

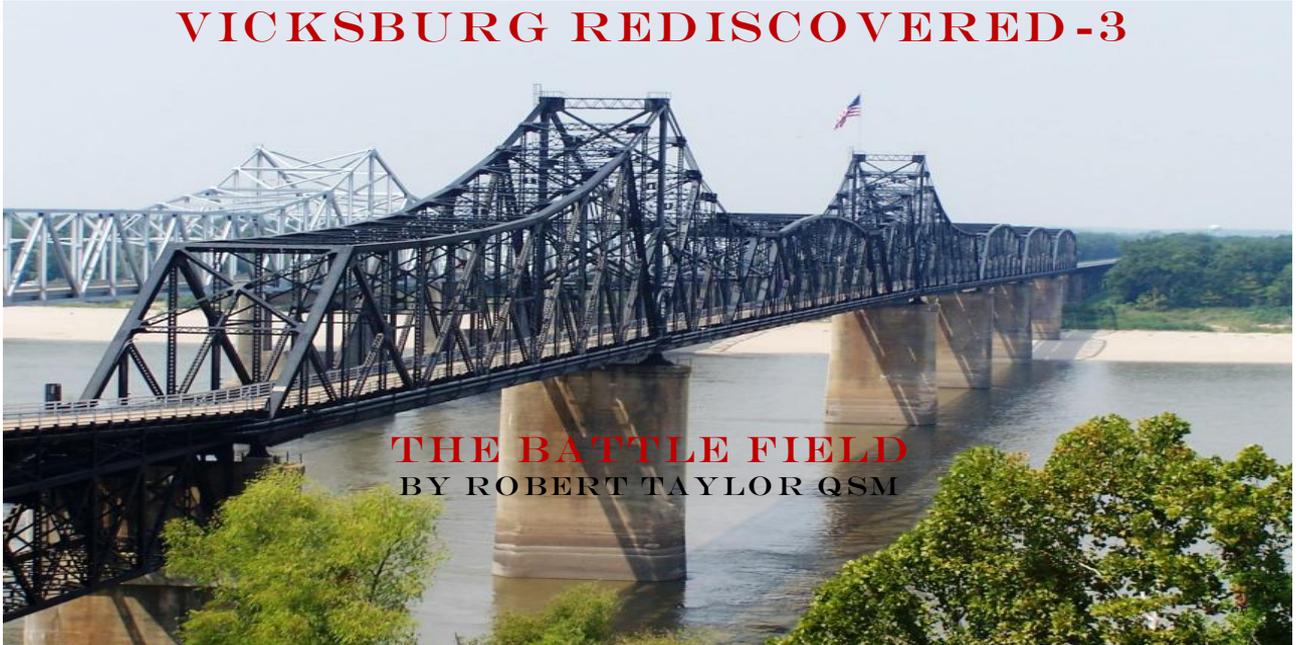


THE BUGLE 27

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VICKSBURG REDISCOVERED -3



THE BATTLE FIELD
 BY ROBERT TAYLOR QSM

Vicksburg draws you into its history from the moment you cross over the old Mississippi iron bridges. Situated 423 miles from Atlanta, 383 miles from Houston, with Miami being a good 954 miles distant, in an age of horse travel, no wonder local residents at the time thought the war could never reach their doorsteps. In naive isolation they could never have imagined how brutally it was to visit them and the devastation it would bring to all their lives, even those who were pro-Union. The Mississippi river that they loved so much, that brought prosperity to the South, was to prove their demise as it permitted a flow of enemy vessels and troops right up to the gates of their city but there they were halted and died in their thousands for 47 horrific, besieged days, trying to take ***"The South's Gibraltar."*** Known by the locals as the ***"Queen City of the Bluff"*** because Vicksburg sits atop a chain of hills overlooking the Mississippi's horse shoe bend, it was rich with both money and culture. A local diarist Lucy McRae said, ***"It is a place of culture, education and luxury."*** The proud city boasted its own orchestra, theatre and a repertory company specialising in Shakespeare. Three daily newspapers kept the well read community informed and a large lecture hall was constantly in use. A British journalist, William Russell, attended a seminar on current affairs, held at the Vicksburg railroad station and reported, ***"The participants are better informed on many issues than I am."***

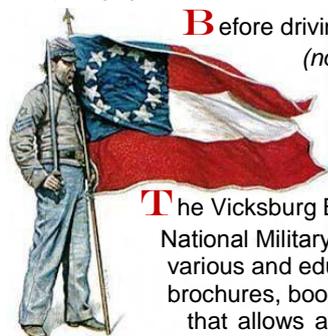


There is much more to see and do in Vicksburg than I can ever begin to cover in these three short

stories of my visit there. When I began to relate this battlefield story to you, I was daunted by its size and couldn't imagine how I could even begin to relate my experiences or even where to start. The Vicksburg National Military Park alone occupies 1,800 acres and is impossible to do justice with a mere one day tour.

Numerous and prestigious publications and lectures by people like Historian *Terry Winchell*, (mentioned in a previous issue of *The Bugle*) have merely scratched the surface, even more emerges the deeper and longer we dig into the past. It is this ever constant rediscovery of history that makes it so impelling to those of us who like to 'dig.' We don't disturb the ground but search through old letters, manuscripts, photographs and diaries to unearth remarkable treasures. Federal law rightly prohibits any attempt to possess, disturb, remove, excavate or destroy archaeological, cultural, historic or even pre-historic resources. Any disturbance of the battlefield by any other than endorsed archaeologists is a disgrace, for history's final stories may be obliterated for all time. We distant Australian enthusiasts are truly appreciative of the diligent work put in by people like Terry Winchell and made available for study.

The parkland's magnificent Romanesque arch, (seen above) allows access to America's most monument adorned Military Park. This is even when you consider that in 1942, during the last World War, 142 of its largest and heaviest cast-iron tablets and markers were raided by the U.S. government for scrap metal and melted down for essential military use. At the time, it was hoped that funding would be available after the war to replace the markers; sadly only a few were put back as a token gesture. In 2007 through to 2008, a support group called '*Friends of the Vicksburg National Military Park and Campaign*' along with the Secretary of the Interior and Park Service Director set about fund raising and replacing 22 of the missing tablets that relate specific events occurring on their locations; invaluable to a visitor in helping gain appreciation of the many engagements that swept these picturesque hills and valleys.

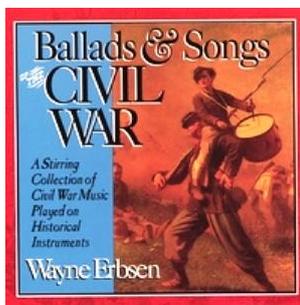


Before driving through the magnificent memorial arch, (not a victory arch I hope) it is essential to visit at least some of the museums devoted to the city's proud history. I have already mentioned the Vicksburg Courthouse Museum in a previous 'Bugle' issue.

The Vicksburg Battlefield Museum is good and the National Military Park's visitor centre is essential to look over various and educational souvenirs but also pick up relevant brochures, books and to see a video describing the conflict that allows an overall appreciation of what took place. It was in the Vicksburg National Military Park Centre that I picked up a CD of *Ballads and Songs of the Civil War* by Wayne Erbsen; all instruments used in the recording are original. (See details later.)



This is music as the soldiers heard it 150 years ago and how wives and lovers, sisters and mothers held onto



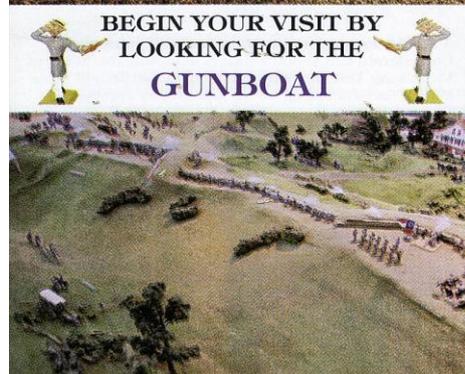
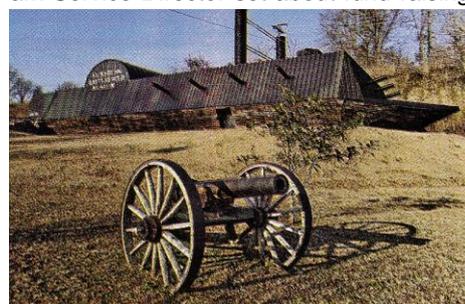
memories of their boys who were never to come home and those few unfortunates who did...who were never the same. They said, "*The war is over but the pain remains.*" Without listening to the music of the era, you can never gain a full appreciation of what it was like then, although the same can be said of hearing a minie ball whine past your ear but then that carries the experience too far, as any hard core re-enactor would admit.

To fully appreciate the times, you need knowledge and must be able to engage as many of the senses as possible. A rushed visit, driving quickly through Vicksburg's National Military Park, would be an injustice to the hard work that park authorities and staff put in and the many sacrifices made by soldiers who fought and died so valiantly here, North or South.

Lincoln correctly considered Vicksburg, "*The key to victory.*" Davis saw Vicksburg as, "*The peg that holds the South together.*" In 1863, the key was turned, the peg removed; Vicksburg is where the fate of a nation was decided. More than Gettysburg, that remarkably coincided in time with the fall of Vicksburg, or any other *Civil War* battle. Vicksburg's tragic demise divided the South and broke its backbone, allowing the North complete control of the mighty Mississippi River.



That traumatic division still exists and Mississippi residents defiantly see themselves as defending the final bastion of Southern independence; although most accept the reality of circumstance that has locked them into a union of suppression that has existed since the end of the battle. After the city's fall, locals, civilians and soldiers, were starved



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until they signed a pledge to rejoin the Union and denounce the South, an action still not sanctioned with prisoners of any war since and in defiance of human rights to any combatant, in any battle, let alone fellow Americans. The war still had two heart wrenching years to go before such actions could be condoned legally, ethically and under existing military conventions.

Coloured Union soldiers were deliberately turned onto the local community as ‘guards,’ injustices were numerous with several coloured soldiers being hanged for rape of local white women. History prefers to ignore these unpleasant stories as they taint the whole concept of liberty and justice and of what many have convinced themselves the war was all about. In the Vicksburg Battlefield Museum, shaped like an old gunboat, an elderly wheelchair bound curator spat out his rage at the actions of Union soldiers and the terrible injustices launched on his fellow Vicksburg citizen ancestors. **“If they signed a pledge to the Union they were given food,”** he said with a frown, **“otherwise they were left to starve. They were confined to their homes under martial law you know and couldn’t venture out to find sustenance. General Grant himself had to step in to control the coloured soldiers and hanged several for raping our white women folk.”** It was a deep and tragic time for the civilian community swept up by the circumstances of war.

The pain of war is deep and still there, the bitterness real and it’s hard to conceive of it ever being assuaged. I suggested that the curator’s museum told a *gallant story of the South* to which he replied, **“Yes we may not be politically correct but we are historically accurate.”** It is a quote that appears in the museum’s brochure and it was in this museum’s shop that I faced a real dilemma, should I purchase a pair of ‘flip-flop’ thongs that had the Confederate Battle Flag printed on the upper sole? I really liked the thongs but couldn’t face putting my feet on the famed flag and wondered why the curator, whom I admired, hadn’t thought of this; I didn’t mention it and the thongs remain on the shelf to await someone with less sensitivity or understanding of what it means and perhaps a little less Southern in pride, if not nationality. You cannot put your feet on a flag you hold so high. There is much said about the Stars and Stripes and its use in clothing is frowned upon and in some places considered an offence but no such rules apply to the Battle Flag.

Within the beautiful, lush, spring, bush-clad parkland of Vicksburg are moments of almost spiritual contact with the armies who fought there; valleys, gullies or ridges are dotted with 144 emplaced cannon. Grass covered craters still mark the ground and lines of trenches trace their faint finger prints on fields once ravaged by war. Within the park you’ll discover the Cairo, (*pronounced ‘kay-roe’*) a Union ironclad gunboat that, when recovered from the bottom of the Yazoo

River nearby, some 102 years after its sinking, offered up more than 6,300 perfectly preserved artefacts. Not far from the Cairo is located the largest National Military Cemetery in the U.S. containing 17,000 Union dead.

Still separated by their passion and loyalty to State’s Rights lay 5000 Confederate dead in the distant ‘Soldiers Rest’ cemetery, divided still, their silent names call from an ocean of well weathered headstones.

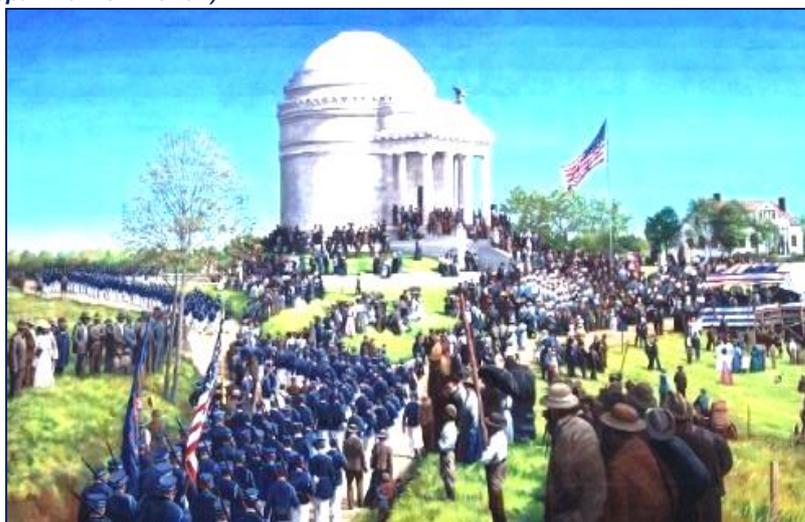
You cannot help but take sides as you visit the Vicksburg National Military Park; every visitor faces his or her own catharsis on the long tour around the many battlefields; topography forced the Union into a myriad of often disastrous and complex engagements.



Campaign illustration from a Vicksburg National Military Park brochure.
(Courtesy National Park Service U.S. Department of Interior.)

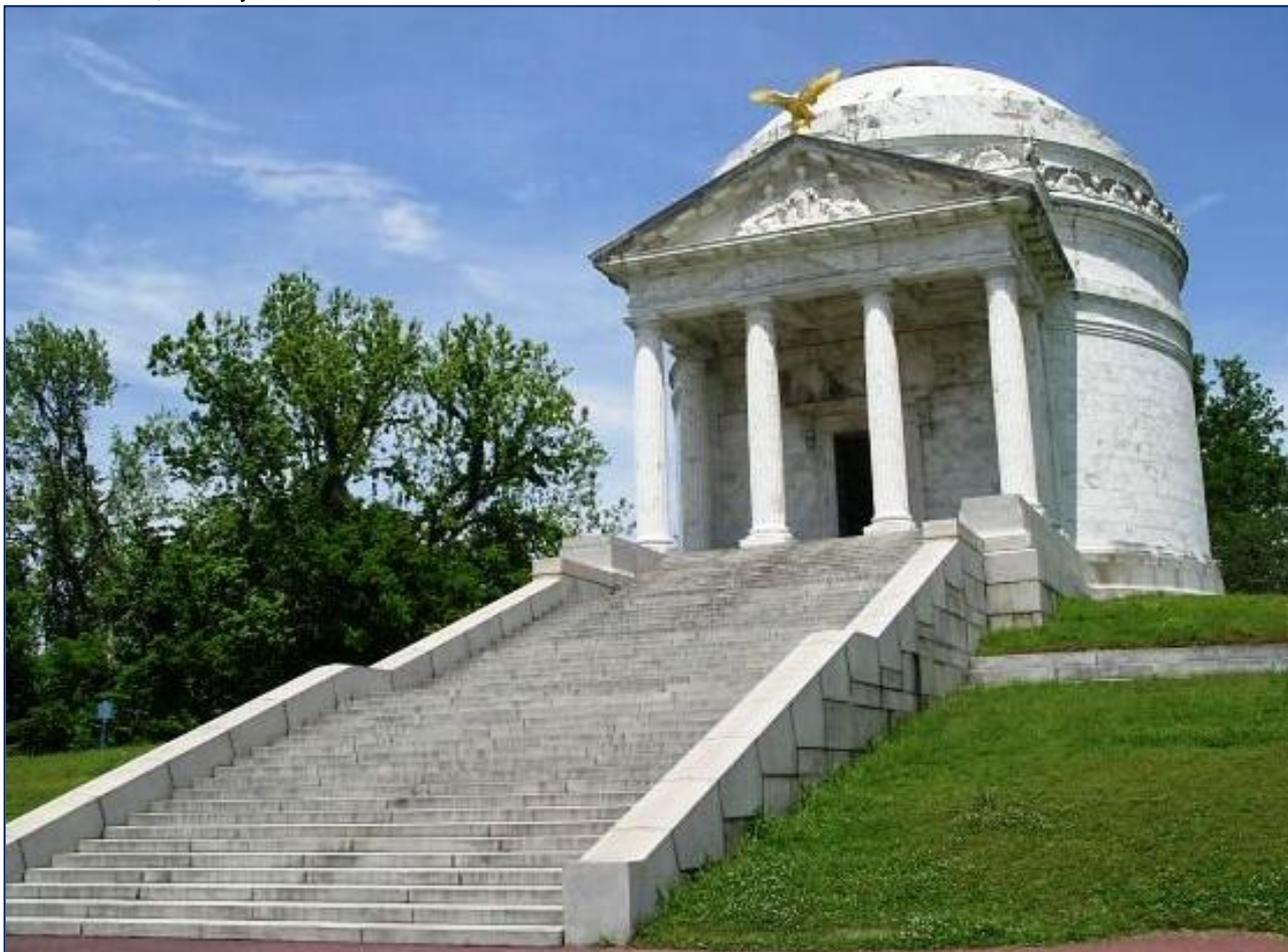
I noticed some young ladies wearing *Civil War* era bonnets, that can be purchased from the local information centre and shop attached to the museum as you enter the parkland; they were full of gaiety as they ran laughing and skipping amongst the cannon that once brought the most awful wounds and death to victims whose blood surely still stains the ground we were walking upon. I couldn’t help but feel the soldiers would have liked the sight of these young damsels and their obvious happiness.

While driving through the park, following numbered markers, the outside world disappears behind a heavy growth of trees. There are no distant chimneys or power cables, no visual intrusions on the



moment to shatter illusions of the time; you are simply enveloped by the park, its history and yes, raw emotions that surface to surprise you at every turn and even tempt a tear or two. The battle may be long over; some locals maintain the war is not yet finished but the pain remains, even for this *'foreign'* tourist who opens his heart and allows all the senses to feel the moment.

Vicksburg's Military Park, also known locally as *'The World's Art Park,'* was established by an act of Congress on February 21st 1899, the most impressive monument erected was for Illinois, dedicated with a massive ceremony in October 1906; it totally dominates the battlefield.



Grand stairway leading to the Illinois Monument. Spring has put fresh leaves on the trees, clover flowers decorate the lawn.

The impressive structure (*above*) was modelled on the Roman Pantheon with its distinctive large circular hole in a domed ceiling. Designed by William L. B. Jenney, who served as Sherman's chief engineer during the siege, it was erected by Italian craftsmen. Costing \$194,423.92 cents; it's a tribute to 36,290 Illinois soldiers who participated in the Vicksburg campaign, more than half the Union army fighting there at the time. Above the entrance are sculpted medallions of President Lincoln, General Grant and the Illinois Governor during the war, Richard Yates. The edifice was sculpted by Charles Mulligan, who also placed three women in the portico representing Clio, the muse of history, flanked by North and South; women depicted as being reunited in peace under the outstretched and protective golden wings of an American eagle. The same eagle that brought death and destruction to Vicksburg, all a matter of how you look at it and which side you take.

Lincoln said, after the defeat of Vicksburg, *"The father of waters again goes unvexed to the sea."* This comment depends on who you see as the 'Vexed' and the 'Vexor.' The Mississippi knew nothing of this and flowed regardless but the 'Vexor' brought unimaginable death and devastation to a pristine land, bountiful and vibrant, full of happiness and abundance and a culture now *'gone with the wind'* but is it forever? After my visit I'm not so sure.

For those who say slaves were not happy I say, *"Read your history...it was not all bad for the slaves. After the war it was horrific for them. Surely this sort of conflict is not the way to resolve these issues of human rights. Why can't discussion and reason prevail?"*



It could and should have. Slavery never was the true cause of the war but in today's conscience, slavery cannot be condoned and there were many pressures on both Southern and even Northern States that still had slavery at this time, to change their ways."

These were the very thoughts that so plagued me on my visit to these illustrious battle fields. What a waste! The golden eagle represents all that we hold most dear but also a bird that is a killer, born red in beak and claw and this is the reality that Vicksburg teaches you. It was a *'killing field'* that performed its task only too well.

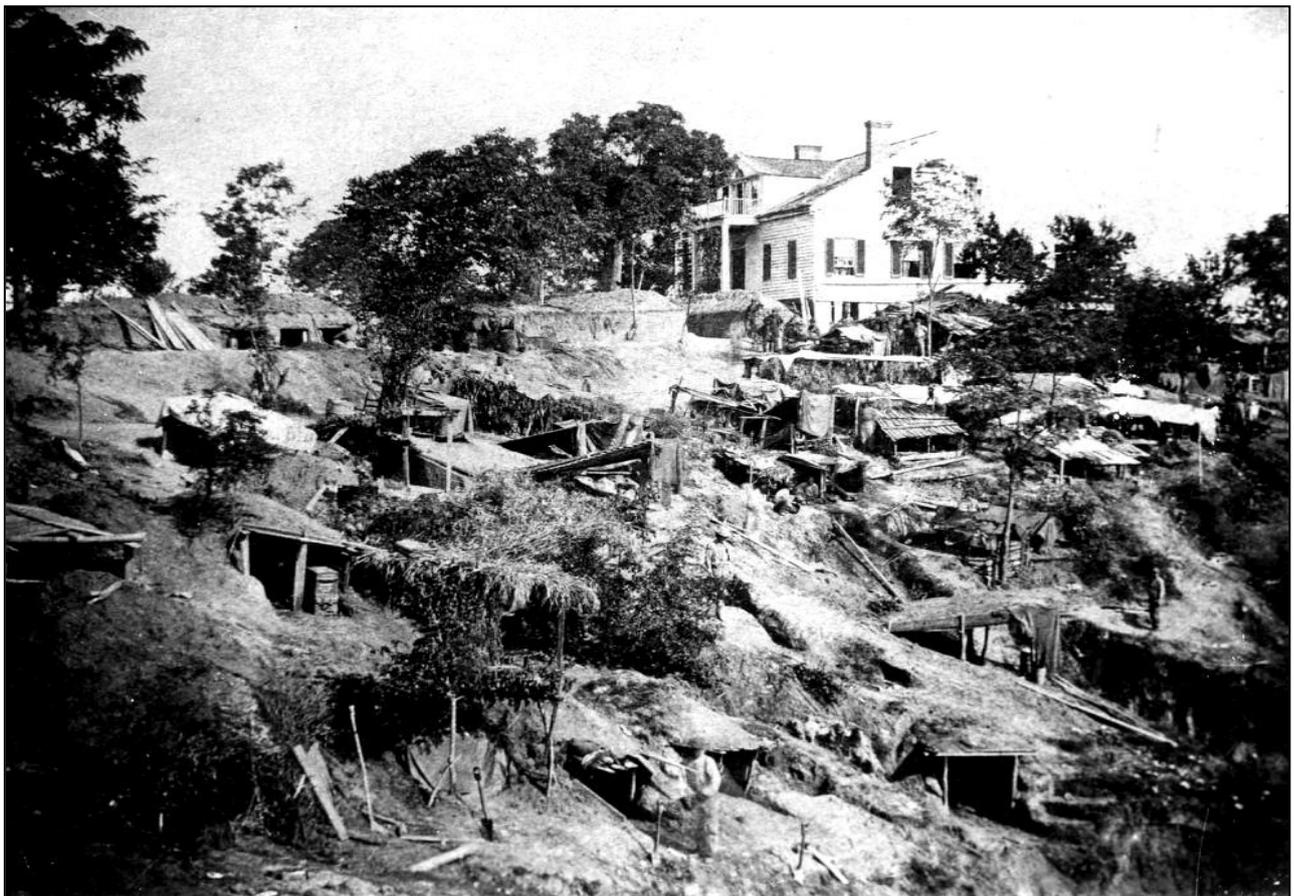


I have centred on the Illinois memorial because of its magnificence; I could equally highlight Ohio monuments because of their prevalence. Local Confederates are sadly missing in the equation but are there never the less in your imagination, certainly in spirit and the odd memorial, some quite grand. All were remarkable participants, their dedication to duty...admirable, in spite of circumstance and shouldn't be demeaned.

If you count the steps leading up to the Illinois memorial you will find there are 47, one for each day of the siege. There are many of these little *'twists'* at Vicksburg. Inside you are greeted by an echo ambience so indicative of the times, sombre and full of pathos, a fitting tribute to the men who fought for Illinois in the Union. The walls are inscribed with many tributes to Illinois participants, both officers and men.

In this picture (*left*) my son Rob and daughter Lydia are clearly overawed by the size and extent of information contained within the Illinois Memorial's walls. Absorbing this sort of detail is an important part of being there. Again it is hard to do justice, so extant is the information

within. The Illinois Memorial is at Tour Stop 2. It is the largest and most impressive monument in the park. The stone is hewn from 'Stone Mountain' in Georgia and Georgian white marble is used throughout.



Nearby is the famed Shirley House. While not as impressive as Cedar Lodge Mansion, (*mentioned in an earlier story*) it is a fairly modest weatherboard homestead and to me seems strangely alone and empty, almost as if crying out for a family to move in. Shirley house is fairly average in looks but way above average in terms of historic importance; it is the only in-tact wartime structure remaining inside the Vicksburg National Military Park. Called *"The White House"* by Federal

soldiers during and after the battle it somehow survived and stands isolated in its shroud of remembrance with only monuments like the Illinois temple and tourists for neighbours.



Old earthworks can still be seen at the rear, traced into the soil around The Shirley House and softened by grass

When Confederate troops fell back into the Vicksburg defences they were ordered to burn the house, barns and various out buildings. Immediately outhouses were put to the torch however a young Confederate soldier, ordered to burn the homestead was swayed by pleas of the owner's wife not to do so and before he could be prompted by further orders, was shot by Union soldiers. His life given, the house remains to this day, it is perhaps the most identifiable image of the war, surrounded by numerous trenches and the valley cut with numbers of caves. To walk over this very ground and look back at the valley where the road used to be is haunting.



Front view of The Shirley House on Vicksburg's battlefield



Memorial to its owners

Mrs Shirley, alone with her 15 year old son Quincy and several servants, crouched behind the fireplaces amidst a fierce cross fire. The bricks resounding to the thud of heavy minie balls as they feared for their lives from both enemy and friendly fire

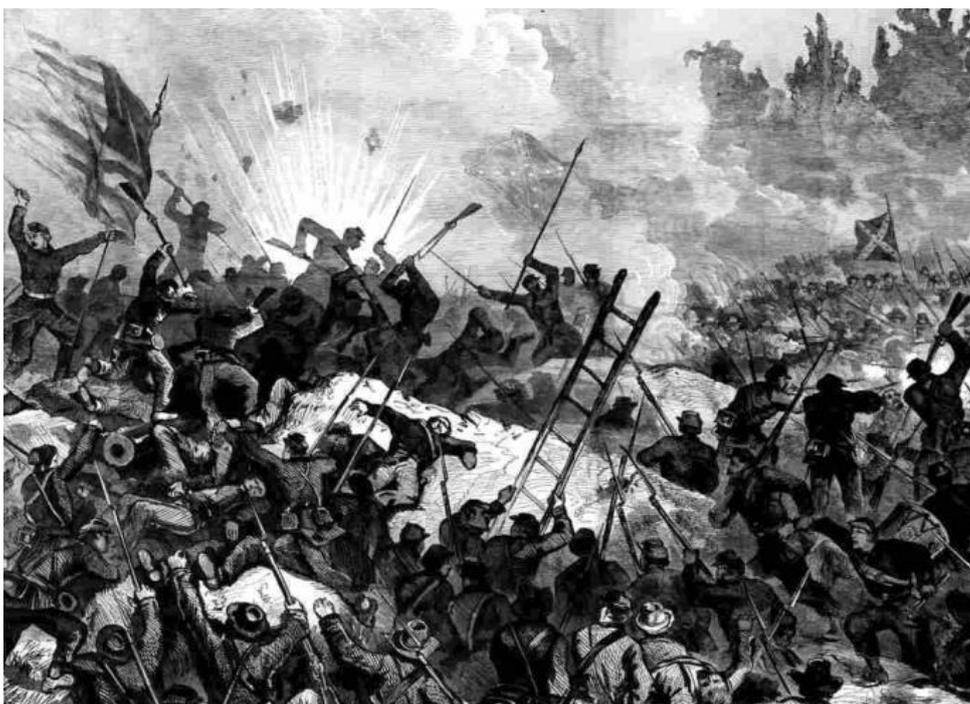
It was only when Mrs Shirley tied a white sheet to a broom handle and placed it in the upper front porch that firing ceased and the occupants were allowed to leave as prisoners of Union soldiers. They sheltered from the remaining gunfire in a nearby cave.

As you can see from my photographs of The Shirley House, it is currently undergoing restoration work. It has been a long hard task as the house had fallen into ruin and much work was required. A nest of wasps had taken up a place on the back porch so I kept my distance. (*Compare this picture with the black and white photograph taken at the time.*) In the back garden there are memorials to the original owners who donated their property to immortality providing they could be buried in the grounds behind their much loved and battle scarred home. It has endured the impossible circumstances of battle and is now a shrine to the family and a physical reminder of one of the battle's high points. It was near this house that the Union tunnelled under Confederate trenches and blew them up with stacks of gunpowder barrels.

Logan's Approach was one of thirteen tunnels and was situated alongside Jackson Road and directly under the Third Louisiana Redan.

On the 25th June 2,200 pounds of black powder were detonated at 3 PM. There came a muffled thud followed by a loud bang as the ground began to break apart and an enormous column of flame and dirt exploded upwards flinging men, mules and equipment into the sky.

Even before the dust had settled Union soldiers were ordered into the crater, they were led by the 45th Illinois Infantry and there ensued a wild melee with muskets used as clubs, bayonets were thrust and hand grenades thrown back and forth for 26 hours. Grant ordered in wave after wave of regiments that were cut to pieces by rallying Confederates who sealed the breach in their defences with a wall of bayonets and Grant's gamble failed. For those in our ACWRT ranks who say the bayonet was never used during the war, apart from as tent pegs, you should study this battle where the bayonet saved the day or lost it, depending on which side you stand, hence my comment earlier about 'taking sides.'



Amongst all this slaughter comes one small piece of miraculous news. A southern slave named Henry had been working in the Confederate trenches above, when the mines were detonated and he was flung high into the air and fell into the Union lines. He was virtually unharmed but dazed as an officer congratulated him on being 'blown to freedom.' When asked later how high he thought he flew Henry said, "**Must've bin three miles.**" A flight of fancy, the Union trenches were only a few yards away, that he survived unscathed is truly remarkable.

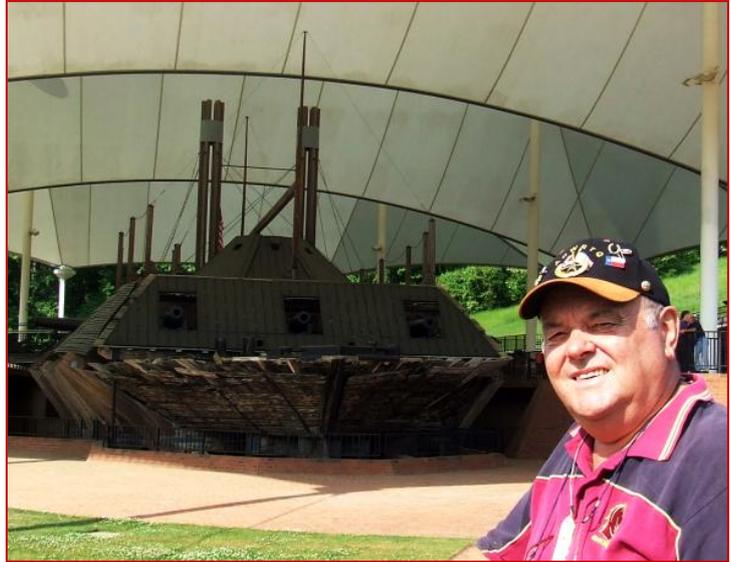
This picture (left) is taken atop the Third Louisiana Redan with Logan's Approach below. Moments after taking this picture I backed up onto a second Confederate gun, tripped and fell, gauging a piece out of my left leg on the gun frame and so receiving a wound on the battlefield of

Vicksburg. My son wryly pointing out that the gun I fell over was Confederate. I remarked, "**No wonder we couldn't win this battle with all these darned guns left everywhere for people to trip over.**"

The field around the guns is covered with clover. The Confederate artillery piece is beautifully restored and maintained and was a joy to behold. Near here was the crater from the massive explosion and a deep gully or ravine heavily covered with trees and through which the Union army dragged their field artillery to get a better position to fire on this placement. A stroll through the thick vegetation serves to tell you how arduous and difficult this task must have been. It was in this gully that the tunnel was dug and the area is full of atmosphere and to those with perception, the ghosts of men who toiled and died here.

The journey through Vicksburg National Military Park is long and at each turn there is something to fascinate. The climax to the visit, without doubt, is at the museum/shop and site of the Cairo, a Union gunboat that was sunk by Confederate mines in the Yazoo River. She went under so quickly that there was no time to take personal belongings and these have been entombed with her until being lifted from the preserving mud and semi restored. The vessel has a 'ghost' outline, as can be seen by the posts representing her funnels in the picture to the right. All the guns are original and the hull has been preserved in the condition it was found. The good thing is you can walk aboard her and gaze down at her massive boilers that look like they could still hold a head of steam.

Famed lecturer and historian Edwin C Bearss studied various maps and charts to plot the site of the Cairo and in 1956 located the wreck. She was eventually lifted from the muddy waters in 1965 in sections.



Protected by a huge awning, the aged remains of U.S.S. Cairo



A mine was detonated under the port bow and the rush of water pulled her under

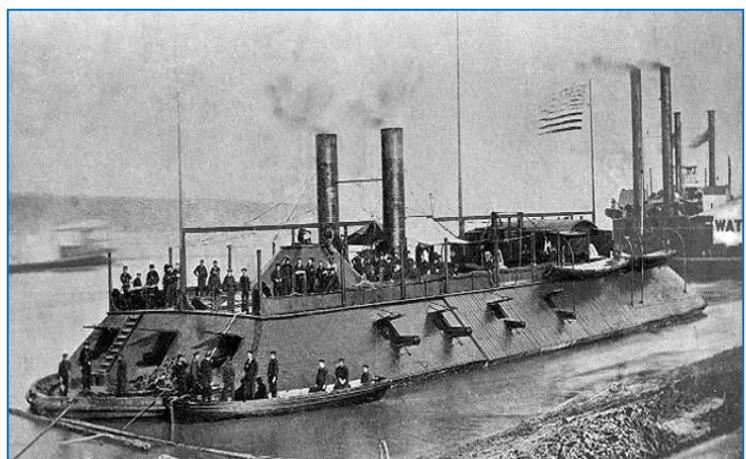
The recovery of artefacts reveals a treasure trove of weapons, munitions, naval stores and numerous personal items such as combs and toothbrushes. A pair of leather boots is perfectly preserved and shine like new. The hole in her port bow is massive and explains the rapid sinking.

I have restored this photograph of the Cairo, (right) and you can see she has a head of steam and is ready for action.

From the Cairo Museum's location you can drive past the Union cemetery (mentioned earlier) and out of the park but it was in the Confederate cemetery that one last little gem surfaces, the story of a Confederate camel. The Dromedary camel is the same camel found in the

A City class ironclad gunboat, U.S.S. Cairo, was constructed during the war, the first of its kind, also called "The Cairo Class." She became the first ship to be sunk by a naval mine on December 12th 1862. Engaged in clearing mines from the river for an attack on Haines Bluff Mississippi, the Cairo was hit by two mines, often referred to as torpedos. They were detonated electronically by a wire connection to Confederate volunteers hidden on the river bank; a task recognised as almost suicidal, so desperate were they to protect their kinfolk.

The Cairo, for all her might, sank in just 12 minutes with no casualties.



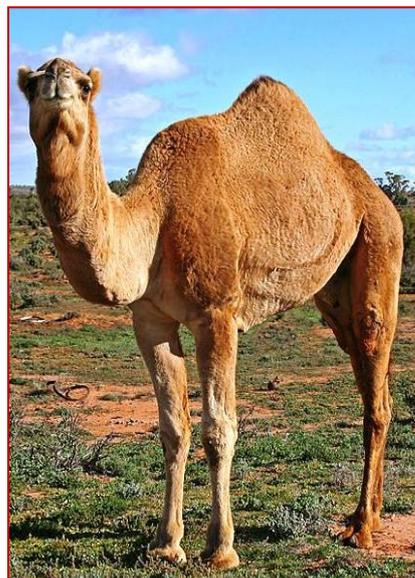
Australian outback and seems to have had its origins with Robert E. Lee in the Mexican war; this Civil War camel is believed to have descended from Lee's herd that was used to convey supplies and tents in the war with Mexico that followed the Texas embrace into the United States.

The camel was called Douglas and was the 43rd Mississippi Infantry's mascot. He remained a faithful, if very unpredictable and sometimes irascible servant until Vicksburg, where he was killed by Union sharpshooters. Douglas is

honoured with his own grave headstone in Vicksburg's Cedar Hill Cemetery.



It's hard to conceive that of all the burials in the Confederate cemetery there should be one to a camel. It is outstanding. Douglas generally just tagged along with the troops, making his own rules as he went. Earlier attempts to tether and control him resulted in mayhem, he seemed to object to being treated like a horse or mule and just wanted to follow the soldiers. However he proved invaluable as a pack animal and the Union could clearly see him going about his daily duties bringing supplies up to the front. Union sharpshooters were assigned the task of killing Douglas who was an easy target. In so doing the sharpshooters exposed their own positions and Confederate sharpshooters were waiting, they killed each one in his turn. Douglas' owner



was killed earlier at the Battle of Corinth and the faithful animal survived to become a much favoured pet and mascot. In spite of the murder and blood bath of the Vicksburg battlefield, saddened Confederate soldiers ensured he had a suitable grave as a mark of respect. I believe there is something charming about an army and its mascot being buried together and especially one that stayed with them to the bitter end.



Union gun emplacement at Vicksburg at one of the early stops

When the battle began with a deafening and continuous roar from the Union gunboat artillery it was directed right into the city and a woman became the first civilian victim. Mrs Alice Gamble was struck and killed by a shell fragment while

trying to reach a shelter. From the beginning this was a war waged on civilians without remorse, where fellow Americans were looked on as foreigners and treated as spies. No matter what their affiliation, being Southerner was enough to condemn.



J.C. Pemberton

The Union debacles in this battle became lost in the victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg coinciding on the same day but one person emerged as the most vilified of all the serving officers, it was Lt. Gen. John C. Pemberton, officer in charge of Confederate forces at Vicksburg. Over three quarters of Pemberton's army had been lost in the two main preceding battles and throughout the campaign many believed General Joseph E Johnston, who was in overall command of the Confederate Department of the West, would come to relieve the city; he never did. Nor did he ever have any intention of doing so. Johnston (*shown on the right*) saw the futility of sacrificing all for a city, no matter how strategically important. He even requested that



Pemberton abandon Vicksburg and save his soldiers for major battles to come. Pemberton couldn't bring himself to do it. A Northerner by birth it may be that he was concerned about the civilian backlash and public condemnation; he got that anyway for the suffering he caused and his men were in shock at surrendering while they still had fight in them. Pemberton had put himself in an impossible situation and while he made the North pay dearly for their victory, the men that were lost could be replaced by the North but not by the South, as Johnston knew only too well. In the end, Pemberton surrendered because of the pitiful plight of the same civilian population he had fought to protect and as I mentioned earlier, this was just the beginning of their suffering.

So here I end my trilogy of a visit to Vicksburg. There are many more things I wanted to share with you about this fascinating battlefield, so much is said of Gettysburg but little attracts people to Vicksburg. Without doubt it is an interesting, absorbing place and so preserved as to be a time tunnel to the era. When next you visit America, place Vicksburg on your itinerary, you won't be disappointed; in fact I believe you will come away a different person. The last word of this account I will leave to General Robert E Lee who after the war, was talking to Governor Stockdale of Texas. ***"Governor, if I had foreseen the use those people designed to make of their victory, there would have been no surrender at Appomattox Courthouse; no siree, not by me. Had I foreseen these results of subjugation, I would have preferred to die at Appomattox with my brave men, my sword in this right hand."***

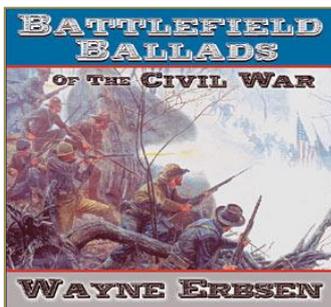
(Courtesy Texas Division Sons of Confederate Veterans.)



THE LENGTH OF HISTORY

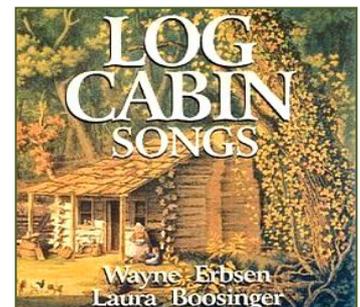


Editor: I have often been told, in both New Zealand and Australia, that our history is very short. This is a strange attitude because it attempts to diminish our importance and place in the world and give more importance to the history of Europe and America. I don't understand an attitude that prompts this expression. It is much like a piece of string; it is as long as it is, why should length, or the number of years diminish it? My piece of personal 'selected' American history has been approximately from a year before the War Between the States to about a year of reconstruction after it. However following a visit to San Antonio's Alamo I have knotted another piece of string to the line to cover this event. My favoured history is as long as this piece of string and it's growing in knots with my knowledge and interest. Australia and New Zealand are like that and I have knotted many additional pieces and found our history to be amazingly long and still growing. History is full of knots and it is a matter of personal interest, not reality that extends it. Size is not what gives credence to history; it's the circumstances that fill it and your interest in it. The American, Australian and New Zealand Indigenous history appears to stretch way back beyond Europe's, like The War Between the States, it's all a matter of how you look at it.



Wayne Erbsen (*featured earlier*) is an active teacher, musician, writer and publisher who has made it a lifelong passion to collect, preserve, and perform historic American music; he is widely recognised as an authority on the history of old-time and bluegrass music.

Seven foot-stomping 19th Century melodies feature Wayne Erbsen in multi track recordings on banjo, fiddle, mandolin, dulcimer, and guitar, David Holt on spoons, washboard, harmonica, tambourine and



bones and Phil Jamison does feet stomping, (hey I can do that!)

Wayne has made it his lifelong passion to teach, collect, record, perform, write and publish Southern Appalachian music and folklore. A master of both the claw hammer and bluegrass banjo styles, Wayne also performs and records on fiddle, guitar and mandolin, and has authored twenty-eight books and numerous websites of instruction, lore and history. An instructor for over forty-five years, Wayne has taught literally thousands of people to play stringed instruments.

In addition to Wayne's deep interest in old-time Appalachian and Bluegrass music, he has also researched, recorded and written on numerous other themes of American culture such as *The Civil War*, Victorian life, Log Cabin culture, cowboys, pioneers, railroads and gospel music.

For the past twenty-four years Wayne has taught Appalachian music at Warren Wilson College in Swannanoa, North Carolina. An active instructor at his own teaching facility called *The Log Cabin Cooking & Music Centre* in Asheville, NC. (www.nativegroundmusic.com) he has published books and is founder and General Manager of Native Ground Books & Music (www.nativeground.com). He was advisor to the *Civil War* feature film *God's and Generals*.

For radio listeners, Wayne has a popular radio show called "*Country Roots*," that recently celebrated a 25th anniversary on Asheville North Carolina's public radio station, WCQS. Wayne's show is now streaming, so you can listen to it live every Sunday evening from 7:00 - 9:00 PM EST. at <http://www.wcqs.org/>.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Mr. Taylor, I wanted to let you know about this awesome digital project that was launched in 2002. *The Lincolnarchives Digital Project* is scanning all of the federal records created during the Lincoln administration, including *Civil War* records, and placing them online at www.lincolnarchives.us. With over 8,000 documents currently online, and over 500,000 scanned, we are busy getting these documents online for those *Civil War* scholars, teachers, students and lifelong learners as the *Civil War* Sesquicentennial launches in November, with Lincoln's election and the following southern secessions from the Union.



These documents are being scanned from originals, there's no microfilm on this website. Along with scanning original documents, we are letting the power of technology make these thousands, and soon to be millions of records searchable. Along with the documents, we have newspapers of the period, scanned from original papers, the finding aids and entry descriptions online to help you search for records that interest you and video podcasts from leading Lincoln and *Civil War* scholars. All from your office or home, minus the dust, and inconvenience of course!

We are ready to offer Queensland roundtable members a discounted membership of \$100 annually. The price will be going up in January to \$350 per year. The cost of flight and lodging in the D.C. area long enough to view the records, currently online, would cost thousands of dollars and once you get to the Archives, there is no inventory or index of what is in a box, so it requires removing every document from the box, unfolding and reading through the document to try and find what you want. We have done all of the hard work for you.

This is a non-profit endeavour and subscriptions pay for continuing the project. We need the support of fellow *Civil War* Roundtables. This project will enable millions of people globally to have access to these records, not only protecting original documents but enabling a cost effective way for you to study the *Civil War*.

If you have any questions I would be more than happy to answer them. Please help support this project with your subscriptions. Best regards,

Karen Needles Director Lincoln Archives Digital Project <http://www.lincolnarchives.us>

Editor: Our next correspondent, Don Zuckero, is former President and member of the ACWRT in Houston, an authority on the Alamo and San Jacinto campaigns and a tremendous and valuable source of knowledge related to *Civil War* Battles, in particular those relating to Texas and the Masonic involvement. He has a huge collection of books at home including poetry of the period. I met and immediately befriended him at a Round Table meeting in Texas and we went together on a tour to San Jacinto battlefield including a tour of the historic old Dreadnaught battleship U.S.S. Texas. I asked him, "*If the War Between the States was to erupt again what side would you take?*" His answer was delivered after a moment of serious consideration, "*I think,*" he said, "*I'd have to go where my great grandparents went and fight for my State.*" It is an interesting reply and meant a lot more to me than some might think because it revealed that in spite of all that has happened since that awful conflict, the patriotic spirit and loyalty to individual States, that was swept up with it, still exists, at least in the heart of Texans.



Hi Robert,

You look like you would have made a good officer in the "*War of Northern Aggression*," as

we Southerners refer to it. A captured Reb' was asked why he was fighting and replied "***Because Yank...you are down here.***" I have read several journals written by Southern soldiers and have come to the conclusion that:

- 1- Most of them didn't fight principally to defend slavery. (***Editor: Neither did Northern soldiers fight to liberate slaves.***) Probably 90% of Southern soldiers didn't own a slave but because his State seceded he fought for his State. Robert E. Lee is an example of this, he was offered a promotion to stay with the Union, yet stayed with Virginia when it seceded.
- 2- He also joined to "***See the elephant***" (a quaint American phrase meaning to see something new.) Most rural Southerners had never been more than 40 miles from their homes.
- 3- He joined because of peer pressure, one soldier writes that he enlisted as quickly as he could because service aged single men in his hometown received a pair of women 's underwear on their front porch if they didn't join up promptly.
- 4- To protect his home and family. Many wrote of their concern because of the invasion by "Yankee" armies.
- 5- To avoid the draft. Many joined the unit or branch of service they wanted, rather than wait to be drafted. Texans especially joined cavalry units, it was said that a Texan would mount his horse to cross the street rather than walk.
- 6- He enlisted because everyone in his family had probably fought in a previous War. His older brother fought in the war with Mexico, his father in the War with England in 1812, and his grandfather in the war for Independence from England. Many believed the War Between the States would last just a few months, believing that any "Reb" could whip ten "Yankees." They wrote of their worry that the war would be over before they could fight and prove their mettle.

I thought you might find a Southerner's point of view interesting. I had two Great-grandfathers who fought in the *Civil War*. One joined the 25th Texas Dismounted Cavalry to avoid being drafted; he had a wife and 3 kids. The other was single and joined the artillery because his two older brothers had enlisted. The one who joined the cavalry was captured at Arkansas Post in Arkansas and shipped to a prisoner of war camp in Illinois. He was exchanged six months later at Richmond Virginia. (*Early in the war both sides would exchange like numbers of prisoners, this practice stopped toward the end of the war.*) He was sent to Georgia to help the southern cause in the Atlanta Campaign. While he was in Georgia he got word his wife had died and went on detached duty to Texas for the remainder of the war and travelled many of the States during the War. The other was stationed in Texas for the duration and ended up deserting due to boredom late in the war. Captured shortly after deserting, he managed to escape and was a fugitive when he arrived home, but being lucky and unknown to him, the war had ended.

I enjoy talking to someone who like you is interested in history. I just have a two year degree at local Jr. College but I have 40 years of book learning and practical experience from all the books *inhaled* in that time and numerous lectures and field trips participated in. I also do research on my family history when time permits. We have the Clayton Library here in Houston. It is one of the premier research libraries in the U. S. There is a set of books there that will give the unit of any *Civil War* soldier that ever showed up on a roster. It helps narrow things down if you have a State, but, that is not necessary if you have the full name. (*First, middle or middle initial and last name.*) If the name is unique to the listing in the book, the State and unit number and branch of service (*i.e. Cavalry, State Militia etc.*) is furnished. If there are 2 or 3 names that are the same, then further investigation is needed to determine the State. Once the State and unit are found there's a set of National Archives on micro film that tells what that soldier did in the war and where he went. That is how I found out about the relatives I mentioned earlier. If the person was in a State Militia they remained in that State and were directed by their State Governor. If they joined a Confederate unit they were directed by the Richmond Government.

During the war the state of Texas was still a frontier. The western half of the State was very sparsely settled and about 95% of the population was east of the 100th longitude. The Texas Indians were not subjugated until the late 1870's, so the Texas Governor was at odds with Jefferson Davis on the use of Texas troops. Davis wanted most of the troops to help in other States. The Governor wanted most of them to stay in Texas to protect the frontier and Gulf coast. He fought to keep as many troops as he could in the militia, but it was a losing battle. At first Confederate troops manned the string of forts the U. S. had manned before the war. They were unable to maintain this practice and ended up forming units that only reacted to Indian raids (*chasing the Indians after a raid had occurred.*) About half of the Confederate troops that were raised in Texas, (*numbers range from 40,000 to 60,000 depending on your source*) about 40 cavalry regiments, 22 Infantry Regiments, and 16 artillery units. The average size of a *Civil War* Regiment was about 1000 men and these largely stayed in the State itself. The other half were sent to other States as required. About 30 regiments stayed west of the Mississippi River in what was called Trans-Mississippi, in Missouri, Arkansas, and Louisiana. About 20 regiments were sent east of the Mississippi River. This is what the historians called ***The War in the West***. They fought in Mississippi, Tennessee, Alabama, Kentucky and Georgia. Three regiments fought in the Eastern theatre, in Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. They participated in all of the major battles in the east except First Manassas (*1st Bull Run*) when they were in training and transit and Chancellorsville where they were detached with Longstreet to Georgia to help win the battle of Chickamauga. An interesting note on cavalry units raised in Texas is that because there was more of a demand for infantry than cavalry, about half of the units were 'dismounted' and fought as infantry but were known as 'Dismounted Cavalry' this was fortunate as it entitled them to an extra \$11 a month pay.

Regards, Don Zuckero

Editor: **A** highly recommended website containing a magnificent gallery of re-enactor photographs as well as a large collection of original war time photography, is provided below. While many of the wartime pictures are new to me, many have certainly never been published before. The quality is quite remarkable. This picture (*below*) is one of the

displayed collections featuring probably the most famous 13 inch mortar *'The Dictator'* in front of Petersburg, Virginia.

The gun's crew are from company G of the 1st Connecticut Heavy Artillery and are shown servicing *'The Dictator'* in their casual gear on a hot sunny day. At first glance they almost look like Confederates with their mixture of clothing. The mortar was built in 1861 and is a seacoast mortar, in this case mounted on a specially reinforced railroad carriage to carry its enormous weight of 17000 pounds. If you study the picture closely you will make out the railroad tracks behind the gun to the left of the picture.



The image was taken during the siege of Petersburg in 1864. The size of the weapon and the huge balls it fired tells a grim tale of the destruction that was hurled into Vicksburg earlier and was now the fate of Petersburg. The mortar could lob a 200 pound explosive shell about 2½ miles and it fired from this position on a curve in the rails for 3 months. I have had to do quite a bit of cleaning to remove a large crack in the original glass plate and some of the many blemishes caused by age but it is now a clear *'window'* into the times and reveals something of the character of the men

manning the mortar and their attire. Thanks to my Texas colleague Denis Votaw for drawing this site to my attention. You will find some excellent pictures of this gun if you Google the name of the mortar, they include one that has been *'coloured'* showing the officers and it is in this same location, recognisable by the distant trees.

<http://www.mikelynaugh.com/VirtualCivilWar/index1024.htm>

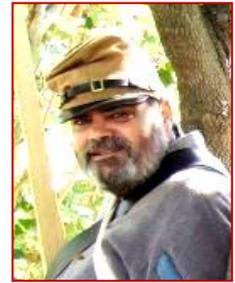
A DIFFERENT WAR, BUT STILL SOUTHERN! CORRESPONDENT JACK FORD



US troops arrive at USA Transport docks in Brisbane to man searchlights, many were Southern boys.

D

uring World War Two, the first US troops to reach Australia arrived on the *Pensacola* convoy on 22 December 1941. The convoy had been destined to reinforce General Douglas MacArthur's command in the Philippines but a tightening Japanese blockade forced the convoy to divert to Brisbane. Major-General Julian F. Barnes became the first commander of the US Forces in Australia (*USFIA*) and established his headquarters at Lennon's Hotel, in Queen Street, Brisbane.



On 31st December 1941, Lieutenant General George H. Brett took command of the *USFIA*, retaining his HQ in Brisbane but on 2nd January 1942, Brett transferred his HQ from Brisbane to Melbourne where the Australian army navy and air HQs were located. **Editor:** Brett was an Ohio man born in Cleveland in 1886. He was an 'early bird' of aviation and served as Staff Officer in World War 1. An attack of appendicitis knocked him out of service in the air force.

During World War II Brett served in the United Kingdom, Middle East, Burma and China. He commanded U.S. and Australian divisions before the arrival of Douglas Mac Arthur. Having been ordered by President Roosevelt to leave the Philippines, General MacArthur reached Melbourne on 21 March. He was given a new command – the South West Pacific Area (SWPA). On 20 July 1942, MacArthur moved his SWPA headquarters from Melbourne to Brisbane. For the remainder of the year, there was a steady build-up of US forces throughout Queensland.



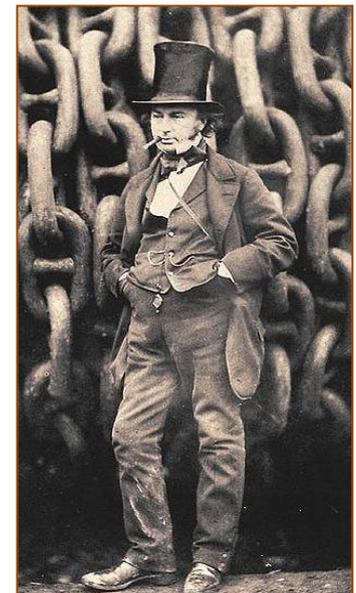
The US Army established Camp Carina off Richmond Road in 1942. To protect the camp from Japanese air attack a US Army anti-aircraft gun battery was emplaced in Fleetway Street at Morningside. To support this battery a US Army mobile searchlight unit complete with a generator was located on Oatson Skyline Drive in Seven Hills.

A searchlight position was manned around the clock and soldiers lived in a small camp established below the ridgeline near Porteous Drive. Daily meals were trucked to the searchlight crews from Camp Carina. It just so happened Americans at Seven Hills came from states in the 'Deep South.' Local children, particularly small boys, enjoyed visiting the searchlight positions and they soon became friends with US troops but one particular Australian nuance really annoyed the Americans. They insisted the kids not yell out "**Hey Yank!**" to the troops. The soldiers didn't appreciate frequent use of the Australian slang term for Americans, "**Yank,**" to troops from the old Confederacy was too close to that common Southern term of derision "**Yankee!**" Source: Eris Jolly, *Seven Hills of Brisbane*,

RICHARD WILLIAM CURTIS CS NAVY



On Sunday November 7th beginning at 1.45 PM the American Civil war Round Table Queensland in partnership with Sons of Confederate Veterans William Kenyon Australian Confederates Camp 2160 and Friends of Toowong Cemetery will be joined by descendants of the Civil War naval officer Richard William Curtis and invited guests. Curtis was drowned in the Brisbane river in 1905 and is buried in Toowong cemetery; together we will pay homage and rededicate his grave. Until recently Richard Curtis had an unmarked and neglected gravesite.



There will be a full uniformed Honour Guard under the command of Trace Scalf and three volleys fired as a salute over his grave from black powder muskets of the era.

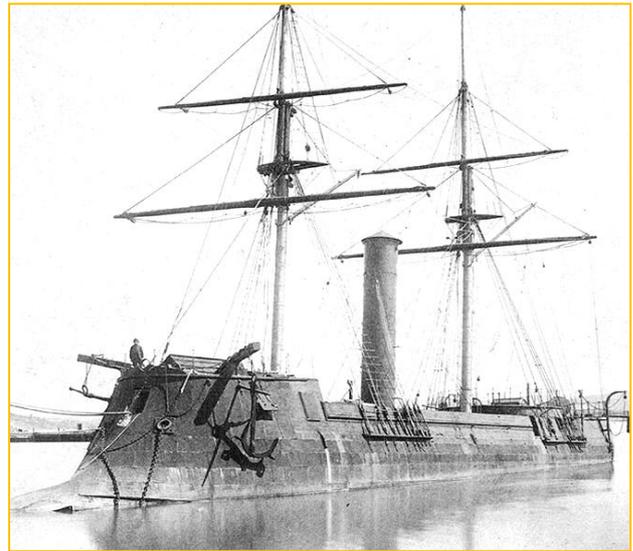
Richard William Curtis was Ship's Purser on board the magnificent five funnelled paddle steamer The Great Eastern, designed and built by Isombard Brunel who also gave us the SS Great Britain that has been fully restored to its original condition and rests in its birthing dry dock in Bristol.

Curtis sailed with The Great Eastern to New York in 1860 and somewhere along the way developed sympathies for the South and through a recruiting agency in Britain, later joined the Confederate States Navy to serve on the screw steamer CSS Georgia and finally aboard one of the most powerful warships ever built at the time, CSS Stonewall. So powerful was she that the Union navy had nothing to challenge her with and would flee from her on sight so no full engagements

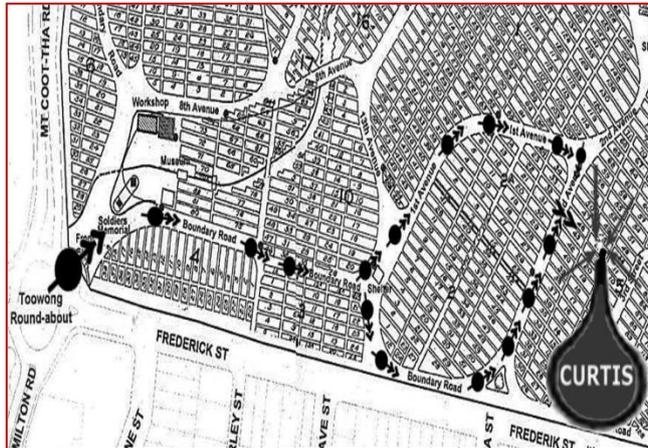
ever occurred by the time war ended.

In the picture above, Brunel is posed with a cigar in his mouth leaning against the mighty chains that will be used to slow the sideways launch of the huge paddle steamer The Great Eastern. Dogged by mishaps and debt she would have proven a nightmare for Richard Curtis as Ship's Purser. Strangely, like the master of this ship, who drowned while transferring to shore in a small craft Richard would also drown but in the placid waters of Brisbane's river.

For those who attended the U.S. Navy's William Waters' ceremony at Toowong, the grave is located near the same vicinity and the Confederate National Flag and Stars and Stripes will guide visitors to the location on the day. A picture of Richard will be revealed at the ceremony and presented in the next issue of The Bugle, subject to strict copyright controls requested by its owners. Richard William Curtis is our first Confederate officer to be located in Brisbane but we are assured by researchers, that others are there and the research continues to discover their final resting places.



Big ships seem to form a major part in Richard's life, CSS Stonewall was gigantic.



Associations but rely on volunteers installing them correctly and with dignity. It is a policy of the ACWRTQ to undertake such services only for veterans within our sphere of influence.

As a footnote the flag flown from Confederate navy vessels of the Curtis period, was the Ensign, shown below as the first flag on the left. The army and cavalry tended to use a more squared version of this called The Battle Flag and is shown below last on the right.



Ceremonies, like the one planned at Toowong, are rare in Australia but of common occurrence in America where dedicated Round Table and Veteran's groups ensure the veterans have a respected and fitting memorial. There are no funds available for us in Australia and the work is done entirely on a voluntary basis and in this case with the assistance of the Friends Of Toowong cemetery without whose help the service could not take place. All costs are born by these volunteer groups. Fortunately memorial plaques and sometimes headstones can be obtained free of charge from American Veterans



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