

53rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Company C

"The Sentinel" November 2025

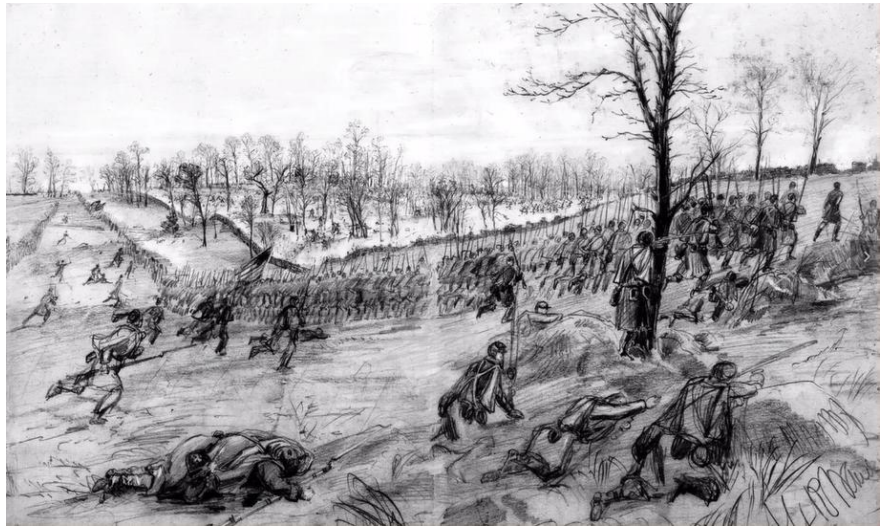
Newsletter of The James Creek Guards



"Clubs Are Trumps!"

This Month:

1. Civil War Murals In Cuba, Missouri
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I am always looking for newsletter content, so please forward your articles, book reviews, event summaries & photos, stories, etc.) to me for inclusion in a future edition of "The Sentinel". – Matthew Steger, editor

CIVIL WAR MURALS IN CUBA, MISSOURI

Cuba, Missouri is famous for its painted murals on numerous buildings around town. During my recent Route 66 – Part 2 trip, I stopped in Cuba and found many interesting murals including some related to the Civil War.







BATTLE OF THE HUZZAH SEPTEMBER 29, 1864



CONFEDERATES IN CUBA SEPTEMBER 29, 1864



RESCUE AT LEASBURG OCTOBER 1, 1864



Not CW-related but another of the many interesting murals in town is called “WWII Gold Star Boys” and shows a train car called the “Frisco” and shows the 6 men from Cuba, MO who died in WW2.

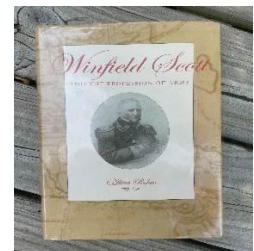
BOOK REVIEW: WINFIELD SCOTT AND THE PROFESSION OF ARMS

Author – Allen Peskin

Reviewed by Mike Espenshade

Hardback; 2003; The Kent State University Press; 265 pp text; 28 maps and pictures; 43 pp notes, 11 pp bibliography and 7 pp index. Bought at a used book store for \$5.

What does a book review about Scott have to do with the Civil War? After all, he resigned from being the Commander of the U.S. Army early during the war on November 2, 1861! Answer: a great deal, as this book suggests why and that you should learn from it.



You may know that he was a 74-year-old aged, physically incapacitated, leader at the outbreak of April, 1861 hostilities between North and South. Did you know that he directed the salvation of Wash DC during those dangerous early days by the correct and exacting deployment of the scarce Union forces so that the Lincoln Administration could be protected until Union forces arrive? This book will help you understand better how the US Army had been structured, as a result of Scott's life's work to build a professional army, so that the US government could so quickly administer a deployable fighting force from the 75,000 volunteers Lincoln called for that April. Note: this nationally-recognized talent did not just appear on the scene.

He became, during the War of 1812, long before most CW men were born, a publicized hero from his efforts, as a second-level commander during the Battles of Chippewa, Queenston Heights, among others. Add to that his brilliant peace-maintaining Indian campaigns in Florida, Tennessee and near present-day Seattle, WA. during the 1830-1850's. Never mind his brilliant 1847 Mexican Campaign (not withstanding that President Polk constantly undermined him because Scott was not a Democrat) which also helped him to remain forefront in the minds of the American public. He ran for nomination for Whig President in 1852.

All the while he consistently pressed hard for the establishment of a permanent army structured to leverage volunteer units to only augment, not constitute, national defense. Indeed, his decades-long understanding of the sectional strife between North and South stemming from his leadership service during the multiple Indian conflicts from 1832-1855 helped him to appreciate the difficulties involving the slave owning interests. This understanding led to

the “Anaconda Plan” he so expertly predicted in the 1850’s – to arrest the anticipated Southern resistance to Union Interests.

Was Winfield Scott (“old Fuss and Feathers”) an arrogant, self-possessed and overstated personality? It appears that he WAS these things throughout his career. But look at what he has done.

Read this well-done book!

ORIGINAL LETTER - 1862: GEORGE SCHEETZ TO COUSIN

From www.sharedandspared.com. Reprinted with permission.

This letter was written by George Scheetz (1840-1905), the son of John Scheetz (1818-1857) and Anna Catherine Sands (1815-1886) of Pottstown, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania.

George Scheetz enlisted on 21 April 1861 with Co. C, 4th Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers. Upon the expiration of his term, he re-enlisted as a corporal with Co. A, 53rd Pennsylvania Volunteers. It was while serving with the 53rd Pennsylvania that George wrote this letter, just after the Peninsula Campaign while bivouacked at Harrison’s Landing on the James River. Late in 1862, at the Battle at Fredericksburg, George was severely wounded and lay on the battlefield until being rescued at night. His wounds were severe enough to cause his discharge from the regiment on 10 March 1863 as a sergeant.

Prior to the battle at Gettysburg, George enlisted in the emergency regiment 26th Pennsylvania, serving as a 2d Sergeant. His regiment met in battle with General Ewell’s troops on June 26 and pushed back to Harrisburg. During all of this time, he was still suffering from his wound. Finally in the summer of 1864, he enlisted with the 197th Regiment—a 100-day unit—serving as 1st Sergeant.



Harrison Point Landing, Va.

July 6, 1862

Dear Cousin,

I received your letter and was very much pleased for to hear from you that you are all well as I am the same. I expect when the news reached Pottstown that the army had fallen back from Fair Oaks, it caused quite an excitement but it is for our own good for it is thought that the Rebels have a much stronger force there than what our Head Commander was aware of. Therefore we were obliged for to retreat until we have reinforcements or else be defeated in the attempt to take Richmond.

Before our rear guard left Fair Oaks, they burnt up all that we could not get along. We had to set fire to a large pile of crackers, sugar, meat, &c. which would have fed 75,000 men for 7 days. And [besides that], a large lot of clothing had to be burnt for to prevent them from falling into the wrong hands of the Rebels. ¹ But enough of this.

As you have heard of our regiment being in another battle, I will give you some little account of the fights. The first battle that took place in our rear on the retreat was about 1½ miles below Fair Oaks to the left of the Richmond and Yorktown Railroad. The enemy come close to us before any firing was done on any side. At length they made their appearance out of the woods, driving our skirmishers in to the reserve, when at once grape & canister was poured into them making them run in all directions. But they formed again and marched up in front of the 1st California Regt. [71st Pennsylvania] and opened fire. But the Californians fought them well for about a half an hour. After they marched out, our regiment took their place. We did not have much for to do for our Colonel J[ohn] R. Brooke commanded us not to fire until we were all ready for to give them a good volley.

At the word, “fire,” we opened and the effect of our Rifles made them skedaddle. But this wasn’t the only fight we were in for we had fighting to do for 3 days. In our retreat, the solid shot and shell came in and around us thick enough for awhile. I can not give you the correct or full account as I have no time but you can see it in the Pottstown paper by next week.

As in regard of sending a Rebel sword to your father, I will do [it] if I have any chance for to get hold of one. I seen plenty of rifles, swords, &c. of which the Rebs used against us but they were all stamped U. S. I want to get something of their own stamp. No more at present. I remain your cousin. Give my respects to all at home. Read this letter to my mother. — George Scheetz

N. B. The pen you sent in your letter comes in handy as I just was in need of one. — G. Scheetz

¹ George is probably referring to the large quantity of stores stockpiled at Savage's Station by McClellan's supply line that were destroyed by Union troops as they retreated to keep it from falling into the Rebels hands.

CEDAR CREEK 161 EVENT SUMMARY

I was the lone attendee from the 53rd to Cedar Creek this year; it was my first time doing this event. The National Regiment contingent was 3rd company and we portrayed the 9th NY Heavy Artillery. There was 1 battle scenario each day. The weather on Saturday during the battle seemed rather hot as we stood/sat on the hill in the sun east of the Heater House awaiting our part to enter the fray. Our overall commander was Lt. Col. Scot Buffington. Our company was led by Capt. Jimmy Thomas on Saturday and Capt. Mark McNierney on Sunday, although earlier that morning, he was promoted to Major on staff so 1st Sgt. Dave Bloom led our company during the battle on Sunday. Sunday's weather was much more agreeable thanks to slightly lower temperatures and a nice breeze. Overall, things went well. The only bad part was the poorly-planned parking situation. We were all parked in a large open field and, once the event ended afternoon Sunday, all vehicles had to leave through the same single location which was a huge bottleneck. The cars near the entrance kept squeezing their way in front of everyone else. Too bad the organizers didn't provide multiple egress locations so traffic could exit in a more reasonable manner. It took me well over an hour to exit once I was in line from my area of parking. Photos courtesy of Ira Seidel, Bob Smedley, and your author (Matt Steger).



Sunday morning before sunrise with the moon and Venus prominent in the eastern sky.



Our company street as viewed from my tent.



Saturday morning at sunrise.



Sunday afternoon as the NR awaits to enter the battle and defeat the Rebels on the very ground that the 9th NY Heavy Artillery (as infantry) whipped the Rebs 161 years ago.



UNIT ELECTION INFO

The annual meeting is scheduled for December 6th and will start promptly at 9:30AM. Mark Fasnacht has graciously agreed to host the meeting once again. Following the meeting, we'll have our traditional potluck lunch so please bring a dish to share. Treasury report, 2026 schedule, Quartermaster, annual banquet, NR business and elections will be on the agenda. **Please make every effort to attend.** Also, 2026 dues and banquet payments can be paid at the meeting. Dues are \$40 (\$10 of which covers your NR liability insurance) and the banquet is \$30/person. Unit dues and dinner/banquet can be paid with a single check at the meeting payable to "53rd PVT".

On the ballot for this year's election:

President: Alec Bohnenblust (Nominee)

NCOs: Sergeants- Matt Steger and Marc Benedict (Nominees)

Corporals- Mike Espenshade and Mike Brumbaugh (Nominees)

Directions to Mark Fasnacht's home: use the address below for the Kleinfeltersville Post Office. For those coming for the first time, Mark lives directly across the street from the Post office on the corner of Rt. 897 and Millbach Rd. Park in the parking lot of the white church across from Mark's home on Millbach Rd. **Park your vehicles in the back of their lot (not along side of the building).**

Kleinfeltersville Post Office
2657 Heidelberg Ave
Kleinfeltersville, PA 17039

UPCOMING EVENTS

15 November - The NR annual meeting and the Remembrance Day Parade will take place in Gettysburg. Please let Eric know ASAP if you plan on marching with your fellow 53rd PVI and NR parads. After the parade, we will plan a visit to the 53rd PVI monument to honor the original men of the 53rd.

6 December – Info is listed above. Please let Eric and Mark ASAP know if you're attending plus what you plan to bring, so we don't have multiple people bringing the same item for lunch.

THE CIVIL WAR MERCHANT

(if you have something for sale or are looking for something, email me to include it in a future edition of "The Sentinel")

For Sale –

1. *Hard Tack and Coffee or The Unwritten Story of Army Life*; by John D. Billings; originally published 1887, facsimile reprint of 1993; hard cover; excellent condition; 408 pgs.; 211 illustrations. A must-read for any new member. Email: oldsolger@juno.com \$5.00

2. Kerry Williard is handling the sale of Dave Swigert items for Dave's wife. Marc and I assembled an inventory list with approximate values. Some items remain. The list is current as of April 2025. Contact Kerry directly with all inquiries: shamokin71@aol.com (see the updated list below)

Quantity	Item Description	Detailed Description	Price
Uniform Clothing			
1	Trouser - Steel Blue each with suspendors	34 min waist/27" inseam-avg. condx and a little dirt w/ braces no watch pck	\$25.00
1	Dk Blue Vest Size 42	3 pockets - light wear	\$20.00
1	Colored Pattern Shirt	blue plaid with white china buttons - sun faded - good condx	\$10.00
1	White muslin Shirt	19" at shoulder 14" neck - very short in body length	\$5.00
1	White muslin Shirt	20" at shoulder 16" neck - very short in body length - cuffs are stained	\$5.00
1	Underpants - Night Pants - White	36" waist - knee stains - 25" inseam white muslin - rear repair	\$3.00
1	Lt Brown Scarf - Acrylic - Modern		\$1.00
1	Havelock - White - VG condx		\$2.00
1 pairs	Grey Wool Socks - Modern		\$2.00/pr
2	Hats - Union & Confederate for children		\$1.00
Accoutrements			
1	Scabbord - Late war 7 Rivet		\$15.00
1	Gum Blanket	some cracking with oversized grommets	\$20.00
1	Grey Smooth Face Canteen - Leather Sling Satinette Cover w/ Corded Stopper		\$20.00
1	Haversack - Tarred Black - Brittle Strap w/opwn seam		\$5.00
1	Haversack - Tarred Black w/Liner- Paint peeling Holes @ Strap Connection		\$10.00
1	Grey Smooth Face Canteen - Leather Sling Satinette Cover w/ Corded Stopper		\$20.00
Misc Items			
1 can	sno-seal (half full)		\$1.00
1	Wood Mirror - Haversack filler	sliding cover	\$3.00
1	Wood Comb - Haversack filler		\$1.00
1	Wooden button board		\$1.00
2	Coin Purses - Made from Tic Material		\$1.00/ea
1	Bag with Coffee	brown coffee	\$1.00/ea
2	Soap Bar		\$1.00/ea
1	box rifle cleaning kit	pads, steel wool, rags, etc	\$5.00
1 Pair	shoe tree		\$3.00
1	Green Army Duffle Bag		\$3.00
1	drawers for use as patches		\$1.00

2025 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

~~18 Jan. Holiday Party Dobbin House, Gettysburg~~
~~1 Feb. Winter Drill Landis Valley [53rd MAX EFFORT]~~
~~15 Feb. Cartridge Rolling Party [53rd MAX EFFORT]~~
~~22-23 Feb. NR School of Instruction Gettysburg~~
~~14-16 March 160th Bentonville (NC)~~
~~4-6 April 160th Sailor's Creek (VA) *~~
~~26-27 April Ft. McHenry Drill~~
~~3 May POSA Living History Robeson, PA~~
~~17 May Lancaster Cemetery Flag in Event~~
~~26 May Hummelstown Memorial Day Parade [53rd MAX EFFORT]~~
~~7-8 June Manassas (ELF Event) [NEW DATE!]~~
~~19-20 July Landis Valley [53rd MAX EFFORT]~~
~~9-10 August Cedar Mountain *~~



(Schedule continued)

~~13 Sept. - Antietam Living History [53rd MAX EFFORT]~~

~~18-19 Oct. - 161st Cedar Creek - Middletown, VA~~

15 Nov. - Remembrance Day - NR Annual Meeting and Parade *

6 Dec. - Annual Unit Meeting

17 Jan. - Annual Party/Banquet

**NR max effort events*

For updated event info and other news, please check the Facebook pages of the 53rd PVI and the National Regiment (links below) and check your email on a regular basis.

53rd PVI Contacts

President: Eric Ford (reenactor53@gmail.com)

Vice President: Jacob Dicks (jdwarrior@yahoo.com)

Treasurer/Secretary: Matthew Steger (n3ntj@outlook.com)

Newsletter Editor: Matthew Steger (n3ntj@outlook.com)

Webmasters: Steve Dillon (steve@gofoxpro.com) and Matthew Steger (n3ntj@outlook.com)

53rd PVI Website: <http://www.53rdpvi.org>

2024 Field Officers - Sergeants: Matthew Steger (1st Sgt.) & Marc Benedict

Corporals: Mike Espenshade & Michael Brumbaugh

53rd PVI Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/53rdPVI>

National Regiment Website: <https://www.thenationalregiment.com>

National Regiment Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/842904089142263>

