



Battle Lines

Newsletter of the Civil War Round Table of Atlanta

A non-profit 501c3, dedicated to Promoting the Serious Study of the American Civil War

October Meeting

Tuesday, October 12

5:30- 6:45 p.m. Cocktails

6:45 p.m. Dinner

Reservations Required

Register online at
www.atlantacwrt.org

or mail a check (\$39 per ticket)
to Tim Whalen:
P.O. Box 2355
Griffin, GA 30224
Reservations must be made by
Thursday, October 7 at 8 p.m.

Meeting Location

Capital City Club-Downtown
7 John Portman Boulevard
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 523-8221

** Masking expected
from the car drop off portico
to the meeting room*

Menu

Salad;
Georgia Trout;
Desert.

Meade's Gettysburg Command

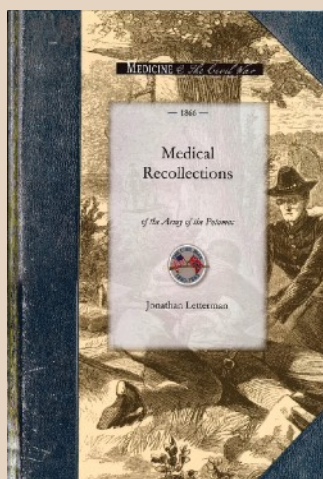
Longtime members will remember when Kent Masterson Brown spoke to us of Lee's retreat from Gettysburg, the topic of his 2011 book, *Retreat from Gettysburg: Lee, Logistics, and the Pennsylvania Campaign*. For our October meeting, Kent will tell the rest of the story as analyzed in his new book *Meade at Gettysburg: A Study in Command*. A Lexington, Kentucky native, Kent has practiced constitutional and administrative law for 47 years in Lexington, Kentucky and served as counsel in Washington, DC for 26 years. Kent helped form the Perryville Battlefield Association and chaired the Perryville Battlefield Commission and the Gettysburg National Military Park Advisory Commission. He also served on the Board of the Gettysburg Foundation. A scholar, educator and documentary film maker, Kent created the national magazine, "The Civil War," and has authored six books, all of which have been selections of the History Book Club and Military Book Club. Since 2007, Kent has produced eight award-winning historical documentary films for public and cable television. Kent is a 1974 graduate of Washington and Lee University School of Law and a 1971 graduate of Centre College.





Major Jonathan Letterman,
MD (Library of Congress)

Two years after the war, in 1866, Jonathan Letterman published his *Medical Recollections of the Army of the Potomac*. In the years since it has been reprinted often and is available, free of charge, in digital format: <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/009561615>



Dr. Letterman's Memoir: This edition is sold by the National Museum of Civil War Medicine <https://www.civilwarmed.org>

Union Plan Still Saving Lives

More than 150 years have passed since military physician Jonathan Letterman devised strategies to support the health of Union soldiers and provide immediate care for those wounded in battle; yet this military physician of the Civil War is “still saving lives,” according to our September meeting speaker George Wunderlich. The Letterman Plan, devised after Dr. Letterman was named Medical Director of the Army of the Potomac on July 4, 1862, provided for a system of battlefield care and patient transport that remains crucial and

most recently saved many lives through our 20 years in Afghanistan. Ordered in October 1862 and affirmed by Congress in 1864, Letterman's plan is the basis for contemporary ambulance transport, triage and trauma care, in military and civilian life. In 1864, Prussian military doctors named Letterman's techniques, the “American Plan.” The system became essential on the battlefields of Europe and remains a force world-wide. Sixty ACWRT members attended the program for an inspiring return to our in-person meetings.



September speaker George Wunderlich and Past ACWRT President Gordon Jones, Senior Military Historian at the Atlanta History Center, discuss a banjo display at the History Center. George is Director of the United States Army Medical Department Museum. He plays and builds banjos.

Atlanta Civil War Round Table Kennesaw Tour

On the day of the deadly battle of Kennesaw Mountain, June 27, 1864, temperatures were fierce, 100 degrees. There had been heavy rains for three weeks prior to the engagement and Union soldiers approaching the top of the summit, now known as Cheatham Hill, trudged through mud and waist-high wheat. As we walked the steep path of the Union Army of the Cumberland for the September 18 ACWRT tour, historian Michael Shaffer vividly described the terrain as it would have been that day, less wooded and with a clearer line of sight for the Confederates who took aim at the advancing Federals. At the top of the summit, we viewed the well-crafted entrenchments left by Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston's Army of Tennessee. The beautiful Illinois Monument, close to the fortifications, marks the site where the Union assault culminated and failed.

In early May of 1864, General William T. Sherman and his forces came to north Georgia hoping to conquer Atlanta, a vital source of industry and supply for the Confederacy, and to destroy the Confederate Army of Tennessee, which still held Georgia. As the Union forces advanced into north Georgia from Chattanooga—engaging in skirmishes and battles from Resaca, May 14-15, 1864; Paulding County around the Dallas area, May 26-June 1; and Big Shanty near Kennesaw, June 9—Sherman and Johnston followed a pattern. Sherman would flank Johnston's forces and Johnston would defensively withdraw. Sherman launched operations around Marietta from June 10-July 3, 1864. In those weeks, Kennesaw Mountain emerged as the gateway to Atlanta.



At the Illinois Monument: (Seated, Left to Right:) Carol Willey, Michael Shaffer, Gould Hagler. (Standing, Left to Right:) John Miller, Cameron Barham, standing behind his wife Susan Barham; Leslie Humber, Susan's sister, standing to her right and to the left of her husband Thomas Humber; ACWRT Members Dick Plunkett and Kerry Elliot. At this site, entrenched Confederates repulsed an assault led by Union General Dan McCook. The hill is named for Confederate General Frank Cheatham, whose men fended off the Federals. The Illinois Monument was dedicated in honor of Illinois combatants on the 50th Anniversary of the Battle in 1914.

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Earlier in June, Confederates began building a series of military entrenchments in Cobb County. Following the death of Lt. General Leonidas Polk who was killed by Union fire on June 14 at Pine Mountain, Johnston concentrated his forces along the Kennesaw Mountain line that would be the site of the battle. On the night of June 18-19, Johnston completed his move into a defensive position with entrenchments stretching seven miles. The Battle of Kolb's farm, fought June 22, persuaded Sherman that Johnston's lines could be permeated and he planned a frontal attack, aiming to season his men for battles to come. From his headquarters near the base of Cheatham Hill, Sherman wrote to his wife Ellen that his troops were "too complacent." He felt that trying his men would brace them. "To keep soldiers sharp you have to use them," he wrote. Sherman set his troops in position for a frontal attack at 7:30 a.m. on the morning of the 27th. The Union Armies of the Tennessee and the Cumberland were to strike the Confederate right and center while the Army of the Ohio acted as a diversion to the Confederate left. Aimed at Cheatham Hill were Brigadier General John Newton's 2nd division of the 4th Corps, Colonel Daniel McCook's 52nd Ohio Brigade and Colonel John Mitchell's 113th Ohio Infantry. Under heavy fire, they crossed John



Union Troops Charging Toward Kennesaw, June 1864: Artist Alfred Rudolph Ware's 1864 sketch shows Union troops gathering for a frontal assault on Kennesaw Mountain. (Library of Congress)

Ward Creek, then deep from the rains and teeming with snakes, as they approached the hill. Colonel McCook recited from Thomas Macaulay's poem "Horatius:" "Then out spoke brave Horatius, the Captain of the Gate: To every man upon this earth, death cometh soon or late; And how can man die better than facing fearful odds, For the ashes of his fathers, and the temples of his Gods."

At the summit they came close to some of Johnston's most skilled men. Major General Patrick Cleburne's division was there with Brigadier General George Maney's men from Major General Frank Cheatham's division. The bloodiest conflict of the Battle of Kennesaw Mountain ensued. Near the Confederate works, encouraging his men, Colonel McCook was mortally struck in the right lung. Col. Oscar Harmon of the 125th Illinois assumed command and was mortally wounded minutes later. Brigadier General Charles Harker, mounted on his white horse, also made an attempt to motivate the beleaguered Federals before being struck down. Colonel Luther Bradley of the 51st Illinois became leader in the brief period before the fighting ended at 10 a.m. With 824 Union casualties and 11 Confederates lost in the 100 degree weather, the stench of death soon overwhelmed the living, already battered from the fight. It was necessary to arrange a truce for burials.

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Left: At the monument on the spot where General Leonidas Polk was killed, historian Michael Shaffer describes the death of the general. Right: Gould Hagler and Michael Shaffer reflect at the site of the 5th Indiana Battery.

After our climb of Cheatham Hill and lunch, our group made its way to Pine Mountain and the site of the death of Lt. General Leonidas Polk, who had served as a Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana and as a clergyman in Tennessee before joining the Confederacy. Polk, with Generals Johnston and William J. Hardee, was scouting enemy positions when the group was spotted by General Sherman. Not knowing the identities of the officers, Sherman ordered his artillery to take aim. A first and second round came close to the trio of Confederate Generals. The third killed General Polk. Captain Peter Simonson of the 5th Indiana Battery Light Artillery is thought to have fired the fatal shot. He died two days later, July 16, 1864, killed by a Confederate sniper a few miles away from Pine Mountain. Though Polk was deeply mourned throughout the South, Sherman apparently regarded his death a small matter, simply noting “today we killed Polk” in his notes. At the end of our tour, we traveled to the well-preserved entrenchments of the 5th Indiana Artillery. Simonson, most believe, fired the fatal shot that killed Polk from that location.



A Civil War Era Federal Map from the Library of Congress indicates the Pine Mountain site of Polk's death, and Simonson's location. These are easier to see on the LOC link: [https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3923c.cw0164500/? \(Cor=-0.151,-0.07,1.508,0.685,0](https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3923c.cw0164500/? (Cor=-0.151,-0.07,1.508,0.685,0)



Battle of Mission Ridge, Nov. 25, 1863: Printed for the McCormick Harvesting Machines Company (Color Lithograph, 1886)

ACWRT Battlefield Tours Continue

To follow up on our **Kennesaw tour** with world-class guide Michael Shaffer, we will join the National Park Service's Jim Ogden on Saturday, November 20 to participate in some of the programming in observance of the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park's 158th Anniversary of the Battles for Chattanooga (November 23-25, 1863). ACWRT has a long relationship with Jim, who has for many years served as historian to the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park & Moccasin Bend National Archeological District. At 10am we will arrive at the military park. Expect a two-hour walking tour of one of the battlefields.

More details will follow. ACWRT is starting the signup now. Anytime Jim Ogden leads a tour, spaces fill quickly. Our group will be "tagging along" with whatever group Jim Ogden is leading that day. Please use this link to signup now:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C084CADAB22A31-tour5>



Jim Ogden at Chickamauga

We look forward to hosting several tours in the north Georgia area next Spring and are currently evaluating Utoy Creek and East Atlanta locations. A tour of the Decatur battlefield is another possibility. So keep watch for news of these tours in forthcoming issues of "Battle Lines." And if you have a tour in mind or know of an especially talented tour guide you would like to follow, please contact John Miller at canoe4ever@gmail.com

John Miller: At Large Executive Committee Second Year

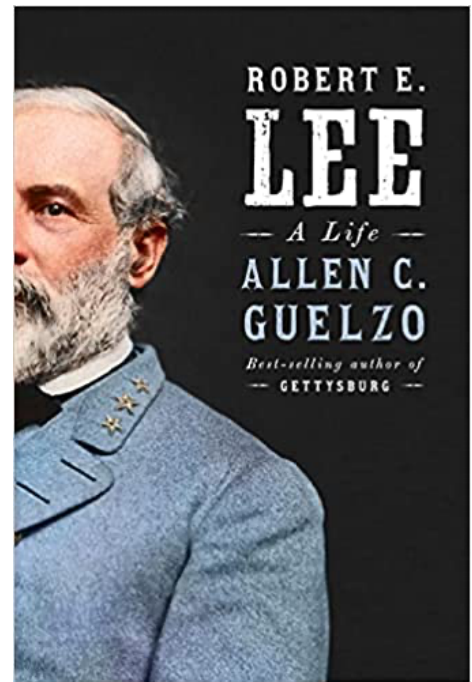
Reading About General Robert E. Lee

Reading is often the best way to evaluate an historical figure's place in culture. In Georgia, General Robert E. Lee was once a particularly omnipresent personality as Georgians who served in the Civil War, generally served in the Army of Northern Virginia. Historian

Michael Shaffer notes that early in the War, all states, North and South, raised regiments and sent them to Virginia and Washington D.C. as it was expected that the first great battle would take place somewhere between Richmond and Washington. A total of 36 Georgia infantry regiments served in the Army of Northern Virginia: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A2001.05.0145%3Achapter%3D4>.

ACWRT's annual Richard Barksdale Harwell Book Award has often recognized books on the topic of Lee. And 2014 Harwell winner Allen C. Guelzo's new book, *Robert E. Lee: A Life*, has attained bestseller status since its release a week ago. We asked Harwell committee members to recommend books on the topic of Lee. Two books close to Lee and close to Georgia are memoirs by notable Georgians. Lieutenant General James Longstreet, buried in Gainesville where he retired after the war, wrote the memoir

From Manassas to Appomattox, still in print. *Fighting for the Confederacy: The Personal Recollections of General Edward Porter Alexander*, first published by the University of North Carolina Press in 1989, also looks at Lee from the perspective of a Georgian. Porter was chief of artillery for Longstreet's Corps. Douglas Southall Freeman's four-volume *R.E. Lee: A Biography*, winner of the 1935 Pulitzer Prize, is a classic as is Southall Freeman's 1942 book, *Lee's Lieutenants: A Study in Command*. Two books by historian Gary W. Gallagher reflect more contemporary thought on the topic of Lee: *Lee and His Army in Confederate History*, published in 2006, and *Lee the Soldier*, published in 1996. Thomas Lawrence Connelly's book, *The Marble Man: Robert E. Lee and his Image in American Society*, published in 1978, is another important book. Harwell Book Award winners on the topic of Lee include 1996 winner, Emory M. Thomas' *Robert E. Lee*; 1999 winner, J. Tracy Power's *Lee's Miserables*; Elizabeth Brown Pryor's 2008 winner, *Reading the Man: A Portrait of Robert E. Lee Through his Private Letters* and 2012 winner, Jeffry Wert's *A Glorious Army: Robert E. Lee's Triumph 1862-1863*, winner of the 2012 Harwell Award. Allen Guelzo's *Robert E. Lee: A Life* is also recommended.





We're Together Again

It was as if we had never left. Our room was still there and we met as we used to meet before the Pandemic. We enjoyed a great September program and a lovely meal. Speaker George Wunderlich, pictured above, enlightened us. President Mary-Elizabeth Ellard, above right, thanks last year's president Carlton Mullis, presenting him with the the traditional plaque and gold badge of past presidents. Charlie Crawford, below right, returned as Trivia Master.



Atlanta Civil War Round Table

Officers and Executive Committee 2020-2021

Mary-Elizabeth Ellard	President
Loran Crabtree	First Vice President
Bill Dodd	Second Vice President
Tim Whalen	Secretary/ Treasurer
Carlton Mullis	Immediate Past President

At Large Executive Committee Second Year:

John Miller; Robert Fugate

At Large Executive Committee First Year:

John Ottley; Sy Goodman

Correction: Page 5 of September *Battle Lines*, incorrectly reported that Swiss Guards were killed during the French Revolution in 1782. The date was actually 1792.