defend Gettysburg until Reynolds and his infantry, which was about 10 miles away, could arrive the next day.



Buford put his 2,500 dismounted cavalry on both Herr and McPherson Ridges defending the Chambersburg Pike leading into the west side of Gettysburg. Then he put Colonel Tom Devin’s brigade on the right end of the line to protect his right and rear. When Devin expressed his opinion that he could hold this position against any number of Confederates, Buford just looked at the Colonel with sad eyes and said, “No, you won’t. They will attack you in the morning and they will come *booming* – skirmishers three ranks deep. You will have to fight like the devil just to hold your own until support arrives.”

The next morning, July 1st, at 6:00A.M., an hour after sunrise, Heth’s Confederate infantry from Hill’s corps, with skirmishers three ranks deep, came shuffling along the Chambersburg Pike right at Buford’s men. The Battle of Gettysburg had begun.

Photo above left: General John Buford

Photographs for this article from the Library of Congress

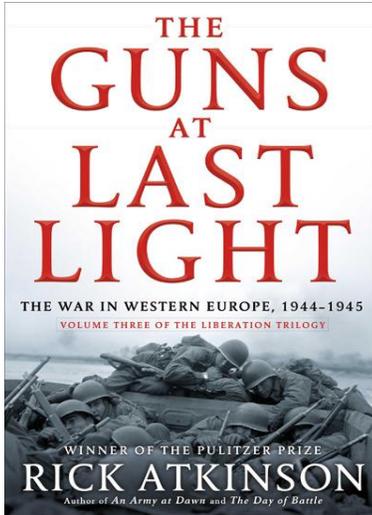
The Guns at Last Light

The War in Western Europe, 1944-1945

Volume 3 of the Liberation Trilogy

by Rick Atkinson, Winner of the Pulitzer Prize

Book Review by Joseph E. Tirpak



This book, all 877 pages is loaded with details, maps, quotes from privates to generals and new information about Generals Eisenhower, Bradley, Patton, Montgomery, and “Hap” Arnold, as well as others too numerous to mention. My interest was triggered by our visit some years ago to the American National Military Cemetery at Normandy, France, now and a final resting place of silence, beauty and tranquility. However, in June of 1944 during the Normandy Invasion it was a place of chaos, hell and death! Here is the scenario as describe by Atkinson of Great Britain about this period of WW II: *“Nearly five years of war had left British cities as, bedraggled unkempt and neglected as rotten teeth. The country was steeped in heavy smells, of old smoke and cheap coal and fatigue. Less bucolic were the millions of rats swarming through three thousand miles of London sewers, exterminators scattered sixty tons of sausage poisoned with zinc phosphate, and stale bread dipped in barium carbonate. Government placards advised, “Food is munition. Don’t waste it!”* World War II by this time had taken an extraordinary toll on our chief ally. However,

our chief ally at times, especially Field Marshall Montgomery often had unkind words about Eisenhower: *“When it comes to war, Ike doesn’t know the difference between Christmas and Easter!”*

Numerous demeaning remarks by Montgomery were quoted by Atkinson. However, in the presence of Ike he held his tongue. In my opinion, Ike disliked Montgomery and yet recognized that he could do little to change the dynamics of the situation. Much credit must go to him.

The Normandy Invasion began during the early hours of June the 6, 1944. The weather was very questionable. More than 500 weather stations scattered across the United Kingdom reported hourly based on updated weather reports requiring “Ike” to make perhaps the most difficult decision of his life. Each of the invasion forces required specific weather demands. Amphibious forces required winds not greater than 13 to 18 miles per hour. Pilots need cloud ceilings of at least 2500 feet. Paratroopers required surface winds below 20 miles per hour. The odds of meeting these needs were placed at 13 to 1 by weather experts. Such demands added immensely to “Ike’s” decision to go or not to go. Eisenhower said: *“Don’t bring me any more bad news.”* Across the allied fleet the war cry sounded: *“Up anchor!”* From that moment the Invasion began. The focus of this overview will be on the Normandy Invasion only. The sheer volume of the advance into France, Belgium and Germany is another report in itself.



Above right photo: General Eisenhower and the Joint British/ American General Staff



The Normandy Invasion

As the invasion convoys in the English Channel swung toward their respective beaches in heavy seas each landing craft was tested for its sea worthiness. Their targets were the beaches of Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword. Men were singing or vomiting each lost in their own thoughts. According to Atkinson, almost all were scared shitless! In the night skies over 800 aircraft were carrying Paratroopers to their respective landing areas. The plans were simple and understood. However the execution had a military slogan: SNAFU! Soldiers drowned because the landing crafts were too far from the beaches when their hatches opened. Paratroopers missed their targets by miles leading to capture and death. Confused pilots mistook one town for another.

The Germans totally surprised were caught off guard too. Many were caught with their pants down. All hell was breaking loose as they manned their stations and opened fire with artillery. Over 1000 British Bombers dropped bombs on German forces and targets. This was followed very shortly by over 1600 American Bombers unleashing havoc and devastation upon the entrenched Germans as well. Men died, others screamed and cried from wounds sustained. In 90 minutes three hundred thousand tons of allied bombs blitzed the Normandy coast. The German bunkers witnessed by Judy and me were in some cases 10 to 12 feet thick and tunnels ran throughout the entire area making it very difficult to penetrate by allied forces.



In spite of SNAFU'S galore, missed targets, drowning, bravery and cowardliness all mixed together, progress was made and the long march through France and Belgium into Germany had begun. Many challenges still remained but with superior resources and more manpower the ultimate victory over Germany and the axis powers would be won.

I believe that this trilogy of books by Rick Atkinson will become the definitive works of WW II. I also think at times he offers too much detail, utilizes too fancy words, endless Regimental details most readers will find overwhelming and mind boggling. However, it was major undertaking and Atkinson has achieved the

Pulitzer Prize for Literature. Military scholars will read it for information not previously available to them, in this respect I believe that he has made a priceless contribution. You will enjoy reading about the Generals, the officers and the enlisted military of each branch of service. Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin are frequently quoted as was George C. Marshall.

All in all, as interest continues in WW II history this Trilogy will become a required read.

Photos: Above left, Landing craft approaching Omaha beach

Lower left, The American Cemetery at Normandy