

BUGLE CALL ECHOES

MAY 1999 MEETING

Philip Avila will speak to the May gathering of the San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table on Thursday, May 27, 1999. His talk is entitled "The Bear Goes East: Californians in the Civil War."

Phil was born in Oakland, California. He is a retired high school history teacher with a long-standing love of Civil War history. He is past president of the North Bay Civil War Round Table and has spoken to several round tables on various battles and personalities. A highlight of his experience was being able to participate in the 125th reenactment of the Battle of Gettysburg in 1988.

Phil and his wife Lyn have two children, Aaron, 23, and Rosey, 17.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

When you read this Barbara and I will be in Harper's Ferry. We are touring the Civil War sites of West Virginia, my home state. Here is a brief history of the Civil War in West Virginia, 1861.

Five days after Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, leaders of Confederate Virginia decided to capture the United States Armory and Arsenal at Harper's Ferry for the Southern cause. As Southern militia marched toward Harper's Ferry, Union troops set fire to the armory and arsenal, preventing the weapons from falling into Confederate hands. With a loud explosion on the night of April 18, the Civil War arrived in western Virginia. During the war, Harper's Ferry changed hands numerous times. The intersection of two major railroads, the Baltimore and Ohio and the Winchester and Potomac, and its military importance in the Shenandoah Valley made Harper's Ferry a key strategic stronghold.

During the first weeks of the war, the Confederate government of Virginia recruited troops in western Virginia, assigning Colonel George A. Porterfield to Grafton, which was connected to most of northwest Virginia by the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. As Union troops under General George B. McClellan advanced, Porterfield drew his forces back to Phillippi. As McClellan neared the region, he sent Colonel Benjamin F. Kelley and the First Virginia Provisional Regiment (later the First West Virginia Infantry) as an advance guard. On the morning of June 3, 1861, Kelley's troops attacked Porterfield's forces at Phillippi, resulting in a Confederate retreat. This is considered by many to be the first land battle of the Civil War.



The May meeting of the SJVCWRT will be held on Thursday, May 27, 1999, at the Ramada Inn on Shaw and Highway 41. A no-host cocktail hour begins at 6 p.m., followed by dinner and the speaker at 7 p.m.

Send your check for \$15 for dinner (\$10 for students under 25) to Gloria Carter, c/o San Joaquin Valley CWRT, PO Box 5695, Fresno, CA 93755, or call her at 322-9474 to notify her you will be attending.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER (continued)

To prevent Union troops from advancing further up the Tygart Valley, reinforcements led by General Robert S. Garnett joined the retreating Confederates and established strongholds at Laurel Hill in Tucker County and Rich Mountain in Randolph County. On July 11, Union General William S. Rosecrans won a decisive battle at Rich Mountain and days later, the Confederates were pushed from Laurel Hill. On July 14, the retreating Confederates were routed at their position at Corrick's Ford and Garnett was killed. This series of engagements resulted in Union control of northwest Virginia for virtually the remainder of the war. Control of the transportation routes made it difficult to supply Confederate units throughout the war. This also ensured the safety of West Virginia statehood leaders meeting in Wheeling.

While the Confederates were easily defeated in the northern part of present-day West Virginia, they mustered a better effort in the Kanawha Valley. Former Virginia governor Henry S. Wise, now a general, had established his forces at the mouth of Scary Creek in Putnam County. On July 16, Wise pushed back an attack by forces under General Jacob D. Cox. After the arrival of reinforcements, Cox's men drove Wise up the valley to Gauley Bridge and eventually into Greenbrier County. The North suffered a setback in August as General Rosecrans's advance forces were defeated at Kessler's Cross Lanes in Nicholas County while marching toward Gauley Bridge. Another former Virginia governor, General John Floyd, established his troops on a bluff at nearby Carnifex Ferry. Union troops attacked Floyd on September 10. Although the Union casualties totaled 158 compared to 20 Confederate, the larger number of Northern forces drove both Floyd and Wise back into Greenbrier County. A significant factor leading to the Southern defeat was a long-standing political rivalry between Wise and Floyd. The Battle of Carnifex Ferry placed the important Kanawha Valley in Union hands for the early part of the war. In only a few short months, the North gained control of northwestern Virginia and the Kanawha Valley.

In August, Robert E. Lee, in his first assignment of the war, set up camp on Valley Mountain in Pocahontas

County. He first hoped to put more pressure on northwestern Virginia, but overestimated Union strength at the Cheat Mountain Summit Fort and elected not to attack. Many feel that Lee's 15,000 men in the area could have retaken all of northwestern Virginia had he pushed forward. In October, Lee again failed to attack Rosecrans's outnumbered force following Carnifex Ferry. These early disappointments landed Lee an administrative post in Richmond until later in the war.

(Reprinted from www.wvlg.wvnet.edu/history/civilwar.html)

Grafton, my home town, was a strategic railroad center that connected the Baltimore and Ohio (the B&O) and the northwestern Virginia railroads near the northern end of the Tygart Valley. On May 30 the Union occupied Grafton, western Virginia, in order to guard the B&O and help protect pro-Union citizens in the western counties of Virginia. By the way, Stonewall Jackson was born in Clarksburg, western Virginia.

Ken Moats

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CHINESE IN THE CIVIL WAR

By Linda Wheeler, Washington Post Staff Writer
Wednesday, May 12, 1999

Two local historians have discovered that nearly 50 Chinese men served in the Civil War, many more than the one or two previously listed. The new research was announced yesterday at the National Archives by Thomas P. Lowry and Edward S. Milligan.

Their work adds another ethnic group to the already long list of celebrated participants that includes German, Irish, French and African Americans.

Mike Musick, archivist for Civil War military records at the Archives, called the research significant.

"Most people will be surprised to know the Chinese had any presence in the war," he said. "The country was a bit more diverse than we thought."

Lowry, a retired physician, and Milligan, a retired Army officer, are professional researchers who met at the Archives while each was pursuing information on Chinese involvement in the war.

Milligan had been hired by an Australian Civil War researcher, Terry Forender, to find Chinese who had served in the Navy. Lowry, who is self-employed and is the author of several books based on research in the Archives, said he felt challenged when Musick told him several years ago that the Chinese were the last unexplored ethnic group of the war.

Milligan said Forender had given him permission to use the material he found for yesterday's lecture.

The two men discussed the difficulty in tracking the Chinese in the official records. Lowry said he figured he'd find them by searching for predictable surnames such as Wong, Fong, Gee, Chew or Hong.

"My bright idea was a dud," he said. "Lewis Wong of the 33rd Wisconsin had sandy hair and was born in Norway. Alfred Fong was born in France and had blue eyes, and so on through my list." Some that were found had names that were anything but Chinese: Edward Day Cahota, Joseph Pierce, Antonio Dardelle. It was through pension records or newspaper obituaries that Lowry found most of his men. Milligan said he had to depend on induction papers where nativity was noted and on ships logs where the information was repeated. However, the log keeper often changed, and names would be spelled as many as seven different ways.

"I didn't find any pension records," he said. "They just

never applied. Some went back home to China. Others died."

Together, Milligan and Lowry documented 47 Chinese men who served in the war.

According to Musick, the work of Ruthanne Lum McCunn, who in 1966 published an article on Chinese who served in the war in the scholarly magazine *Chinese America: History and Perspectives*, and the work of Lowry and Milligan make up all the serious research done on the subject.

Among the 75 people who attended yesterday's presentation was Ta-Tung Jacob Chang, a public affairs officer for the U.S. Office of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative.

"I am very interested in the Civil War," he said. "But I think I read years ago about Chinese in the war. I think it was only one. . . . I have a sense of pride now that we Chinese were a part of that event."

Franklin Fung Chow, a retired government worker who lives in Washington, said the information was new to him because he had believed no Chinese had been involved in the war.

"It is important for Chinese and Chinese Americans to know about this," he said. "It may seem esoteric because 50 is such a small number out of the hundreds of thousands who fought, but it is very significant to me. I plan to try and find out more about this."

Lowry said that although the number of Chinese who served was small in relationship to the total Chinese American population of the time, a higher percentage served than in any other ethnic group.

He called for a plaque or a monument to "give credit to these men and to their brave and loyal service."

Chow said he liked the idea of such a memorial.

"We will have to raise money," he said. "We will have to find a place for it."

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PreservationTHE BATTLE OF KERNSTOWNHISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Today, in this community of about 1000 people, pre-Civil War structures such as Benner's Tavern, the Pritchard House and the Opequon Presbyterian Church cemetery mark a landscape little changed since the Civil War. The cemetery includes the earliest marked gravesite in the Shenandoah Valley-1742. Today's church is the third on the site and is the oldest Presbyterian congregation west of the Blue Ridge.

The Grim Farm, lying between Kernstown and Sandy Ridge is in the heart of the battlefields, and is eligible for inclusion on the Virginia and National Registers of Historic Places. Today's landscape, beautifully peaceful and steeped in heritage, is in great danger. It could vanish forever. Much depends on its fate.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BATTLES

23 MARCH 1862

On this date Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson fought the opening engagement of his famous Valley Campaign. Although he suffered a tactical defeat, he swiftly transformed it into a strategic victory. In little over a month after Kernstown, Jackson had swept Union forces out of the Valley and contributed significantly to the salvation of the Confederacy.

"I do not recollect of ever having heard such a roar of musketry," wrote Jackson after the battle. When darkness ended the battle, casualties totaled over 1300 men. Kernstown was the first battle fought in the Valley, and it launched the great campaign still studied today.

24 JULY 1864

The Second Battle of Kernstown was a decisive Confederate victory, the last such in the Valley. Lt. General Jubal Early's victorious Confederates inflicted 1185 casualties in smashing General George Crook's Army of West Virginia, clearing the Valley again of Union troops. The battle cleared General Early's route into Pennsylvania. In Washington, President Lincoln

moved to put the entire Valley area under the command of General Philip Sheridan. The battles of Third Winchester, Cedar Creek, and the Great Burning were to follow.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Military Significance of Property: The Grim Farm figured prominently in both the First and Second Kernstown Battles. During First Kernstown, Union artillery was positioned on the Grim property along Pritchard's Hill. In order for certain Union regiments to get to the Confederate position on Sand Ridge, they had to cross the Grim property.

During Second Kernstown, the Grim property was the center of the fighting. Union soldiers took up positions along the stone fences on the edge of the Grim property and along Pritchard's Lane. Union artillery fired from positions on Pritchard's Hill.

The Kernstown Battlefield is one of ten key battlefields that comprise our nation's first National Historic District, and the only one in those ten that does not have land set aside for Civil War interpretation and heritage tourism.

Environmental Significance: The effort to preserve the Grim Farm has been greeted with enthusiastic support from several environmental organizations. Development, both residential and industrial continually add new threats to the remaining open space of the area. The local chapter of the Audubon Society has expressed its concern that the development of the Grim Farm will have a serious, negative impact on the migrating birds and other wildlife that currently use the property's ponds, stream, wetlands, and apple orchards.

Architecture on the Property: There are several buildings located on the Grim Farm, three of which pre-date the Civil War. These include a farm shed, wheelwright's shop, and the 1854 Pritchard House. The tenant farmhouse is believed to have been built circa 1870. Because the property has been continuously farmed since the settling of the Shenandoah Valley, many of the remaining structures are farm related, and may have no historical value.

Future Plans for the Farm: The American Battlefields Protection Program (ABPP) provided the funds for the development of a Land Resource Management Plan. The Kernstown Battlefield Association hopes to use this plan as a guide in developing an appropriate management and interpretation program. A copy is available for review at the Handley Library in Winchester, Virginia.

Property Availability: Because the Grim property straddles the Winchester City and Frederick County boundary, the city and county joined forces to purchase the property from the charitable trust established at the death of the owner. However, the beneficiaries of the trust brought suit in the Circuit Court charging that the trustee of the estate, F & M Bank of Winchester, had agreed to too low of a purchase price. A jury trial followed, which resulted in the purchase contract of \$2.7 million being voided and the removal of F&M as the trustee. In January 1997, the Middleburg Bank of Middleburg, Virginia was named as the new trustee. The city and county announced they would not pursue the purchase any longer themselves, but would support the efforts of the KBA as an alternative buyer.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Kernstown Battlefield Association is a non-profit 501c3, incorporated in July 1996, and granted its non-profit status in November 1996.

The KBA has been recognized as the alternative recipient of an ISTEIA grant of \$1.09 million for the purchase of the Grim Farm. The combined matching funds totaling \$500,000 from the city and county have also been pledged to the KBA for use.

Over \$35,000 has been raised through the membership dues and fundraising activities of the KBA. Our 500 + members represent several organizations and individuals across the U.S. and Canada. Among these are several Civil War Round Tables, Reenactment Units, UDC and SCV Chapters.

Because we understand the hesitancy of larger donors to commit funds while the negotiation process is

underway, we have accepted pledges. These donors have pledged to come forward with funds once a contract and closing date have been secured. These pledges add another \$100,000 to the effort to save the Kernstown Battlefield.

Expenses for the KBA are nominal. There is no paid staff, everything is done by volunteers. The KBA has the endorsement of the city and county governments, and the local Chamber of Commerce. Additionally, the KBA is an active participant in the Visit the Valley regional tourism efforts. Our Vice-President serves on the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Commission and we have allied ourselves with other historic preservationists, national Civil War groups, and conservation efforts.

We urge everyone interested in preserving our country's heritage, to join the KBA. Each membership adds to the funds available for the purchase of these hallowed grounds and is proof positive of the grassroots support that foundations look for in determining grant recipients.

A downloadable Membership Form is available on our web site (www.kernstownbattle.org/) If you would like to receive pledge information, please write us at: Kernstown Battlefield Association, P.O. Box 1327, Winchester, VA 22624.

The above information is from the Kernstown Battlefield Association web site. Copyright KBA.



Custom House, Charleston

PROGRAM SCHEDULE FOR 1999

The programs for the year are listed below. Be sure to mark your calendars so as not to miss any of the speakers we have lined up:

Date	Speaker	Topic
January 29, 1999	Nathan Boyer	<i>Civil War Prison Camps</i>
February 25	Dr. Allen Carden	<i>Abraham Lincoln</i>
March 25	John Peterson	<i>Gouverneur Warren</i>
April 29	Shelton Johnson	<i>Yosemite and Sequoia Black Infantry and Cavalry</i>
May 27	Philip Avila	<i>The Bear Goes East: California in the Civil War</i>
June 24 - Backyard potluck at the Moats'	Carol Berry	<i>A Woman's War: The Homefront</i>
July 29	Jack Leathers	<i>Texans in the Confederacy</i>
August 26	Dr. Helen Trimpi	<i>Harvard Confederates</i>
September 30	Tom Goodrich	<i>First Civil War--Bleeding Kansas</i>
October 28 (note date change)	Dr. Leon Litwack	<i>Reconstruction</i>
November 18	Mike Carter	<i>States' Rights and Secession</i>
December	No regular meeting	



MEMBERSHIP FORM

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

_____ Individual \$25 _____ Family \$35 _____ \$10 Student/Newsletter

Name _____

Address _____

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 to preservation.