

Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia

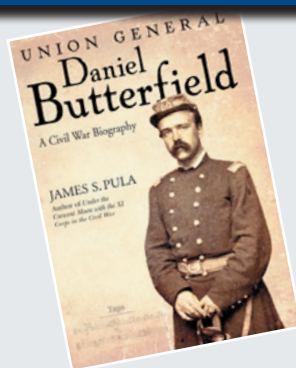
January 9, 2024

The Civil War: April 12, 1861 - August 20, 1866

“Union General Daniel Butterfield: A Civil War Biography”



James S. Pula



This book explores the complex legacy of Union General Daniel Butterfield, from his battlefield heroics and Medal of Honor to controversies and innovations that shaped the Civil War. James S. Pula unravels this enigmatic figure's life in this meticulously researched and long-awaited biography.

Dan Butterfield played a pivotal role during the Civil War. He led troops in the field at the brigade, division, and corps level, wrote an 1862 Army field manual, was awarded a Medal of Honor, composed “Taps,” and served as the chief-of-staff for Joe Hooker in the Army of the Potomac. He introduced a custom that remains in the U.S. Army today:

the use of a distinctive hat or shoulder patch to denote the soldier's unit. Butterfield was also controversial, not well-liked by some, and tainted by politics. Award-winning author James S. Pula unspools fact from fiction to offer the first detailed and long overdue treatment of the man and the officer in Union General Daniel Butterfield: A Civil War Biography.

James S. Pula is a professor of History Emeritus at Purdue University Northwest and the former editor-in-chief of Gettysburg Magazine. Dr. Pula is the author or editor of more than two dozen books including *Under the Crescent Moon with the Eleventh Corps in the Civil War* (winner of the U. S. Army Historical Foundation Distinguished Writing Award); *The Civil War from Its Origins to Reconstruction*; *The 117th New York Infantry in the Civil War: A History and Roster*; *For Liberty and Justice: A Biography of Brig. Gen. Włodzimierz B. Krzyżanowski*; and *The Sigel Regiment: A History of the 26th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, 1862-1865* (winner of the Gambrinus Prize in History from the Milwaukee County Historical Society).

Notes from the President

The torch has been passed. For sixteen years OBCWRT has thrived under Dr Rich's energetic leadership. During those years we have moved twice, expanded membership, extended outreach, survived a pandemic, made valuable contributions to the history community, grew stronger and basically kept on truck'n to make a respected name in the Delaware Valley and Midlantic Civil War Communities. A big thank you to all for all the hard work but especially to **Rich** and **Kathy** who made the last few years truly superb. Welcome to our new members and the group of fresh talent in Leadership.

Meeting Notice

Join us at 7:15 PM on Thursday, January 9, "The January and February meetings will be Zoom only. We will not gather at the Rohrer Center, and will also not have a pre-meeting dinner at the diner. Watch for the usual meeting reminders and Zoom links in your email. We will return to the Rohrer Center in March."

"Members, and Friends of the Roundtable who receive our email communications, will automatically receive the Zoom link and do not need to request it"

Please email oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net at least 24 hours prior to request Zoom access.

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OBCWRT Awards



The Society For Women and the Civil War for Service to the Society presented to OBCWRT

Civil War Roundtable Congress The Wallace L. Rueckel Innovation Award presented to OBCWRT (2022)

American Battlefield Trust for 25 Year Service to the Trust presented to OBCWRT

Civil War Roundtable Congress Sustainability Challenge presented to OBCWRT (2023)

Kevin M. Hale Award for best Historical Newsletter in New Jersey (2017, 2022)



Paul Prentiss
President, OBCWRT

Welcome **Calvin Kinsel**, Vice President; **Anita Schwartz**, Secretary and **James Heenehan**, **Alex Glisson** and **Barney Yetter** to our Board of Trustees. Don't worry, the brain trust is still with us, **Frank Barletta** is staying on as Acting Treasurer until a replacement can be found; **Dave Gilson**, programs; **Amy** and **Dan Hummel**, membership; **Mike Bassett**, attendance; **Pete Wood**, Website/IT and **Rich Jankowski** will fill the long vacant Past President position. Please give them your support to continue to improve our Round Table. Thank you to all who were prompt in submitting your 2025 dues. Look for Frank's message if you have not done so yet to support our programs this year.

Hope everyone had an enjoyable Holiday Season; we look forward to hearing your stories. The

December social event was an enjoyable time for all who attended in-person and on-line. After a brief business session including the election and awarding membership pins and announcements, the fellowship and refreshments were enjoyed by those gathered at the Rohrer Center in Cherry Hill. Five members won a prize including two online participants. Our next social gathering will be the annual picnic. We need your input to decide if it will be a Spring or Fall event.

Appreciate the members who represented our round table at Wreaths Across America and the General Meade Birthday celebration. We are waiting to receive word of a grant award from Camden County to cover some of our administrative costs. Thank you to the Board for their work in getting this done. The grant will allow our treasury to expand outreach and projects.

Speaking of expansion, my 2025 goal is to get more members personally involved in the workings of our OBCWRT. Cal and I have identified many small, easy tasks that would take less than 2 hours a month to execute. Interested? More information will be provided at the meeting and the February newsletter. Our 50th anniversary is just around the corner, planning for the celebration is in the initial stage. Let us know how you think we should commemorate it and how you will be involved in the planning and execution.

Visit the New Jersey History Day website <https://docs.google.com/.../1FAIpQLScNLuMtGIMeg4.../view> form to register to be a judge at Rutgers Camden for the Regional Competition on February 22nd. This month James Pula will visit on Zoom to help us unravel the complex legacy of Union General Daniel Butterfield, from his battlefield heroics and Medal of Honor to controversies and innovations that shaped the Civil War.

Stay warm and see you virtually on the 9th.
REMEMBER our January and February meetings will be conducted on Zoom.

Member Profile - Jim Countryman

Kim Weaver
OBCWRT Member

Jim Countryman had only a passing interest in history when he watched filmmaker Ken Burns' epic documentary "The Civil War." By its end, he had become hooked on the conflict.

As his curiosity grew, so did his pile of books. "My first book after the Burns series was "Battle Cry of Freedom" by James McPherson. I recently read Peter Carmichael's "The War for the Common Soldier" and it re-piqued my interest in the plight of the average foot soldier, both North and South. Now I have a cue of books and diaries on this topic to reread, and I am looking for more unread publications on the topic to consume." Jim holds specific interests related to the Civil War, but they seem to change every time he

Continued from page 2 - "Member Profile"

learns something new. He has come to one conclusion about himself. "The more I learn, the more I realize I don't know. Consequently, I always want to learn more."



Jim Countryman

Jim's desire to educate himself about the Civil War has led him to many battle sites, including Glorieta Pass, on the Santa Fe Trail between the Pecos River and Santa Fe, New Mexico. Jim visited the area with his brother-in-law and Colorado resident Barney Yetter, who has since become a member of Old Baldy. "Once on the battlefield, we walked the paths through the hills and valleys. The elevation at Glorieta Pass is 7,500 feet so there was some heavy breathing for a sea-level denizen like myself."

Born September 18, 1959, Jim was raised in Palmyra, New Jersey, in a neighborhood full of kids who liked playing pick-up sports and fishing the Delaware. Young Jim wanted to be a professional baseball player; national park ranger was Plan B. In time, Jim graduated from Holy Cross High School in Delran, New Jersey, class of 1977, and then from Rutgers University-Camden in 1982 with a degree in business administration.

Considering the lines of work Jim was attracted to as a kid, facilities management would become his calling. The final 18 years of his career — he retired in 2018 — Jim was facilities director at the Burlington City School District. He was closely involved with the construction of a new intermediate school, expansion and renovation of the high school, and over \$90 million of construction in total. "This is my career highlight."

Jim still lives in Palmyra. He and his wife of 38 years, Joanne, have three boys, and their first grandchild was born in January 2023. Joanne is an award-winning homebrewer and Jim, who likes visiting small breweries around South Jersey and the Philadelphia area, is her official taste tester. He is a South Jersey Fermentation Club and New Jersey Craft Beer Association member.

Like numerous Old Baldy joiners, Jim, a member for over five years, heard of the group on his first visit to the G.A.R. Museum and Library in Frankford. "A gentleman there told me about Old Baldy. I looked up the group on the internet and here I am." Jim is a member of the American Battlefield Trust and a paid member of the G.A.R. Museum and Library in Philadelphia.

Dues Renewal...

The 2025 Membership Dues are now being collected. Dues remain the same, \$25.00 Individual Membership and \$35.00 Family Membership.

Remember they can now be paid online. Just visit our Web Page, click on, "Membership" on the top bar, which will take you to the next page. Choose a payment method, visa, etc., and click "Buy Now". This will take you to the submission page, complete form and click on, "Pay Now". Done

As always, if you prefer to pay by check, bring it to any meeting or send to: 16 Heather Drive, Marlton, NJ, 08053.

Should you have any questions, please contact Paul at 609-732-3930 or theprentissfamily@verizon.net

Today in Civil War History

1861 Thursday, January 9

Western Theater

Although neither Halleck nor Buell appear to have responded to the

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president's request that the Union should advance in the west, there is some movement in Kentucky, with Colonel James A. Garfield's Union force, about 2200 strong, and Humphrey Marshall's Confederates approaching each other. At the same time, Grant begins his operation against Columbus. Under the immediate command of General John A. McClernand, 1000 Illinois cavalry cross the Ohio and secure the approaches from Columbus.

Trans-Mississippi

A skirmish is reported at Columbus, Missouri.

1863 Friday, January 9

Western Theater

There is a skirmish at Ripley, Tennessee in which 46 Confederates are captured. Elsewhere, Confederate General Joseph Wheeler leads a six-day raid into Federal-controlled territory, attacking Mill Creek, Harpeth Shoals, and Ashland.

1864 Saturday, January 9

Trans-Mississippi

Arkansas is in the iron grip of winter. All operations give way to the daily struggle to stay warm and find something to eat. The hostile armies are ranged along the line of the Arkansas River. Confederate general Kirby Smith now has one of the most independent commands of the war; with the Mississippi controlled by the Union, southern Arkansas is isolated from the rest of the Confederacy.

1865 Monday, January 9

The North

The influential Democrat Moses Odell of New York changes his mind and supports the Thirteenth Amendment as the debate continues.

The South

The Constitutional Convention of Tennessee adopts an amendment abolishing slavery.

Wreaths Across America



Flat Old Baldy joined members to place handcrafted wreaths on the graves of veterans at the Beverly National Cemetery during Wreaths Across America. The round table purchases wreaths for the Beverly Cemetery and members volunteer to place them. This annual event occurs at over 4000 cemeteries across the nation on the second Saturday in December. Volunteers place

the donated wreaths to recognize the deceased veterans. The program's National sponsors include Walmart, Jersey Mikes, Penske, and Mission BBQ. The cemetery section decorated this year included many World War II veterans. The volunteers were from various organizations in South Jersey covering a range of ages. A brief ceremony was held before the wreaths were

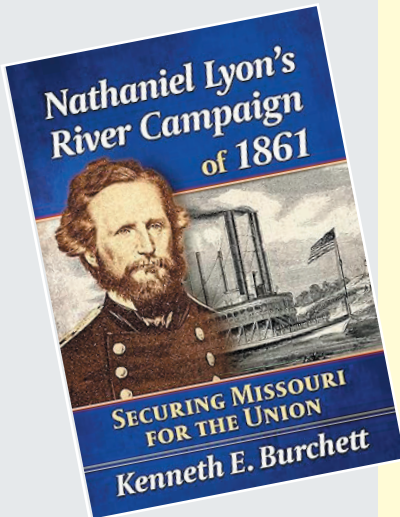


placed on the graves. This included a wreath for the fallen members of each Service, comments by local leaders, and a representative of the Military. FOB thanks those who served and invites you to plan on volunteering next December.



American Civil War Books (to be published January 2025)

Compiled by Kim Weaver
OBCWRT Member



Nathaniel Lyon's River Campaign of 1861: Securing Missouri for the Union

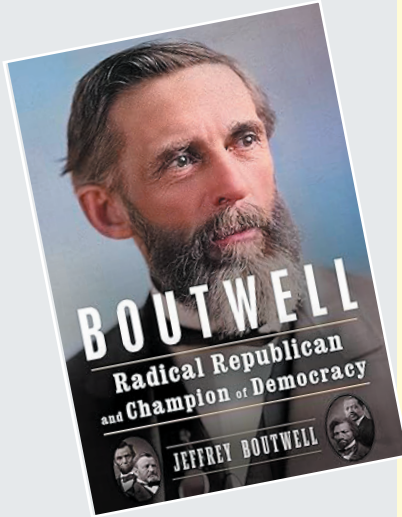
by Kenneth E. Burchett/McFarland & Co, Inc., Publishers

About: On May 10, 1861, Captain Nathaniel Lyon marched out of the federal arsenal at St. Louis at the head of 7,000 Union Regulars and pro-Union volunteers to break up a Missouri State Militia encampment at Camp Jackson. Hostilities erupted and several civilians and soldiers died when opposing forces opened fire on each other. The unfolding of events afterward drove previously undecided Missourians to join either the Union or Confederate side. Receiving near dictatorial authority from the state legislature, Governor Claiborne Fox Jackson raised a Missouri State Guard force to "protect the State from invaders." The War began in Missouri at the taking of Camp Jackson, and this book presents the history and context of this pivotal Civil War event. Contemporary illustrations provide detail to this complicated narrative, and care is taken to present these events in the context of the vibrant character and lifestyles of the people who participated.

Boutwell: Radical Republican and Champion of Democracy

by Jeffrey Boutwell/W.W. Norton & Company

About: During his seven-decade career in public life, George Sewall Boutwell sought to "redeem America's promise" of racial equality, economic equity, and the principled use of American power abroad. From 1840 to 1905, Boutwell was at the center of efforts to abolish slavery, establish the Republican Party, assist President Lincoln in funding the Union war effort, facilitate Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, impeach President Andrew Johnson,



and frame and enact the Fourteenth and Fifteenth civil rights amendments. He helped lay the foundations of the modern American economy with President Grant, investigated white terrorism in Mississippi in the 1870s, and opposed American imperialism following the Spanish-American War alongside Andrew Carnegie, Mark Twain, and Booker T. Washington. The son of a Massachusetts farming family of modest means, George Boutwell would do battle during his career with American political royalty, including Henry Cabot Lodge and Teddy Roosevelt.

Righteous Strife: How Warring Religious Nationalists Forged Lincoln's Union

by Richard Carwardine/Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group

Somewhere Toward Freedom: Sherman's March and the Story of America's Largest Emancipation

by Bennett Parten/Simon & Schuster

More Important Than Good Generals: Junior Officers in the Army of the Tennessee

by Jonathan Engel/Kent State University Press

A Grand Opening Squandered: The Battle for Petersburg, June 6-18, 1864
(Emerging Civil War Series)

by Sean Michael Chick/Savas Beatie

In the Thickest of the Fray: Mississippians At Gettysburg In Their Own Words

by Joseph L. Owen and J. Douglas Ashton/Fox Run Publishing

Punish Treason, Reward Loyalty: The Forgotten Goals of Constitutional Reform after the Civil War

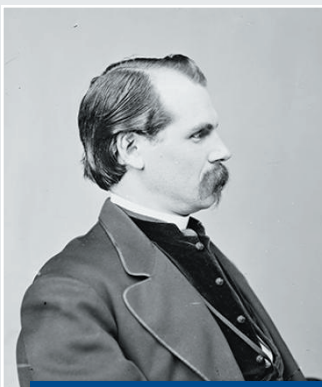
by Mark A. Graber/University Press of Kansas

Decisions of the Red River Campaign: The Fifteen Critical Decisions That Defined the Operation
(Command Decisions in America's Civil War)

by Michael S. Lang/University of Tennessee Press

The First Confederate Soldier: George Washington Lee and Civil War Atlanta

by Robert Scott Davis/McFarland & Co, Inc., Publishers



***Chief Aeronaut, USA
Thaddeus S. Lowe***

***A series of Articles from a
Publication of the
Central Intelligence Agency***

Intelligence in the Civil War

Intelligence's New Tools

Thaddeus S. Lowe, a 29-year-old balloon enthusiast, went up about 500 feet on June 18, 1861, looked down upon Washington, and, via a cable linking his balloon gondola to the War Department, telegraphed a message to President Lincoln: "The city, with its girdle of encampments, presents a superb scene...." It was the first wartime air-to-ground communication ever recorded in America. By linking the balloon to the telegraph, Lowe transformed what had been a novel contraption at county fairs into a tool for a new kind of intelligence gathering: real-time aerial reconnaissance.

The demonstration had been arranged, not by military officers, but by Joseph Henry, first Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, and an enthusiastic



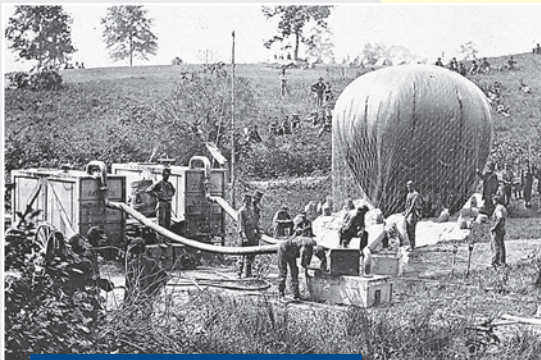
The map of the Richmond area

supporter of the use of balloons in war. With a note introducing Lowe, Lincoln nudged Lieutenant General Winfield Scott, commander-in-chief of the U.S. Army. The army soon accepted the new tool, forming the U.S. Army Balloon Corps. In March 1862, when Major General George B. McClellan began his campaign up the Virginia peninsula, Thaddeus Lowe, bearing the title Chief Aeronaut, went along. He had three balloons and what he described as an "aeronautic train, consisting of four army wagons and two gas generators."

At 3 o'clock one morning, Lowe went up and stayed aloft until daybreak, "observing the camp-fires and noting the movements of the enemy" around Yorktown. Brigadier General Fitz John Porter went up next, getting, from 1,000 feet, an unprecedented view of an American battlefield. As soon as he landed, Porter rounded up generals and mapmakers and drew up maps showing the Confederates' fortifications, based on what he and Lowe had seen while aloft.

Lowe made frequent flights to obtain tactical intelligence. On June 14, 1862, for instance, he went aloft near Richmond carrying a map on which he noted, in red, "some of the most important earth works seen this morning"

The map had been prepared by John C. Babcock and "E.J. Allen S.S.U.S"—the cover name of Allan Pinkerton. The initials stand for "Secret Service, United States," Pinkerton's name for the organization he formed while working for McClellan.



Union Balloon System

As the Union began to make routine use of the new surveillance system, the Confederates reacted. They shot cannons at the balloons, but artillery, aimed by formulas involving trajectory from cannon to land target, could not easily become anti-aircraft guns. Confederate artillery officers soon learned that when they shot their guns, they became targets of fire directed by Union artillery spotters in the balloons.

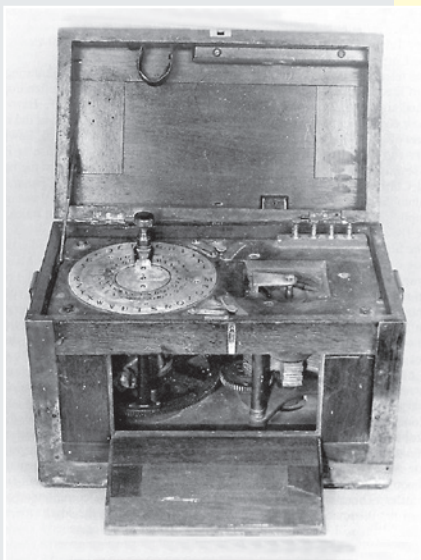
Then, in the age-old rhythm of intelligence, an espionage innovation produced a counter-innovation: The Confederates started camouflaging encampments and blacking out their camps after learning that Union balloonists counted campfires for estimates of troop strength. To fool daytime observers, Confederates painted logs black and arranged them to look like cannons jutting from defenses. They were dubbed "Quaker guns" and "wooden ordnance."

The Confederates raised balloons a few times. But the South did not have adequate equipment for producing large amounts of hydrogen gas or rubber. The first Confederate balloon was made of varnish-covered cotton and was filled with hot air. An observer drew a map of Union positions near Yorktown, but had trouble controlling the balloon. The next Confederate balloon was made of colorful swaths of silk (inspiring the legend that the balloon's fabric consisted of ball gowns donated by patriotic Southern belles). Filled at Richmond's municipal gas works, the balloon was tethered to a locomotive, which took it to an observation site. The balloon later was moved by a tugboat and taken down the James River. The tug ran aground, and Union troops captured the balloon.

Both sides soon gave up the use of balloons: the South because of the lack of resources, and the North primarily because Lowe and his balloons could not find a bureaucratic niche in the U.S. Army. Lowe resigned in May 1863, and the U.S. Army Balloon Corps was disbanded soon after.

The telegraph, however, went to war and stayed in the war. The Union particularly saw the value of the telegraph and used it as the key component in what would be the first modern military communication system. Field telegraph units linked commands and were connected to hilltop signalers who sent messages by flags in daylight and by torches at night.

For most of the war, Union Army telegraphic messages were handled by the civilian-staffed U.S. Military Telegraph (USMT), which connected battlefields with far-flung generals and with the War Department in Washington. On a



Beardslee Telegraph



typical day, the USMT operators handled 4,500 telegrams, some more than 1,000 words long. During operations at Fort Monroe, on the Virginia peninsula, the terrestrial network even had an underwater branch that carried messages across Chesapeake Bay to a land connection at Wilmington, Delaware. The underwater link was a recycled, 25-milelong segment of the original Atlantic Cable, which had briefly connected America and Britain in 1858.

The Confederacy also used the telegraph for tactical communications in the field and for messages between Richmond and military commands. Like the Union telegraphers, Southerner operators usually encrypted messages. The Confederates' preferred encryption system was known as the Vigenere substitution cipher, named after Blaise de Vigenere, the 16th-century French diplomat who developed it. The encipherment depended upon the use of a keyword used to set up a matrix in which a letter acquired a different equivalent each time it was used in a message. Union codebreakers cracked the code because Confederates usually employed only a few keywords and encrypted only important words.

For example, in a warning message sent to a general by President Jefferson Davis, the text read: "By this you may effect O-TPGGEXVK above that part-HJOPGKWMCT-patrolled..." The Union cryptanalyst, beginning with guesses, deciphered the first jumble of word as a crossing and the second as the river (words were often encrypted without spaces between them). Knowing the basic Vigenere system, he then worked out the keyword as Complete Victory, and with this, he could break subsequent messages until the keyword was changed. Keyword changes, however, did not guarantee message security; for by knowing that a keyword had to be 15 letters long, Union cryptanalysts had a solid clue when they tried to break a message. (Union cryptanalysts also helped to break up a Confederate counterfeiting ring based in New York City.)



The cipher system, which gave Confederate telegraph operators strings of letters combined with plaintext, impaired message transmission. The operators, who had no idea what they were sending, often made mistakes. They sometimes garbled messages so thoroughly that only fragments reached decrypting officers.



Both sides learned to tap telegraph lines. Federal operators tapped General Albert Sidney Johnston's headquarters in Bowling Green, Kentucky and were undetected for a month when they tapped the Confederate line between Chattanooga and Knoxville. Most message intercepts, however, came not through taps, but via the capture of enemy telegraph stations. Once in control of a station, the captors could not only intercept messages, but also send false ones. Robert

E. Lee found telegraphing so untrustworthy that he ordered his officers to "send no dispatches by telegraph relative to ... movements, or they will become known." Federal telegraphers scrambled words in prearranged patterns, making Union messages relatively secure. (The technique was known as a "routing code.")

Much battlefield signaling involved flags and torches rather than telegraph operators. The wig-wag system, as it was known, was developed by a U.S. Army officer, Major Albert James Myer. While he was a medical officer in the 1850s, Myer used his knowledge of sign language to develop the wig-wag's two-part numerical code. A motion of a flag or torch to the left indicated 1, to the right, 2. Each letter of the alphabet was represented by a combination of lefts and rights. As Myer pointed out in his manual, once a "signalist" learned the system, he could use "a handkerchief or hat held in the hand above the head ... or any white or light cloth tied to a gun."



Major, USA
Albert James Myer

One of the young officers who had worked with Myer was Lieutenant Edward Porter Alexander. When the war began, Myer was still in the U.S. Army, and



**Major, CSA
William Norris**



**Lieutenant, CSA
Edward Porter Alexander**



**Governor Virginia
John Letcher**

Alexander was about to become a captain in the Confederate Army.

At Manassas in July 1861, Myer, attached to a balloon unit, did not have a chance to put his system in operation. But Alexander did, setting up a wig-wag station on a height still called Signal Hill. Alexander, who spotted the glint of an artillery piece and signaled a crucial Union maneuver, helped the Confederates win the battle—thanks to Myer.

Because both North and South used essentially the same wig-wag system, the signal principles were mutually understood. By training powerful telescopes on rival signal stations, each side could intercept the other's messages and then try to decrypt them. Once, Confederate signal operators intercepted a message that read, "Send me a copy of Rebel Code immediately, if you have one in your possession." The Confederates quickly changed their codes. Intercepting and decrypting went on continually. During a campaign around Charleston, the Confederates had 76 signalists at work, twelve of them assigned to reading enemy traffic.

Myer developed a cipher disk, as did the Confederates. The disks were used for important messages. The transmitting station initiated the message by wig-wagging the cipher combination that he would use. The receiving operator received the enciphered message, then deciphered it with the cipher device, which typically consisted of two concentric disks. Numbers on the outer disk indicated flag wags (2122, say, for right, left, right, right). These numbers aligned with letters on the inner ring.

The idea of signaling with flags inspired the sending of other visual messages. Reports of "clothesline" and "window-shade" codes made Confederate and Union officers suspicious of ordinary objects for their possible covert meanings. One documented clothesline code showed whether Confederate forces had withdrawn (empty clothesline) or were being reinforced (three pieces hung out).

In terms of espionage, the signal units of the two sides differed considerably. For the Union, signal intelligence was kept separate from the running of agents

Intelligence Collection - The South

For Confederates planning espionage against the North, Washington looked like an ideal site: a city 60 miles south of the Mason-Dixon Line, adjacent to slave-holding states, and full of Southern sympathizers. Many of them were in Congress or in the federal bureaucracy, and had access to valuable intelligence. All recruiters had to do was find among them the men and women who would have the courage and the skill to act as reliable agents.

The earliest known recruiter was Governor John Letcher of Virginia, who laid the foundation for Confederate espionage work in Washington. Virginia seceded from the Union on April 17, 1861, but did not join the Confederacy until May. During the interval, Letcher saw his state as an independent foe of the Union and began his own defense by forming an army and setting up a spy net in his foe's capital. He knew Washington well: as a member of Congress from 1853 to 1859 and he had been active in the city's social life.

One of the best-known members of that society was Rose O'Neal Greenhow, a vivacious 44-year-old widow, who partied and dined with Washington's elite. Openly pro-South, she had wept in the Senate Gallery on January 21, 1861, when Jefferson Davis, one of her many influential friends, said farewell to the Senate and went off to lead the Confederacy.

Letcher got his spy nest started by telling Thomas Jordan, a Virginia-born West Point graduate, to recruit Greenhow. Jordan, who had served in the Seminole Indian War and the Mexican War, was stationed in Washington. Sometime in the spring of 1861, while still a U.S. Army officer, he called on Greenhow and asked her to be an agent. (He soon left Washington and became a lieutenant colonel in the Virginia Provisional Army.)

Greenhow accepted the mission enthusiastically, using her knowledge of Washington's ways to get intelligence useful for the South. Major William E. Doster, the provost marshal who provided security for Washington,



Rose Greenhow

later called her “formidable,” an agent with “masterly skill,” who bestowed on the Confederacy “her knowledge of all the forces which reigned at the Capitol.” Greenhow’s support of secessionists did not turn away her anti-slavery admirers, who included Senator Henry Wilson of Massachusetts, chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs (and future vice president to President Ulysses S. Grant). Wilson was identified as the author of love letters signed H; one letter said that “spies are put upon me but I will try to elude them tonight and once more have a happy hour in spite of fate.” Another gentleman caller was a member of Wilson’s committee, Senator Joseph Lane of Oregon, who signed his importuning letters to her. Another friend, Colonel Erasmus D. Keyes, General Winfield Scott’s military secretary, later said that she had “tried to persuade me not to take part in the war.”

Jordan instructed Greenhow in a simple, 26-symbol cipher and told her to use his cover name, Thomas John Rayford, for sending him reports. In her memoir about her espionage, she said that she sometimes used a word code. As an example, she told of a letter that said, “Tell Aunt Sally that I have some old shoes for the children, and I wish her to send one down town to take them, and to let me know whether she has found any charitable person to help her take care of them.” What the letter actually meant was: “I have some important information to send across the river, and wish a messenger immediately. Have you any means of getting reliable information?”

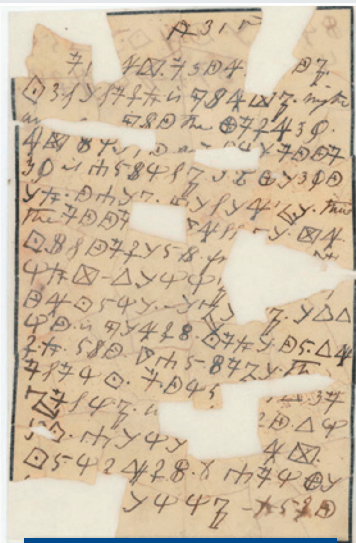
The delivery of the ciphered reports to Jordan involved an ever-changing “Secret Line,” the name for the system used to get letters, intelligence reports, and other documents across the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers and into the hands of Confederate officers and officials. For Greenhow, the Secret Line began with a courier to whom she would entrust her reports. He or she would then hand these off to the next link in the chain of men and women who slipped in and out of taverns, farms, and waterfront docks along routes that connected Baltimore and Washington to the Confederacy.

One of Greenhow’s reports, she later said, had helped the South win the first major battle of the war at Bull Run Creek on the road to Manassas, Virginia, on July 21, 1861. Modern historians discount her role, attributing the Confederate victory to tactics and errors that produced a Union rout. But P.G.T. Beauregard, the victorious general, gallantly gave her credit for alerting him to the size of the federal force advancing toward Manassas. He said that an enciphered report from her had been delivered to a Confederate picket outpost and quickly passed on to him and on to Jefferson Davis—with an added request for reinforcements.

The carrier of the report was Betty Duvall, a young friend of Greenhow. Duvall, dressed in a farm woman’s clothes and driving a cart, passed through the Union sentinels on the Chain Bridge across the Potomac in Washington, and stopped at a Virginia safe house, where she mounted a horse and rode to the outpost, near Fairfax County Courthouse. She told the officer in charge that she had an urgent message for Beauregard. “Upon my announcing that I would have it faithfully forwarded at once,” the officer later said, “she took out her tucking comb and let fall the longest and most beautiful roll of hair I have ever seen. She took then from the back of her head, where it had been safely tied, a small package, not larger than a silver dollar, sewed up in silk.” Within was the message for Beauregard.

On the advance toward Manassas, the Union troops had overrun the Fairfax outpost and found papers and maps that incriminated Greenhow. Her grand home, not far from the White House, was put under surveillance by Allan Pinkerton, who had been placed in command of the Union Army’s Division of the Potomac after the debacle at Bull Run. “I secured a house in Washington,” Pinkerton later wrote, “and gathered around me a number of resolute, trustworthy men and discreet women.”

Pinkerton’s first major assignment was the capture of Rose Greenhow. One rainy night, wanting to peek into her parlor, he went to a high window, removed his boots, and stood on the shoulders of two operatives, “prepared to take notes of what transpired.” A man had entered—and Pinkerton recognized him as an officer assigned to the provost marshal’s office.



Sample of a Greenhouse Cipher



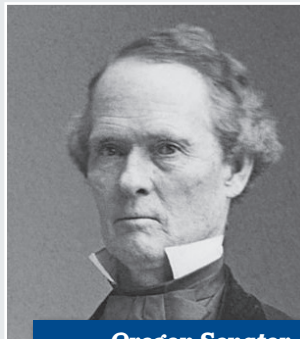
Betty Duvall



Allen Pinkerton



**Mass Senator
Henry Wilson**



**Oregon Senator
Joseph Lane**



Coleman Scouts

"Just at that moment I again received a warning from my supporters, and hastily jumping to the ground, we hid ourselves until the pedestrians had passed out of sight and hearing." He climbed back on the men's shoulders and saw the officer show Greenhow a map. The two left the room for more than an hour, returned "arm in arm," and, with "a whispered good-night and something that sounded very much like a kiss," the officer left.

Pinkerton followed the officer to a building he did not recognize. Suddenly, four soldiers with fixed bayonets grabbed Pinkerton—and arrested him on the officer's order. Pinkerton was soon released and the captain arrested. The captain, his career ruined, died sometime later, reportedly a suicide.

A week later, Pinkerton arrested Greenhow at her home and seized documents and personal letters that linked her to Senators Wilson and Lane, along with many other well-known Washingtonians. She was charged with "being a spy in the interest of the rebels and furnishing the insurgent generals with important information relative to the movements of the Union forces." For ten months, she and several female friends were held in her home. Because she kept attempting to smuggle out messages, she was put in the Old Capitol Prison (now the site of the United States Supreme Court Building). She was released in June 1862 and sent through federal and Confederate lines to Richmond. After Greenhow's capture, the cipher that Jordan had devised apparently was used for deceptive messages sent by Union officers. Writing about the cipher to Confederate Secretary of War Judah P. Benjamin, Jordan said, "Being my first attempt, and hastily devised, it may be deciphered by any expert, as I found after use of it for a time."

The Confederates operated at least two other intelligence networks in Washington, both run by cavalymen and probably set up by the Secret Service Bureau, a clandestine unit within the Confederacy's Signal Corps. The bureau, a part of the Confederate War Department in Richmond, was commanded by Major William Norris, a former Baltimore lawyer. The Signal Corps ran the army's semaphore service while the Secret Service Bureau oversaw a communications network whose missions included the running of agents to and from Union territory and the forwarding of messages from Confederate officials in Richmond to contacts in Canada and Europe.

One of the bureau's most important tasks was the obtaining of open-source material, especially newspapers, from the North, primarily through sympathizers in Maryland, including postmasters. The newspapers provided information—and, occasionally, agents' messages hidden in personal columns.

The delivery system—sometimes called "our Government route"—boldly relied on the U.S. mail along part of the way. One "mail agent," a Marylander who lived near Washington, regularly drove his cart there, collected South-bound documents from network members, then hid the mail in manure that he picked up for his garden. Typically, an agent in Union territory wrote a letter, probably in cipher, addressed it to a specific person, such as "Secretary of War, Richmond, Va.," and placed it in an envelope, which was then sealed and placed inside a second envelope. A U.S. stamp was put on that envelope, which was addressed to a collaborator, usually in Maryland. He or she would then continue the letter on its way by handing it to the first of a relay of mail agents for delivery to "signal camps" in Virginia.

Confederate mail supervisors established several accommodation addresses (as they would be called today) so that a suspiciously large amount of mail did not get delivered to one recipient. The system depended mostly on volunteers, some of whom made the enterprise profitable by adding smuggling to their espionage.

There were also riverside farms where Southern sympathizers maintained simple signal systems. One of the signalers was 24-year-old Mary Watson, who hung a black dress or shawl from a dormer window to warn boatmen across the river that Union troops were near.

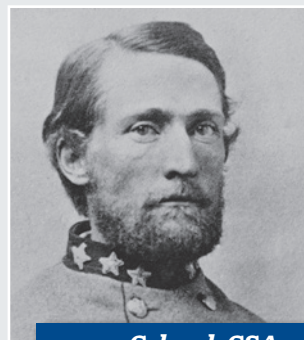
Union officers assigned to investigating the rebel special delivery operation occasionally made arrests of mail agents, but the mail kept going through. Major General William T. Sherman was particularly incensed by the regular delivery of northern newspapers. Newspaper correspondents, he



Major General, CSA
James Ewell Brown "Jeb" Stuart



Confederate Soldier
Sam Davis



Colonel, CSA
John S. Mosby



Colonel, USA
George H. Sharpe

fumed, "should be treated as spies...and are worth a hundred thousand men to the enemy." Yet, like other commanders on both sides, he planted false information in newspapers, well knowing that the enemy would read and perhaps believe the deception.

Although the focus of Confederate espionage was initially on Washington, as the war went on, intelligence gathering became more tactical. Distinctions blurred between "spies" and "scouts." But an age-old custom prevailed: if you were caught in your army's uniform, you were a prisoner of war; if you were in disguise, you were a spy and could be hanged. Men who rode with the "Gray Ghost," John S. Mosby, and other such military units were usually considered soldiers. Many other riders, particularly a Confederate espionage group known as Coleman's Scouts, were treated as spies.

When Yankee troops captured a group of riders behind Union lines in Tennessee, they singled out one young man who had documents concealed under his saddle and in his clothing. Besides information about federal defenses in Nashville, the man, Sam Davis, had a piece of paper signed E. Coleman.

Union interrogators, seeking information on the notorious Coleman's Scouts, focused their attention on Davis. He knew that "Coleman" was the cover name of Captain H. B. Shaw, who had also been captured and was being held in a nearby cell. But when Brigadier General Grenville M. Dodge, a Union intelligence officer, demanded to know who and where Coleman was, Davis refused to talk. He remained silent even when Dodge threatened to hang him.

Davis, a 21-year-old infantryman, was a courier for Shaw. When he was hanged on November 27, 1863, he went into Confederate legend not as a courier, but as a spy. The legend has him say, "I would sooner die a thousand deaths than betray a friend or be false to duty." He became "the South's Nathan Hale," one of many captives executed as spies by both sides. The number of suspected spies executed by both sides is not known because of the lack of records and the secrecy that surrounded most executions.

Because "spies" and "scouts" were used interchangeably, it is difficult to sort out "espionage," which is the work of spies, from "reconnaissance," which is the work of trained observers, such as cavalry scouts. Confederate General Robert E. Lee, for example, received a steady stream of intelligence from what would be called agents or spies today. In a report to Confederacy President Jefferson Davis, Lee said that "our scouts on the Potomac" had learned that a Union army was about to march because "three days' rations had been cooked and placed in the haversacks of the men." Another so-called Southern scout seemed more likely to be a spy because he "was able to converse with" Union troops to get an accurate estimate of the size of a deployment.

Lee's greatest scout, Major General Jeb Stuart, won public fame as a dashing cavalryman leading audacious raids behind Union lines. But when he was killed in action in 1864, Lee gave him an epitaph worthy of a great spy: "He never brought me a piece of false information."

Giving Grant All He Wanted

George H. Sharpe, descendant of an old American family, came from Kingston, New York. At the age of 19, he graduated from Rutgers—giving the salutatory address in Latin—and went on to Yale Law School. He passed the New York bar in 1849, but did not begin practicing for several years because he wanted to travel in Europe. While there, Sharpe studied European languages and served at times in U.S. diplomatic posts in Vienna and Rome.

When the war began, he was in a New York militia as a captain. In 1862, he organized a regiment which was assigned to the defense of Washington. Early in 1863, Colonel Sharpe was made a deputy provost marshal general—essentially, an intelligence officer—assigned to run the Bureau of Military Information. The bureau had been set up by Major General Joseph Hooker, then commander of the Army of the Potomac.

General Ulysses S. Grant, after creating the Armies Operating Against Richmond in July 1864, put Sharpe's Bureau of Military Information directly into Grant's headquarters at City Point, Virginia. Grant said Sharpe's work



USA
John C. Babcock

enabled him to "keep track of every change the enemy makes."

In February 1864, Sharpe was promoted to brigadier general. His last task was at Appomattox, where he oversaw the granting of parole certificates to the soldiers of the Army of Virginia after the surrender of General Robert E. Lee. Out of respect for Lee, Sharpe gallantly declined to issue him a parole. But Lee said he, too, was a member of that defeated army, and Sharpe issued him a parole.

Sharpe returned to Kingston and took up his law practice again. In 1867, Secretary of State William H. Seward asked him to go to Europe to locate and investigate Americans who might have been involved in the assassination of President Lincoln. Seward was particularly interested in finding John Surratt, whose mother, Mary Surratt, had been hanged as one of the assassination conspirators.

Surratt was brought back to the United States and put on trial in a civilian court. The trial ended with a hung jury, and Surratt was soon set free, never to be tried again.

President Grant appointed Sharpe U.S. marshal for the Southern District of New York State. His investigation of political corruption in New York City helped to smash the Tweed Ring run by Boss (William Marcy) Tweed. Sharpe later was elected to the New York State Assembly. He died in 1900.



Lieutenant Colonel, USA
John McEntee



Photos showing the Officers and Scouts / Spies of the BMI



Our Member Ed Komeczyk with his accordion group...

General Meade's Birthday Wreath Laying at Laurel Hill



**Old Baldy
with the
OBCWRT Wreath.**



**President Jankowski
provides greetings
from Old Baldy CWRT.**



**Members:
Nancy Bowker, President Jankowski,
Ellen Preston, Dietrich Preston, Walt Lafty
and Mary Wible**



**President Jankowski and Nancy Bowker place
the OB wreath at Meade's grave.**

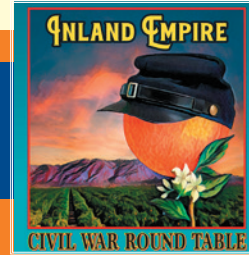


**President Jankowski and FOB
pose with descendants of
General Meade at the grave.**



**Dr. Waskie, Paul Prentiss, Kerry Bryan,
Susan Prentiss with Finn**

Our Sister Round Table Inland Empire Upcoming events



**Wednesday, January 15 6:30 – 7:30pm,
Ken Frey - living historian "Picket's Charge - Gettysburg"**

**Monday, January 20 6:15 – 7:45pm
Elizabeth Anne Newberry, living historian "The role of Vivandieres
in the Civil War"**

**For Zoom links, and regional Round Table program times
& locations, go to:
inlandempirecwrt.org and socalcwrt.org.**



The Cruiser Olympia won fame in the Spanish-American War and served as a flagship in WWI



Independence Hall

HOMECOMING 250

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2025

To kickoff America's celebration of its 250 years of independence, Homecoming 250 Navy Marine Corps will honor the men and women who gained and continue to defend our independence. Through our efforts, the Secretary of the Navy has announced that the Navy and Marine Corps should celebrate their 250th birthdays in their birthplace, Philadelphia, PA, and Camden, NJ. Homecoming 250 will salute their 250 years of distinguished service by hosting spectacular events, ceremonies, parades, aerial demonstrations, exhibitions, and educational programs featuring historic buildings, ships, museums, and waterfront sites on both sides of the Delaware River.



COMING HOME TO THE BIRTHPLACE

*No better place to celebrate the
Navy and Marines' 250th!*

THE NAVY & MARINES...

- Were created in Independence Hall and organized at Tun Tavern
- Commissioned their first ships and officers here
- Launched their first missions from the Delaware River
- Relaunched the Navy and Marines at Congress Hall
- Built the first Naval Shipyard and supplied innovative ships for over 200 years



US Navy ROTC Midshipmen, 2021



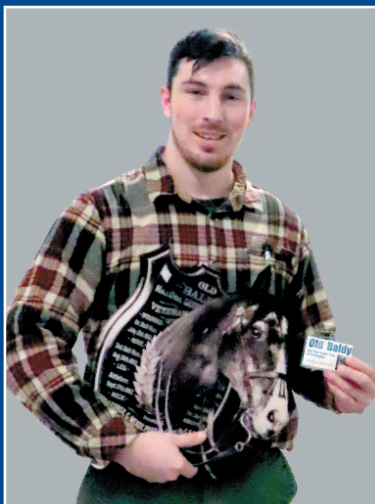
"The President's Own" United States Marine Band



**FOB Welcomes
New Members
and
Awards**



Lorraine Gancher
10-year pin



Dylan Scurria

**Schedule of Old Baldy CWRT
Speakers and Activities
for 2025**

February 13, 2025 - Thursday

Kelly Hancock

“The Art of Surviving: Belle Isle and Beyond”

March 13, 2025 - Thursday

Phil Roycraft

**“The Plot to Perpetuate Slavery: How George McClellan,
Southern Spies and a Confidence Man Nearly Derailed
Emancipation”**

April 10, 2025 - Thursday

Ron Kirkwood

**“Tell Mother Not to Worry: Soldier Stories From
Gettysburg’s George Spangler Farm”**

Questions to

Dave Gilson - 856-323-6484 - dgilson404@gmail.com

Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia

Camden County College

William G. Rohrer Center

1889 Marlton Pike East

Cherry Hill, NJ

oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net

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