

BUGLE CALL ECHOES



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San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table

Knowing in part may make a fine tale, but wisdom comes from seeing the whole.

September Program

Bob Blair will speak to the San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table at its meeting Tuesday, September 26, 2000, on *General George Thomas: The Battle of Nashville*.

Bob, a graduate of Virginia Military Academy in Lexington, Virginia, is the newsletter editor of the Peninsula Campaigner and very active in his local Civil War Round Table.

Please note that the meeting this month is being held on a Tuesday instead of the regular meeting day of Thursday.

President's Column

The annual reenactment at Kearney Park will be held Saturday the 7th and Sunday the 8th of October. The theme this year will be "The Common Soldier." I would encourage each of you to come out and witness the parades, encampment and the battles that are reenacted. The feelings and realism conveyed is exciting. Classes and speakers are stimulating for children and adults alike. Our Round Table will have a booth (tent) as usual so stop by and visit. Food and drink is available or you may bring your own picnic. Hope to see you there.

A couple of reminders - this month's meeting will be Tuesday, September 26th, and our annual fundraiser will be at our October 26th meeting (Thursday as usual).

Ken Moats, President

September 2000 Meeting

The September meeting of the San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table will be held on Tuesday to accommodate the guest speaker's schedule. Therefore, the September meeting of the SJVCWRT will be Tuesday, September 26, 2000, at the Ramada Inn, Shaw Avenue and Highway 41 in Fresno.

A no-host social hour will begin at 6 p.m., followed by dinner and the program at 7 p.m.

Please send your check for \$15 (\$10 for students under 25) to cover the cost of the meal to Gloria Carter, PO Box 5695, Fresno, CA 93755, or call 559/322-9474 to advise her you will be attending the meeting.

Personalities of the American Civil War

by Rick Kubiak

Colonel John Pelham: The Gallant Artillerist

If the well known maxim, "Don't judge a book by its cover," was converted to a human connotation and rewritten to read, "Don't judge a man by his outward appearance," it would be most apropos in describing Confederate Colonel John Pelham. This recognized genius of artillery tactics had a modest, boyish appearance. In *War Years With Jeb Stuart* by W. W. Blackford, he writes of Pelham, "There was Pelham, who commanded the horse artillery but who always lived at headquarters as a staff officer, as the General would not agree for him to do otherwise, for he loved him dearly. Only twenty-one or two years old and



so innocent looking, so 'child like and bland' in the expression of his sparkling blue eyes, but as grand a flirt as ever lived. Three girls put on mourning for him when he was killed. He was tall, slender, beautifully proportioned, very graceful, a superb rider, and as brave as Julius Caesar."

In *The Gallant Pelham*, by Philip Mercer, he is described as possessing those gifts of personality and presence that captivate people. Mercer writes, "He was strikingly handsome in person, of light built, with blue eyes, golden hair, and clean cut boyish features upon which beauty and determination were exquisitely blended. Combined with physical attractiveness was a voice, a smile, a gentleness of manner, and a charming, almost feminine modesty that won the hearts of all with whom he came in contact."

John Pelham was born on September 14, 1838, in Benton County, Alabama. He was the third of six sons of Doctor Atkinson Pelham and his wife Martha. On his father's 1,000 acre estate John developed a wiry athletic physique in a healthy outdoor environment. This later enabled him to endure strenuous battle field conditions campaigning in the Confederate military service.

In 1856 Pelham entered West Point in an experimental 5 year curriculum. He was noted for his fondness for fencing and boxing and was considered the best athlete at West Point. He

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excelled in artillery studies under the tutelage of Major Henry J. Hunt. Pelham would use these artillery skills against Hunt a short time later in the Civil War. On April 22, 1861, just two weeks short of graduation Pelham resigned from the academy. He felt that he must leave immediately or risk being held as a Southern prisoner of war. He traveled west from West Point and slipped across the Ohio River at New Albany, Indiana, disguised as one of General Winfield Scott's couriers.

Pelham immediately entered Confederate service as a lieutenant and ordnance officer in Lynchburg, Virginia, with General Joseph E. Johnston's Army of the Shenandoah. He was assigned to Captain Alburtis' battery as drillmaster. Within a month Lieutenant Pelham's rugged daily routine had transformed Captain Alburtis' battery from an awkward squad into the most polished gunnery unit in General Johnston's Army.

At the Battle of First Manassas, on July 21, 1861, Pelham demonstrated his superb gunnery skills on Henry Hill. General "Stonewall" Jackson no doubt had Pelham in mind when he wrote in his official report of the battle, "Nobly did the artillery maintain its position for hours against the enemy's advancing thousands." Pelham, "the Alabama boy," who was to become the greatest artillerist in the Confederacy, had passed through his "baptism of fire" with bravery, distinction, and glory.

On General Johnston's recommendation Pelham, on November 29, 1861, was promoted to captain and was requested and assigned to General Jeb Stuart's cavalry as the commander of an 8-gun battery of horse artillery. Pelham was put in charge of the organizing of a mobile artillery unit that was to become world famous as the "Stuart Horse Artillery." In a letter to his wife, General Stuart wrote, "The Horse Battery under the energetic management of Pelham is going ahead and will tell a tale in the next battle."

In artillery tactics Pelham refined the concept of the "Flying Battery." This term referred to the light artillery tactic of keeping guns moving and fighting. It consisted of two or more horse drawn cannon moving along the battlefield

firing, loading and riding off to fire from another position.

Pelham fought in over 60 engagements during his brief action packed military career. He was reported to have never lost a piece of artillery even though he was often required to maintain the fierce pace of Stuart's raids through fields, streams, and mountains.

In his book, "Colonel John Pelham: Lee's Boy Artillerist," William Woods Hassler writes of the exploits of John Pelham, "Around the evening campfires, sunburned veterans of the Seven Days Battles never tired of relating Captain Pelham's feats: how with a single Napoleon he checked the advance of eight enemy guns at Gaines Mill; how he routed the Yankees lying in ambush at Black Creek; how with a lone howitzer he out dueled the 11 inch guns on the USS Marblehead and sent the gunboat scurrying down the Pamunkey; how he blasted the bluecoats out of 'Jeb' Stuart's path at Forge Bridge; how with only one howitzer he boldly fired into the entire Federal army at Harrison's Landing; and, finally, how he scrappily attacked a flotilla of enemy transports, actually sinking one."

In an official report to Lee, General Stuart writes of Pelham, "Captain John Pelham, of the Horse Artillery, displayed such signal ability as an artillerist, such heroic example and devotion in danger, and indomitable energy under difficulties in the movement of his battery, that reluctant as I am at the chance of losing such a valuable limb from the brigade, I feel bound to ask for his promotion..."

Following the battle of Second Manassas, of August 29 and 30, 1862, Pelham received a promotion to major and command of a battalion of horse artillery. He also received a high compliment from General "Stonewall" Jackson in his official report to Lee. He writes, "Owing to the difficulty of getting artillery through the woods, I did not have as much of that arm as I desired at the opening of the engagement, but this want was met by Major Pelham, with the Stuart Horse Artillery, who dashed forward on my right and opened upon the enemy at the moment when his services were much needed." Stuart added in his

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report, "Pelham was always in the right place at the right time."

At the Battle of Fredericksburg Pelham held up the advance of a Union division against the Confederate right with only two guns. With only one gun left, he continued to shift positions despite the fact that 24 enemy guns were now concentrating their fire on him. He finally withdrew from the action upon running out of ammunition. General Lee, upon observing Pelham in the battle, was to have remarked, "It is glorious to see such courage in one so young." In the book, *Jeb Stuart*, by John W. Thomason, he writes of Pelham during the Battle of Fredericksburg. "Pelham lost men and horses and had guns knocked out, but he stayed. Once even Jackson ordered him back. The message relayed through Stuart went, 'Get back from destruction, you gallant fool, John Pelham;' but Pelham stayed. That night, Jackson says, 'General Stuart, have you another Pelham? If you have I wish you'd give him to me.' And Lee, in his official dispatch, refers to 'the gallant Pelham,' the only mention of an officer so junior that you will find in his reports." It was widely accepted and predicted that John Pelham would be a brigadier general before another year passed.

On March 17, 1863, at the Battle of Kelly's Ford, Pelham, who had been consulting a Confederate officer regarding the disposition of a battery of artillery, took part in a charge with the 3rd Virginia Cavalry. He was struck in the back of the head by a piece of an exploding shell. Thought to be dead, his body was draped over his horse with his head hanging down one side and his legs the other. The wound in his head was bleeding profusely. He was taken from the battle scene to the Culpeper, Virginia, home of his sweetheart, Bessie Shackelford, where despite the best efforts of surgeons he died the same day.

In *The Gallant Pelham*, Mercer poignantly describes the death scene. "The spirit of the brave young soldier had scarcely departed when the door was gently opened and General Stuart, who had just returned from the Kelly's Ford Battlefield, quietly entered the room with his black plumed hat in his hand. With great tears streaming down his bearded cheeks, he gazed long and silently at the lifeless form and

pallid face of the one to whom he had been bound by ties of the deepest brotherly affection, the one who had been his never failing strong right arm on many a hard fought field. Bending down, he pressed a tender kiss upon the noble brow of his dead comrade in arms, and shaking with profound and sobbing grief he departed uttering as he went the word, 'Farewell.'

Stuart, in an order written to his cavalry division, states his great grief and great pride. "The noble, the chivalric, the gallant Pelham is no more. How much he was beloved, appreciated and admired. Let the tears of agony we here shed, and the gloom of mourning throughout my command bear witness. His loss is irreparable..." In *Jeb Stuart*, Thomason remarks about the death of Pelham, "with Pelham, there passed from the army something youthful and golden. They would have no more like him..."

Sources used:

Who Was Who in the Civil War, by Stewart Sifakis; *Historical Times Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Civil War*, edited by Patricia Faust; *War Years with Jeb Stuart*, by W. W. Blackford; *The Civil War Dictionary*, by Mark M. Boatner III; *Bold Dragoon: The Life of Jeb Stuart*, by Emory M. Thomas; *I Rode With Stonewall*, by Henry Kyd Douglas; *Jeb Stuart: The Last Cavalier*, by Burke Davis; *Jeb Stuart* by John Thomason Jr.; *Stonewall Jackson*, by Colonel GFR Henderson; *The Gallant Pelham*, by Philip Mercer; and *Colonel John Pelham: Lee's Boy Artillerist*, by William Woods Hassler.

CW Sites Focus on Slavery

by Masha Herbst

Associated Press Writer

MANASSAS, Va. (AP) -- For years, Civil War sites run by the National Park Service have devoted exhibits, charts and maps to explaining troop movements, strategies and death tolls. Information about the issue most historians say was the cause of the war -- slavery -- was sparse. But this year, Congress encouraged the Park Service to emphasize slavery in its Civil War exhibits. Now, visitors to the Manassas National Battlefield Park can read discussions of slavery and secession as causes of the war, and learn about the experiences of three civilian families affected by battles.

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At the Richmond National Battlefield Park, visitors can listen to readings from letters and diaries of Richmond residents, soldiers, free blacks and former slaves.

"It's a fairly significant change because heretofore the Civil War parks did not talk about cause at all," said Park Service chief historian Dwight Pitcaithley.

But the change hasn't been welcomed by all.

"What we have here is political correctness running rampant," said Joe Avalon, owner of Civil War Interactive, an online magazine. "It's a push by the African-American community and it's basically changing the mandate of the museums."

Historians say the lack of information about slavery was probably due in part to debates over what actually caused the war.

"I'd say it's been very contentious," said Edward Ayers, a University of Virginia history professor who is writing a book about the Civil War. "It's been, from the first gun until today, the crucial question we keep arguing about."

Ayers said that among professional historians, "there's virtually no one who argues that the war was not based in slavery in some way." The only disagreement is over the degree to which slavery was a cause.

However, Ayers adds, "In the larger public, it is more of an issue."

He said the two factors other than slavery that most often are cited as causes of the war are economics and states' rights. Those are valid points on the surface, he said, but a closer look shows that the economic and states' rights issues both centered on slavery.

Administrators at individual battlefields have generally enjoyed autonomy in deciding what goes on display, said Ed Bearss, a former Park Service chief historian.

Congress encouraged the Park Service to emphasize slavery in the exhibits in three paragraphs of a 2000 spending bill. However, Pitcaithley said no special funds were

appropriated to meet that challenge. Park Service officials say that is not a mandate, and that they already had been discussing changes.

"We have a number of (battlefield) superintendents with advanced degrees in history and who were aware of scholarship that had evolved over the last 30 years," Pitcaithley said.

Visitor inquiries also prompted the change, officials said.

"We were starting to meet with far more sophisticated visitors who knew more, and were starting to ask us questions that went far beyond the battle tactics," said Gettysburg superintendent John Latschar.

But it was U.S. Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr., D-Ill., who pushed the issue into the national spotlight and introduced the language in the appropriations bill.

The new Manassas panels on the war's causes were written by Manassas superintendent Bob Sutton after he talked to Jackson. Sutton also said he sent the text to Jackson for suggestions. A spokeswoman for Jackson said he was no longer talking to the media about the issue.

The changes are necessary, said King Salim Khalfani, executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in Virginia.

"This country needs to be properly educated about the Civil War," Khalfani said. "Even in the North it seems to be that the folks who have been most interested in perpetuating this part of American history have been those who associate themselves with the side of the Confederacy."

Avalon said he is afraid money that should be spent on improving military exhibits is being diverted to introduce cause and context. Remodeling the Manassas visitor center cost about \$1.5 million and Richmond's new visitor center cost \$2.9 million.

Many say the changes are long overdue. "Six hundred thousand people died between 1861

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and 1865, and we are absolutely convinced that the greatest majority of our visitors are far more interested in why they died than in how they died," Latschar said.

At least one visitor at Manassas found the additional information helpful. "It gives you more insight," 12-year-old Mark Russell. "You get to really know what they're fighting about."

Roger Burns Innes

by Carol Berry

During the late 1960s, while living in San Francisco, I purchased a POW/MIA bracelet. I did it to show my support for the men fighting in Viet Nam. The name on my bracelet was Lt. Roger Innes, his date of disappearance December 27, 1967. The expectation was that I would wear the bracelet until Innes' fate was known.

Whenever the newspaper would report the return of a US serviceman or the release of a POW, I would scan it for word of the navy pilot whose name was on the bracelet I wore. Over the years, I learned more about Lt. Innes. A Chicago native, he was a radar intercept officer, flying an F4B Phantom from the USS Kitty Hawk. His tour had begun on the day he disappeared. Sometime after he had been reported missing, he was promoted to lieutenant commander.

On my trip to Washington, DC, in 1995, I visited the Viet Nam Wall and found Roger Innes' name on Panel 32E, Row 74. The bracelet was with me then.

Recently I stopped wearing the bracelet. It had cracked in two places and needed to be repaired. Before that happened, however, I was notified that Lt. Roger Burns Innes was laid to rest September 14, 2000, at Arlington National Cemetery. His plane had been located by a Vietnamese fisherman in 1995, and in 1998 his remains were found and sent to Hawaii for proper identification. Thirty-three years after his disappearance, this navy pilot was home.

Rest in peace, Roger Innes.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE FOR 2000

Date	Speaker	Topic
January 27, 2000	Membership	<i>Show and Tell</i>
February 24, 2000	Robert Snowden/ Black History Month	<i>The Underground Railroad</i>
March 30, 2000	Cathy Rehart/ Women's History Month	<i>"A Twist of Fate"</i>
April 27, 2000	Fred Bohmfalk	<i>William Sherman: His Early Years</i>
May 25, 2000	Ken Bruce	<i>McClellan and the Seven Days Before Richmond</i>
June 29, 2000	Wayne Bowen	<i>Ella Carroll's Role in the Civil War</i>
July 27, 2000	Phil Avila	<i>Brush Strokes of War: A Slide Presentation of Civil War Art</i>
August 31, 2000	Bob Ritchey	<i>Lofty Goals, Resolute Struggle and Deep Disappointments</i>
September 26, 2000 Note date change! This is a Tuesday.	Bob Blair	<i>General George Thomas: The Battle of Nashville</i>
October 26, 2000 Fund Raiser	Vern Crow	<i>Thomas' Legion: One of the Most Unique Commands in the Civil War</i>
November 30, 2000	Dave Davenport	<i>The Battle of Stone's River</i>
December 2000	No regular meeting. A potluck and activity are planned.	

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Please begin/renew my membership in the San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table. My membership category is checked below:

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Clip this membership form and send it with your check to the SJVCWRT, PO Box 5695, Fresno, CA 93755. The membership year is from January to December. Five dollars of each membership goes towards preservation.