

The Knapsack

Raleigh Civil War Round Table
The same rain falls on both friend and foe.

February 8th, 2021
Our 240th Issue



Volume 21
Number 2

<http://www.raleighcwrt.org>

Feb. 8th, 2021 Event Features Dr. Curt Fields, Ph.D., U.S. Grant Impersonator, Speaking on the Topic *Reflections on the Recent Vicksburg Campaign*

Our upcoming meeting will be on Monday, February 8th, 2021. Due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, we will **NOT** be meeting at the NC Museum of History in Raleigh. **Instead, we will meet remotely via an online web session using the application Zoom.**

February's meeting will feature a presentation by Dr. Curt Fields, Ph.D., U.S. Grant impersonator, speaking on the topic *Reflections on the Recent Vicksburg Campaign*.

Raleigh CWRT President, Josie Walker, will email an invitation to you for the Zoom event along with instructions and a link for joining the online meeting. **Please contact Josie at RaleighCWRT@Yahoo.com if you do not receive this invitation by February 2th.**

A "living historian," Curt has a national reputation as a Ulysses S. Grant impersonator and is recognized for his deep knowledge of Ulysses S. Grant as general and president. He is the same height and body style as General Grant and, therefore, presents a convincing true-to-life image of the man as he really looked. He researches and reads extensively about General

Grant in order to deliver an accurate persona of the General. His presentations are in first person, quoting from General Grant's Memoirs; articles and letters the General wrote, statements he made in interviews or wrote himself, and first-person accounts of people who knew the General or were with him and witnessed him during events.

Dr. Fields holds a Bachelor and Master's degrees in Education from the University of Memphis. He later earned a Master's degree in Secondary Education and Ph.D. in Educational Administration and Curriculum from Michigan State University. As a career educator, he taught at the

high-school level for eight years and then served for 25 years as a high school administrator. He has been a long-time adjunct Sociology Professor at the University of Memphis and in education for Belhaven University, Memphis campus. He is also an Educational consultant.

As a Living Historian, he has portrayed General Grant at the 150th Sesquicentennial observations of: Fort Donelson and Shiloh, TN, Vicksburg, MS, and at the 150th anniversary of Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox Court House, VA, in 2015.

He also portrayed the General at Appomattox in 2012, 2013 and 2014. He portrays General Grant in the Visitor Center film that is shown at Appomattox Court House National Historic Park. Curt has appeared with the Mississippi Symphony Orchestra in Vicksburg NMP. He was featured as General Grant, and as a Grant authority, in the Discovery Channel three-part documentary series *How Booze built America*. Dr. Fields portrays General Grant, giving his life story, on the Civil War Trust website in the *1 in 4* series of biographies and significant places and events the distinguished Civil War Trust has established. His portrayal of Grant may be viewed at <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/videos/ulysses-s-grant>.

Curt was honored to have been elected to life Membership in the American Civil War Round Table-Queensland, Australia, and is an occasional contributor to their newsletter: *The Bugle*. Other accomplishments include:

- a frequent contributor to *The Civil War News*.
- appeared as General Grant on the National Geographic Television series *Diggers*;
- featured as General Grant in the Visitors Center films shown at Appomattox National Historic Park;
- featured as General Grant at the Dover Hotel at the Fort Donelson National Battlefield;

- featured on four national magazine covers
- being the only Living Historian to be featured on two national magazine covers at the same time and for the same event: the Appomattox 150th in 2015 (*The Banner* and *The Camp Chase Gazette*);
- being selected as the official Grant for the U. S. Grant Boyhood Home Association in Georgetown, Ohio;
- portraying President Grant for the opening and dedication of the Ulysses S. Grant Presidential Library at Mississippi State University on November 30th, 2017;
- portraying General Grant at West Point (at the USMA request) in January of 2019, to kick off their *Semester of Grant* celebration prior to erecting a statue of him on the plain, April 25th, 2019;
- having the limit for a personal page on Facebook of 5,000 friends;
- as of June 25th, 2019, his Facebook posts had received more than half a million (520,000) "likes"!
- portrayed President Grant for the incoming Freshman class orientation at Mississippi State University, August 2019

Curt served as a Memphis, TN, Police Officer for four years; was an MPD Hostage negotiator and received the Life-Saving medal from the City of Memphis for actions in the line of duty. Dr. Fields website is <https://generalgrantbyhimself.com/>.



The Knapsack (Revised)



FRIDAYS WITH U. S. GRANT

The Civil War Round Table Congress proudly presents *Fridays with U. S. Grant* wherein Dr. Curt Fields, the preeminent Grant living historian, tells the Grant story in Grant's own words. To register for a virtual seat, select from the URLs below.

JANUARY REMEMBRANCES

Jan. 29 at 7:00 pm EST — FRED GRANT: General Grant recalls Fred's wounding at Vicksburg and near death after returning home. #27; <http://www.cwrtcongress.org/grant/G27.php>

FEBRUARY REMEMBRANCES

Feb. 5 at 7:00 pm EST — TEMPER DISPLAY: Captain Grant recalls showing some temper, the mule that wouldn't stay put and the loudmouth at the barn dance. #28; <http://www.cwrtcongress.org/grant/G28.php>

Feb. 12 at 7:00 pm EST — COMMANDING A FIRST MARCH: Colonel Grant recalls commanding his first march; Springfield, Illinois to Missouri in July 1861. #29; <http://www.cwrtcongress.org/grant/G29.php>

Feb. 19 at 7:00 pm EST — GENERAL JOHN A. LOGAN - PART 1: General Grant recalls encountering John A. Logan as an unknown quantity, as a "political general". #30; <http://www.cwrtcongress.org/grant/G30.php>

Feb. 26 at 7:00 pm EST — GENERAL JOHN A. LOGAN - PART 2: General Grant recalls his experiences with General John A. Logan and how he came to describe him as the best political general of the Civil War. #31; <http://www.cwrtcongress.org/grant/G31.php>

MARCH REMEMBRANCES

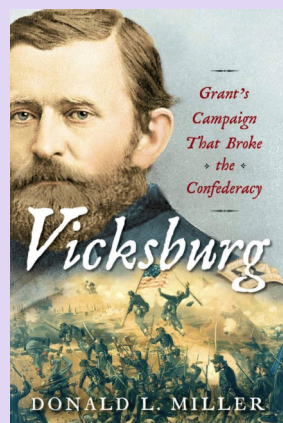
Mar. 12 at 7:00 pm EST — COLD HARBOR: General Grant recalls the Battle of Cold Harbor including the intelligence he received, the strategy employed and the battle outcome. #33; <http://www.cwrtcongress.org/grant/G33.php>

Vicksburg: Grant's Campaign That Broke the Confederacy

By Donald L. Miller

- Winner of the Civil War Round Table of New York's Fletcher Pratt Literary Award
- Winner of the Austin Civil War Round Table's Daniel M. & Marilyn W. Laney Book Prize
- Winner of an Army Historical Foundation Distinguished Writing Award

The following information is taken from Amazon.com. "Vicksburg, Mississippi, was the last stronghold of the Confederacy on the Mississippi River. It prevented the Union from using the river for shipping between the Union-controlled Midwest and New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico. The Union navy tried to take Vicksburg, which sat on a high bluff overlooking the river, but couldn't do it. It took Grant's army and Admiral David Porter's navy to successfully invade Mississippi and lay siege to Vicksburg, forcing the city to surrender."



It took Grant's army and Admiral David Porter's navy to successfully invade Mississippi and lay siege to Vicksburg, forcing the city to surrender."

"In this book, Donald L. Miller tells the full story of this year-long campaign to win the city. He brings to life all the drama, characters, and significance of Vicksburg, a historic moment that rivals any war story in history. In the course of the campaign, tens of thousands of slaves fled to the Union lines, where more than twenty thousand became soldiers, while others seized the plantations they had been forced to work on, destroying the economy of a large part of Mississippi and creating a social revolution."

"Vicksburg solidified Grant's reputation as the Union's most capable general. Today no general would ever be permitted to fail as often as Grant did, but ultimately he succeeded in what he himself called the most important battle of the war—the one that all but sealed the fate of the Confederacy."

Editorial Reviews

"A superb account of both military leadership and soldierly warfare... Books like Vicksburg are exactly what Thomas Hardy had in mind when he wrote that 'war makes rattling good history.'"

- John Steele Gordon, *The Wall Street Journal*

"Miller has compiled the best single-volume treatment of the Vicksburg Campaign. His riveting narrative is well researched and highly informative... A tour de force."

- *ARMY* magazine

"The fullest and best history of the Vicksburg campaign."

- James M. McPherson, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Battle Cry of Freedom*

About the Author

"Donald L. Miller is the John Henry MacCracken Professor of History Emeritus at Lafayette College and author of ten books, including *Vicksburg*, and *Masters of the Air*, currently being made into a television series by Tom Hanks. He has hosted, coproduced, or served as historical consultant for more than thirty television documentaries and has written for The New York Times, The Washington Post, and other publications."

"Miller hosted the series *A Biography of America* on PBS and has appeared in numerous other PBS programs in the American Experience series, as well as in programs on the History Channel."

This book is available in hardcover and paperback at Quail Ridge Books in Raleigh, NC, as well as at other bookstores. It is available in hardcover, paperback, and Kindle ebook format at Amazon.com.

Publisher: Simon & Schuster (October 29, 2019)

ISBN-13: 9781451641394 (paperback)

ISBN-13: 9781451641370 (hardcover)

Current Status of the Coronavirus Pandemic

As of 12-01-2020, there was a U.S. total of 13,696,060 reported cases and 270,369 reported deaths. As of 02-01-2021, two months later, these figures have increased to 26,186,817 cases (+91.2%) and 441,324 U.S. deaths (+63.2%), respectively. In addition, Jan. 2021 saw over 94,000 deaths in the U.S., the highest for any month.

Compared to the current world-wide reported totals of 102,974,263 cases and 2,227,923 deaths, the U.S. has 25.4% of all reported cases and 19.8% of all reported deaths. These rates remain mostly unchanged from previous months.

The U.S. death rate stands at 1.7% of U.S. cases. This is significantly better than the global death rate which stands at 2.2% of global cases. With vaccines beginning to roll out, these rates have begun to stabilize somewhat.

Please continue to follow medical and governmental guidelines of social distancing, washing hands frequently, wearing a mask, and scheduling an appointment to get vaccinated when your group is called.

Did You Know?

Unlike in modern wars, Civil War officers often led their troops into battle. As a result, generals from both sides were 50% more likely to die in combat than the common soldier (aka "cannon fodder"). Take a look at the following table, where KIA = killed in action and MW = mortally wounded:

	Union			Confederacy		
	KIA or MW	# Served	% Dead	KIA or MW	# Served	% Dead
Soldiers	110,100	2,128,948	5.2	94,000	750,000	12.5
Generals	46	583	7.9	78	425	18.4

For the Union, 7.9 % of generals died vs. 5.2 % of common soldiers, while for the Confederacy the corresponding rates were about 50% higher, i.e., 18.4% vs. 12.5 %, respectively.

156th Anniversary Bentonville Battlefield Tours

Reserve a Date & Time

AM tours: 9:00 am to Noon / PM tours: 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm



Feb. 20, 2021 (Sat.)

AM Tour: Last Grand Charge of the Army of Tennessee
(Mar. 19, 1865)

PM Tour: 20th Army Corps Fight at Morris Farm
(Mar. 19, 1865)

Mar. 4, 2021 (Thu.)

AM Tour: Last Grand Charge of the Army of Tennessee
(Mar. 19, 1865)

PM Tour: U.S. and C.S. Artillery during the Battle of
Bentonville

Mar. 5, 2021 (Fri.)

AM Tour: N.C. Junior Reserves & Confederate Red
Infantry (Mar. 19, 1865)

PM Tour: 20th Army Corps Fight at Morris Farm
(Mar. 19, 1865)

Mar. 6, 2021 (Sat.)

AM Tour: Last Grand Charge of the Army of Tennessee
(Mar. 19, 1865)

PM Tour: 20th Army Corps Fight at Morris Farm
(Mar. 19, 1865)

Mar. 18, 2021 (Thu.)

AM Tour: Last Grand Charge of the Army of Tennessee
(Mar. 19, 1865)

PM Tour: U.S. and C.S. Artillery during the Battle of
Bentonville

Mar. 19, 2021 (Fri.)

All Day 156th Anniversary Tour. Special full-day adventure focused entirely on Day One of the Battle (Mar. 19, 1865): Last Grand Charge of the Army of Tennessee / Confederate Red Infantry / Assault on the Morris Farm

Tours are conducted in accordance with COVID protocols. Cost is \$25 per person per tour or \$40 per person for both tours, a portion of which goes directly to Bentonville Battlefield preservations. Each tour is limited to 12 participants. Individuals will pay in advance to reserve a spot. Please wear comfortable walking shoes and seasonal wear.

For information on how to reserve your spot, contact Wade Sokolosky at (252) 646-5553 or email at sokolosky1@aol.com. All tours subject to cancellation at a moment's notice based on COVID Federal and State Executive Orders. Refund options: donate to the Battlefield or personal refund.



The American Battlefield Trust (ABT) has announced three opportunities to save hallowed ground in the New Year — the first is a 94-acre tract at Mill Springs, Kentucky, the second is a 9-acre tract at Petersburg, Virginia, and **the last 7-acre tract is at Bentonville, North Carolina**. Combined, that's 110 acres at stake!

Each of these battles tells the story of an important "beginning":

- The beginning of the second year of the war and the beginning of the long-term effort to secure the important border state of Kentucky at Mill Springs.
- The beginning of the Richmond-Petersburg Campaign and the 292-day siege that would eventually lead to General Lee's surrender.
- The opening day fighting at Bentonville, which marked the beginning of the final standoff between General William Tecumseh Sherman and General Joe Johnston.

The good news is that the ABT has already secured or applied for the grant funding to cover more than a million dollars of the total needed to complete these projects, but must still raise the final \$432,000 necessary to see all three of these important tracts saved forever.

Your donation will be matched \$3.26-to-\$1, more than tripling the power of your donation dollar!

Concerning Bentonville, our Round Table has already initiated a project to donate funds to honor Ed Bearss with a memorial plaque at the Bentonville Battlefield. If you are planning to donate to the Ed Bearss Tribute, please do so by calling 1 (888) 606-1400 or by mailing a check made out to **American Battlefield Trust**, specifying in the memo line that the donation is to be applied to the Ed Bearss Tribute. Mail the check to:

American Battlefield Trust
PO Box 79535
Baltimore, MD 21279-0535

Otherwise, to donate for the preservation of all three tracts, you can do so online at https://www.battlefields.org/save-110-acres-three-civil-war-battlefields?utm_campaign=011921&utm_medium=ask&utm_source=email&emci=112b1ead-7e56-eb11-a607-00155d43c992&emdi=044fc4b3-775a-eb11-a607-00155d43c992&ceid=303079 or call 1 (888) 606-1400.

The American Battlefield Trust's non profit tax ID is #54-1426643.

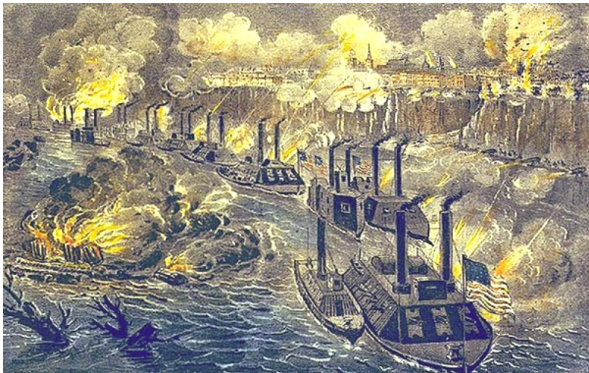
News of the RCWRT



Upcoming 2021 RCWRT Meetings

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, RCWRT meetings will be held remotely via Zoom software until further notice.

Date	Speaker	Topic
Feb. 8, 2021	Dr. Curt Fields, Ph.D., U.S. Grant Impersonator	Reflections on the Recent Vicksburg Campaign
Mar. 8, 2021	Al Bredenberg	Raleigh Civil War Fortifications
Apr. 12, 2021	Douglas Waller, M.A.	Lincoln's Spies
May 10, 2021	Dr. Gene Schmiel, Ph.D.	The Civil War in West Virginia and the Role of Jacob Cox



Union Gunboats Running the Rebel Blockade at Vicksburg, April 16, 1863



Only a very few major Civil War battles were fought on or near the same ground twice, but there is only one place in America where nearly one square mile of a "double battlefield" can still be preserved. A farm of this size outside of Richmond, Virginia was the site of two major Civil War battles, Gaines' Mill in 1862, and Cold Harbor in 1864.

Your gift today to the The American Battlefield Trust at <https://www.battlefields.org/give/save-battlefields/save-108-acres-gaines-mill-and-cold-harbor> will help save 108 acres of hallowed ground at Gaines' Mill and Cold Harbor and you'll forever be a crucial part in preserving the most-important unprotected hallowed ground in America! Every dollar you donate will be matched by an additional \$2.76. The goal is to raise \$511,000.

Bonus! With every gift of \$50 or more, you will receive a special new token of appreciation from the Trust: An American Battlefield Trust Gaines' Mill-Cold Harbor Challenge Coin.



The Knapsack

is the official newsletter of the RCWRT and is published around the 1st of each month.

(January 2021 Circulation: 300)

Staff

Bob Graesser, Editor

Contributors

Griff Bartlett, Dr. Ted Kunstling, Josie Walker

Readers are encouraged to submit photos, events, & articles for publication to Bob Graesser, Editor
(RaleighCWRT@yahoo.com; 919-244-9041)

RCWRT Board of Directors (2020-22)

Name	Position
Josie Walker	President / Program Committee
Ted Kunstling	Past President
Johnny Wood	Vice President / Program Committee
Griff Bartlett	Secretary / Treasurer
Pattie Smith	Program Committee
Bob Graesser	Knapsack Editor / Webmaster
Wayne Shore	Member
Lloyd Townsend	Member

Paying Memberships / Total Members: 120 / 150

We Welcomed Two New Members During January:

- Larry Graham, moved from Raleigh to Camden, SC (can attend meetings via Zoom)
- Jack Witzman, moved from Wilmington, DE to Raleigh

Did You Know?

A person drafted into the Army by the Union could hire a substitute to take his place for \$300. Out of the more than 150,000 men who were drafted, over 100,000 were substitutes. Also, only 5.54% of the over two-million Union soldiers were draftees.

The Raleigh Civil War Round Table was formed on March 12, 2001 and is a 501(c)(3) "tax exempt organization."

We meet on the second Monday of each month. Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, we have been meeting via Zoom, starting at 7:00 p.m. Check the RCWRT website (<http://www.raleighcwr.org>) for program dates and access information.

Annual membership dues are \$30 (individual and family) and \$10 for teachers. Student membership is free. Half-year memberships are available March through May for \$20. Dues should be submitted to Griff Bartlett, Treasurer, 908 Kinsdale Drive, Raleigh, NC 27615-1117 by **September 15** each year.

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