



Founded at Fort Harrison
on February 8, 1951

RICHMOND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE JULY 2023

“The Civil War is the crux of our history. You cannot understand any part of our past, from the convening of the Constitutional Convention, down to this morning, without eventually arriving at the Civil War.”

Bernard de Voto

www.richmondcwrt.org

Ulli Baumann, President
804-789-9844
ullib1101@gmail.com

Waite Rawls, First VP
804-501-8436
waiterawls@gmail.com

Billie Raines, Second VP
804-291-6300
b.raines@live.com

Art Wingo, Treasurer
804-516-7508
[Art and Diane@comcast.net](mailto:Art_and_Diane@comcast.net)

Andy Keller, Secretary
804-382-6605
secretary.rcwrt@gmail.com

Board of Directors (2023):
Doug Crenshaw
Elaine Duckworth
Jack Mountcastle
Danny Witt

Editor/Webmaster: Ulli Baumann
ullib1101@gmail.com

Follow us on Facebook:
[@richmondcwrt](https://www.facebook.com/richmondcwrt)

**July 11, 2023
7:30 p.m.**

**At First Presbyterian Church
4602 Cary Street Road
Richmond, VA 23226
(The parking lot is behind the church; go up the
steps to fellowship hall on the left)**

JAMES HESSLER

“The Fight at East Cavalry Field”



Gettysburg's East Cavalry Field was the scene of a spirited cavalry engagement on the afternoon of July 3, 1863. While Robert E. Lee attempted to break the Union position with the famed infantry attack known as "Pickett's Charge," cavalrymen from both armies clashed on farm fields located about four miles east of the main battlefield.

The Confederate horsemen were led by legendary General Jeb Stuart and highly capable subordinates such as Wade Hampton. Opposing Stuart was Union cavalry led by General David M. Gregg, who was positioned to cover approaches to the Army of the Potomac's rear. Joining Gregg's cavalrymen were Michigan troops under the flamboyant and recently promoted General George A. Custer.

Both Stuart and Custer's roles on this afternoon have been steeped in myths and misconceptions. Often labeled as the "battle that saved the Union," this clash between some of the Eastern Theater's premier cavalrymen was a memorable and controversial moment in the larger Gettysburg campaign.

Join author, Gettysburg Licensed Battlefield Guide and Battle of Gettysburg Podcast co-host James Hessler for "Come on You Wolverines! The Battle of Gettysburg's East Cavalry Field." Jim will also have his books available to sign and sell after the presentation.

James Hessler has worked as a Licensed Battlefield Guide at Gettysburg National Military Park for two decades. Jim has authored or co-authored three full-length books on the Gettysburg campaign: *Sickles at Gettysburg* (2009), *Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg* (2015), and *Gettysburg's Peach Orchard* (2019). His books received several distinguished book awards.

Jim currently co-hosts the popular *Battle of Gettysburg Podcast*. His other media appearances include Travel Channel, C-SPAN, NPR, PCN-TV, and other outlets. He also authored articles in *Gettysburg Magazine*, *America's Civil War*, and *Hallowed Ground Magazine*. He was one of the primary content designers for the American Battlefield Trust's mobile Gettysburg application.

Jim is a frequent speaker for Civil War Round Tables and other historical groups nationwide. In addition to Gettysburg, he leads tours at several other battlefields and historic sites across the country. He currently sits on the Board of Directors for the Little Bighorn Associates and formerly on the Executive Council for the Association of Gettysburg Licensed Battlefield Guides.

Follow Jim's Facebook page at *James Hessler's Gettysburg History* to receive updates on his current and future projects.

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

While doing some reading recently on interest in our American Civil War in other countries, it brought back a memory of something that happened a long time ago in Germany.

I was visiting my parents with our children in Hildesheim. Going back to our car in the parking garage I saw a sticker on the back of a car that said, "Civil War Reenactor." I left a note under the windshield wiper with my email address and a short explanation – and back home in Pittsburgh I found an email from a German Confederate Civil War reenactor, and we corresponded for a while. He and his friends were very much into regularly getting together and studying the American Civil War.

My interest in the German participation in the Civil War also led me to a book (written in German) on the "Forty-Eighters," by Wolfgang Hochbruck, Professor of American Studies at the University of Stuttgart at the time. The Forty-eighters were political refugees from the failed 1848/49 revolution in Europe who made their way to America and into the Civil War. Carl Schurz, Franz Sigel, Louis Blenker, Alexander Schimmelpfennig, and Adolph von Steinwehr were just some of them. Hochbruck was (and maybe still is) really into the Civil War. Tony Horwitz, author of *Confederates in the Attic*, ran into a Union reenactor at Shiloh, who turned out to be Wolfgang Hochbruck. He was retracing the steps of a Minnesota artilleryman during that battle. In Stuttgart he had formed a reenactment unit, modeled on a German American unit, the 3rd Missouri.

There is an active American Civil War Round Table in Australia in Queensland with a nice website, and great topics/speakers at their monthly meetings. There are three round tables in Canada as well.

But the most impressive of them all is the one in England, which was established in 1953, just two years after our own. At their April 2023 Conference near London Chris Mackowski was the keynote speaker. Also in England, there is the Southern Skirmish Association, a group of "keen American Civil War enthusiasts," according to their website.

In Germany, Australia, Canada, and England, our Civil War history lives on and is being studied outside the United States. Speaking for myself, the seed was planted when I was a teenager reading "Gone With The Wind." I remember thinking that I had to look more into that time period in America's history. And here we are.

Ulli

John Reagan and the Birth of the Confederate Postal System

By Jim Wudarczyk

What was the one thing that the Confederacy could do that the federal government was not able to do before or after the Civil War in the South?

Believe it or not, the Confederacy was able to deliver mail at a profit.

The Confederate States of America formed their postal system on February 21, 1861. Even before the first shots of the Civil War were fired, the Confederacy recognized the importance of an effective postal service to enhance communications. Although commissioned in February 1861, the postal service did not begin operating until June 1, 1861. An interesting provision of the CSA Constitution mandated that the postal office be self-supporting by March 1, 1863.



It was somewhat ironic that in the early days of this institution, services were conducted using U.S.A.

currency and stamps. The first Confederate stamp appeared in October 1861 and as expected sported a picture of Jefferson Davis. The Richmond, Virginia, firm of Hoyer and Ludwig was commissioned to print the first issue of green five-cent stamps. A ten-cent blue stamp with the image of Thomas Jefferson appeared in 1861. Said to have been designed by Charles Ludwig of Hoyer & Ludwig, the issue was printed by both the Virginia firm and by J.T. Patterson & Company of Augusta, Georgia. Hoyer & Ludwig was quickly dropped because of their lack of experience and poor quality.

After dropping Hoyer & Ludwig, the Confederate States of America turned to the London firm of Thomas DeLa Rue in order to fill the demand for postage stamps. Stamps were imported from England until 1863 when the Confederate government was able to find a suitable Southern company. From 1863 until the end of the war, Archer & Daly were granted the contract to provide stamps. For an exceptional "Introduction to Confederate State Stamps and Postal History," refer to John L. Kimbrough and Conrad L. Bush's discussion of the subject that appeared in the January 1999 issue of *Scott's Stamps Monthly*. This account showed the magnitude of stamps issued, which lends support to the fact that the Civil War soldier and his family were literate and prolific letter writers. For example, Kimbrough & Bush indicate that "the Archer & Daly printings of CSA #11 and CSA #12 ten-cent stamps together totaled approximately 15,000,000." The account also gives vital statistics of other issues, as well as dates when first put in use, denomination, portraits, and ink colors.



Although a large number of Confederate postage stamps were printed in England, there were periods of acute shortages of stamps as a result of the effectiveness of the Union blockade of Southern ports.

The man behind the Confederate Postal System was John Henninger Reagan. Although Reagan (1818-1905) was born in Tennessee, he moved to Texas where in 1839 he fought in the Cherokee Wars. A lawyer by profession, Reagan entered politics as soon as Texas was admitted to the Union. A Democrat, he had his share of political victories and defeats. He served as a county judge, state legislator, judge for the Northern Judicial District, and Congressman.

Reagan was instrumental in blocking the surging American (Know Nothing) Party from becoming a major force in Texas. A man who believed that the Republicans were unable to compromise and were anti-Southern, he resigned his seat in Congress two weeks after Lincoln was elected and for the next four years served in the C.S.A. as Postmaster General.

A practical business man, Reagan realized that an effective postal system required men with expertise. So he solicited Southern gentlemen working in the post office in Washington, D.C. to leave their job and accept employment with the Confederate Postal System. Not only did a number defect, they also brought with them postal reports, forms, and maps.

The war suddenly placed 8,535 of the nation's 28,586 post offices in the hands of the Confederacy. John H. Reagan was a tough and competent administrator. Examining the 1859 postal operations, he realized the Southern post offices had \$578,000 in revenues but \$1,600,000 in expenses. To comply with the CSA Constitution, Reagan immediately began to shut down non-profitable routes, raise rates, and initiate draconian cuts in personnel and operating expenditures. In addition, he abolished the franking privilege. He also convinced the railroads to slash their rates by 50 percent and to accept Confederate bonds as payment. Reagan theorized that mail could not be profitably delivered on a flat rate system; so he initiated a system based on weight and distance. His scale was relatively simple. Postage was five cents per ½ ounce under 500 miles and ten cents per ½ ounce over 500 miles. Circulars were delivered for a flat rate of two cents. Letters could be delivered for as low as two cents if the sender dropped the correspondence at the post office and the addressee picked it up at the nearest postal facility.

After the collapse of Vicksburg and Port Hudson, Reagan relied on smugglers to deliver the mail. Since his costs escalated, he raised the rates on mail going into Union controlled territories to forty cents per ½ ounce. Effective postal operations were

severely hindered by the growing Union blockade and more territory falling to federal troops.

Critics of a self-sustaining post office argued that government subsidies enhanced effective communication. They further maintained that since the printed word was the main vehicle for news, the reduction in mail service simply deprived much of the South of valuable information.

When the Confederacy collapsed, Reagan fled with Jefferson Davis. He was captured and sent to Fort Warren in Boston where he served two years in prison. (Twenty-two weeks of that time was spent in solitary confinement.) On August 11, 1865 he sent an open letter to the people of Texas, asking them to accept defeat and to renounce secession and slavery. He argued that failure to do so would put Texas in danger of military despotism and forced Negro suffrage. To his dismay, the people of the state initially rejected Reagan. Eventually the people of Texas realized that Reagan had their interest at heart, and he was elected to the First Congressional District in 1874. According to the National Postal Museum website, while in Congress Reagan served on the Committee on Post Offices and Postal Roads. In January 1887 he was elected to the United States Senate but left prior to the completion of his term in order to accept the chairmanship of the newly formed Railroad Commission of Texas. The commission was formed in 1891 with the purpose of regulating commerce on a state level.

Known as the “Old Roman of Texas,” Reagan was instrumental in founding the Texas State Historical Association in 1897. In 1894 he made an unsuccessful run for governor of Texas. He continued to work for the Railroad Commission until his retirement in January 1903. Afterwards, he spent the last two years of his life composing his *Memoirs*, which were published in 1906, or one year after his death.

Reprinted from *The Arsenal*,
newsletter of the Greater Pittsburgh CWRT,
with permission by the author

EVENTS OF INTEREST

July 15: Third “History at Sunset” Tour at Petersburg National Battlefield, co-sponsored with the Petersburg Battlefields Foundation: Tunneling Under the Enemy. Meet at 6:00 p.m. at Tour Stop 8 – Eastern Front Park Tour Road (Siege Road). Free

October 6-8: Central Virginia Battlefields Trust 2023 Conference, “Chancellorsville - The Crossroads of Fire.” With Frank O’Reilly, Chris Mackowski, Kris White, John Hennessy, Robert Lee Hodge, and more. More details: www.cvbt.org (Annual Conference 2023).

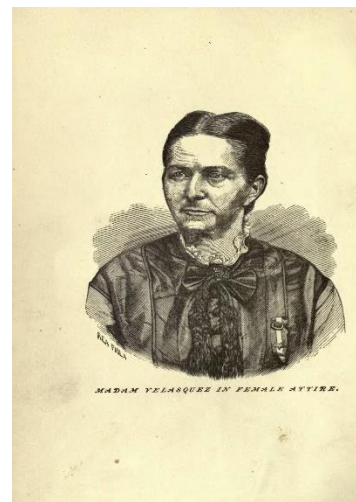
October 6-8: Longstreet Society Seminar at Manassas, VA, “Lee’s Warhorse at 2nd Manassas.” The event will be chaired by the great-great-grandson of James Longstreet. www.longstreetsociety.org

October 6-8: Registration is open for the 2023 Image of War Seminar by the Center for Civil War Photography, which will be held close to home in Petersburg.

For more information and to register, go to: www.civilwarphotography.org

WHO WAS...

LORETA JANETA VELASQUEZ?



Loreta Janeta Velasquez (June 26, 1842-1923) was a Cuban-born woman who masqueraded as a male Confederate soldier during the Civil War. After her soldier husband's accidental death, she enlisted in the Confederate States Army in 1861. She then fought at Bull Run, Ball's Bluff, and Fort Donelson, but she was discharged when her gender was discovered while in New Orleans. Undeterred, she reenlisted and fought at Shiloh, until unmasked once more. She then became a Confederate spy, working in both male and female guises, and as a double agent also reporting to the U.S. Secret Service. She remarried three more times, being widowed in each instance.

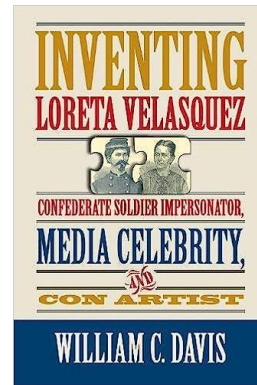
Velasquez was born in Havana, Cuba to a wealthy Cuban official and a mother of French and American ancestry. Her father owned plantations in Mexico and Cuba. Loreta became estranged from her family when she eloped at age 14 with a U.S. Army officer while living with an aunt in New Orleans. By converting to Methodism, she further estranged herself from her family.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Velasquez's husband resigned his U.S. commission and joined the Confederate Army. At first, William aided Loreta in her endeavors to cross-dress and to enlist hoping that she would be dissuaded after a while. Loreta's desire to enlist, however, was only strengthened.

When she failed to convince her husband, she acquired two uniforms, adopted the name of Harry T. Buford and moved to Arkansas. There she recruited 236 men in four days, shipped them to Pensacola, Florida, and presented them to her husband as her command. When her husband died soon afterwards in an accident, she turned her men over to a friend.

During the following years she alternated between spying for the Confederacy as a woman and fighting as a man in the siege of Fort Donelson and the Battle of Shiloh. Burying the dead after a battle, a stray shell wounded her and it was discovered that she was woman. She fled to New Orleans and gave up the uniform at that point.

Velasquez recorded her adventures in a 600 page book, "*A Woman in Battle*," but her account was widely discredited and Jubal Early denounced it as an obvious fiction. In 2016, William C. Davis wrote a biography of Velasquez, "*Inventing Loreta Velasquez: Confederate Soldier Impersonator, Media Celebrity, and Con Artist*."



Adapted from
*The Wikipedia Legends of
The Civil War*

UPCOMING MEETINGS

August 8: Emmanuel Dabney, "Broader Recruitment Training of USCT"

September 12: Jonathan Jones, "Veteran Addictions"

October 10: Rob Havers, "Anticipation of War in U.S. Military Society in the Antebellum Period"

November 14: Annual Dinner Meeting, Garry Adelman, "Preservation Accomplishments in the Richmond Area & Future Plans"

December 12: Jake Wynn, "Civil War Medicine"

Attendance at May Meeting: 75