



# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Volume LXXXIII, Number 5

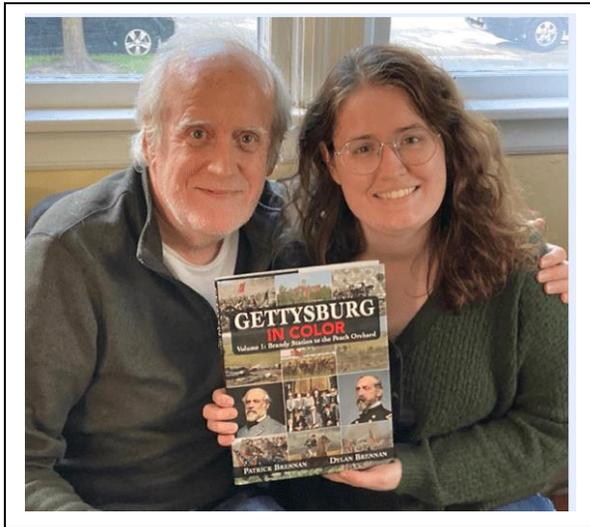
Chicago, Illinois

January 2024

824th REGULAR MEETING, Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## Pat Brennan on "Gettysburg in Color"

**Live/Zoom Meeting. Time: Jan. 12th, 2024, 07:30 PM CST.  
Zoom Option ID 845 3227 1496; No Passcode needed**



Patrick Brennan, a long-time student of the Civil War and published author, has teamed up with his technology-astute daughter Dylan Brennan to bring the largest Civil War battle to life in the remarkable 2-volume study: Gettysburg in Color. Volume 1 covers Brandy Station to the Peach Orchard, and Volume 2 covers The Wheatfield to Falling Waters.

Rather than guess or dabble with the colors, the Brennans used an artificial intelligence-based computerized color identifier to determine the precise color of uniforms, flesh, hair, equipment, terrain, houses, and much more. The result is a monumental full-color study of the important three-day battle that brings the men, the landscape, and the action into the 21st Century.

The deep colorization of battle-related woodcuts, for example, reveals a plethora of details that have passed generations of eyes unseen. The photos of the soldiers and their officers look as if they were taken yesterday.

The use of this modern technology shines a light on one Gettysburg photographic mystery in particular. Colorizing some of the battle's "death" images revealed the presence of Union and Confederate dead that may help determine the previously unknown location of the photographs. That may also be a "first" when it comes to Civil War photography.

Pat Brennan is the author of Secessionville: Assault on Charleston (1996), To Die Game: General J. E. B. Stuart, CSA (1998), and more than twenty articles for a variety of Civil War magazines and journals. Pat is on the Editorial Advisory Board for *The Civil War Monitor* and his work has appeared in the *Chicago Tribune*. He has lectured around the country on the Civil War and Bob Dylan. Dylan Brennan works on the broadcast video production team at Tasty Trade, a real time, online financial network based in Chicago.

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## Battlefield Preservation

Dear \_\_\_\_:

In the summer of 1863, a pivotal moment in American history unfolded on this very ground.

**Now, I'm here at Gettysburg— where the First Days Battle began — to explain more about the property we have the opportunity to preserve!**

PLUS, I'm taking the time to show you just how the movie Gettysburg compares to real life today on the battlefield. ***Let's dive in!*** [video at ABT website]

**As you may know, the Trust fell short of its fundraising target, *and we still need your support!***

We dipped into a rainy-day fund and reallocated money earmarked for other priorities to meet our November 20th deadline, in order to prevent the construction of apartments on hallowed ground in Gettysburg.

Now, we'll either have to borrow money at today's sky-high interest rates or potentially be forced to let other important preservation opportunities slip by.

**Please make a tax-deductible gift today to help us raise the remaining \$78,000 needed for the downpayment in Gettysburg.**

And if you've already sent in your gift, I thank you for your swift response!

To the battlefield,

**Garry Adelman**

Chief Historian, American Battlefield Trust

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## **December Presentation**

**By Mark Matranga**

Scott Mingus presented his study of Texans at Chickamauga at the 823<sup>rd</sup> Regular Meeting of The Civil War Round Table on December 8, 2023. Based on his co-authored book *Unceasing Fury: Texans at the Battle of Chickamauga, September 18-20, 1863*, he offered a detailed treatment of the role played by the Lone Star State in the second largest battle of the Civil War. Mingus rightfully points out that while Gettysburg - a virtual industry – is the subject of thousands of books, Chickamauga only recently has been given the attention it deserves. This is especially so in the realm of monographs concerning specific units.

Mingus describes the experiences of all the Texas regiments deployed across the battlefield, from Chickamauga's crucial creek crossings and extensive forests to the final attacks at Snodgrass Hill/Horseshoe Ridge. Texas contributed 14 infantry regiments and an artillery battery from the Army of Tennessee, in the brigades of Gregg, Deshler and Ector. The Army of Northern Virginia contributed the famed Texas Brigade, Robertson's (1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>), transferred west with General Longstreet.

General Bragg, having seen his army maneuvered out of Tennessee and the Union occupy Chattanooga in early September 1863, decided to strike a portion of Rosecrans' widely separated force south of Chattanooga. After the opening engagement on September 18, both commanders moved their armies north and east, Rosecrans now alert to the enemy west of Chickamauga Creek, Bragg sensing an opportunity to destroy the Union army. What resulted was an immense clash in the woods along the creek for possession of the Union army's lifeline back to Chattanooga.

Texas troops encountered the enemy on September 18, the 7<sup>th</sup> Texas Infantry with Gregg's Brigade crossing the creek upstream of Reed's Bridge, and with Robertson's Brigade in reserve, moving in the dark to Viniard Farm not far from the LaFayette Road.

Wilder's Union cavalry effectively thwarted a crossing at Alexander's Bridge, leading Ector to a roundabout march over the creek. Deshler's Brigade encamped southwest of Lee & Gordon's Mills.

After initial success, the Texans came to grief due to poor planning and execution. On September 19, Ector's Brigade was routed in the woods along Reed's Bridge Road, ordered forward by Forrest who promised reinforcements but failed to deliver. Gregg and Robertson advanced across the road at Viniard Field; both were forced back by what appears to have been superior force, General Gregg being wounded during the retreat. Deshler's Brigade floundered south of Winfrey Field during Cleburne's September 19 night attack but arrived in time to damage the Union right flank and capture part of the 77<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania.

Ector again suffered badly on the north end of the battlefield on September 20, not returning to the fight until late afternoon when the Kelly line was crumbling. South of Kelly Field, ordered forward by General Cleburne, Deshler's men went to ground in a thinly wooded area where they lay under fire by three artillery batteries for over three hours. General Deshler was killed when he stood up to check on ammunition.

In the first line of the September 20 Longstreet assault force stacked at the LaFayette Road, the 7<sup>th</sup> charged through the void in the Union line, eventually facing the right of the Federal line on Horseshoe Ridge. Robertson's Brigade also exploited the breach, attacking northward toward Snodgrass Hill. Unfortunately, the Texans were repulsed in the North Dyer Field when Benning's Georgia Brigade pulled back; the brigade disintegrated, with General Hood who had accompanied it severely wounded.

At Chickamauga, armies clashing while on the move, reinforcements arriving the moment of battle, units thrust piecemeal into action, generals commanding unfamiliar units and not knowing how they were aligned. It has been called a "soldier's battle" and perhaps rightly so. Ector's and Deshler's men were led into virtual ambush by Forrest and Cleburne, commanders who had little knowledge of the tactical situation. The 7<sup>th</sup> and the Texas Brigade were ultimately condemned by the lack of command and control in Dyer Field that epitomized the Confederate high command. The casualty rates in the 7<sup>th</sup>, Ector's and Robertson's units were appalling, Deshler's less so but included its commander. Staggering losses, cumulatively over 40 per cent, including missing and captured, for soldiers who were ordered to attack and attack again for no demonstrable gain.

These men were not well served by those in high command. It is not always easy to tell the story of a battle through personal accounts, but Mingus succeeds here in relating a great story, and in good fashion. His account adds considerably to one's understanding of this extremely confusing battle, notwithstanding its focus on soldiers of one state.



## BULLETIN BOARD

*Our in-person meetings are currently held at:*

### **Holiday Inn O'Hare**

5615 N. Cumberland Ave, Chicago

*Parking at the Holiday Inn is FREE*

Dinner \$40.00 Members and Non- Members

Cocktails at 5:30, Dinner at 6:30

Presentation only is \$10 per person.

The **Kenosha Civil War Museum** is putting on the following in-person/virtual programs:

On Friday Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> at noon, Dr. Gregory Burek will talk on "Post-Civil War Veteran Mental Health."

For more on programs at the museum, visit  
<https://museums.kenosha.org/civilwar/events/>

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The CWRT's **Winter Board Meeting** will be January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at Camp Girardi (Rob Girardi's house), 4532 N. Forest View, Chicago, starting at 9:30 a.m.

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## More Upcoming Local Civil War Events

Check the **Announcements** section of the CWRT's website for additional coming events.

Jan. 3rd, Kankakee Valley CWRT: Zack Nunmaker on "Civil War Veterans Who Became Presidents"

Jan. 5th, Northern Illinois CWRT: (changed) Bruce Allardice on "Charles Gunther, Mississippi River Confederate"

Jan. 8th, Rock Valley CWRT: Steve Acker on "Life in the Trenches of Petersburg"

Jan. 9th, McHenry County CWRT: Dave Mowery on "Morgan's Great Raid: Taking the War to the North" (zoom only)

Jan. 11th, Milwaukee CWRT: Pat Brennan on "Gettysburg in Color"

Jan. 14th, Northwest Indiana CWRT: Charles Rebesco on "Last Man Standing: The 20th Indiana Infantry"

Jan. 16th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Gene Salecker on "Forrest's Raid and the Sultana"

Jan. 20th, Salt Creek CWRT: Steve Alban on "The Election of 1860: How Lincoln Really Got Elected"

Jan. 25th, South Suburban CWRT: Pat Brennan on "Gettysburg--From Brandy Station to the Peach Orchard"

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## Future Chicago CWRT Meetings

**Feb. 9th:** Carolyn Ivanoff on "The 17<sup>th</sup> Connecticut at Gettysburg"

**March 8th:** Chris Bryan on "The Union XII Corps"

**April 12th:** Will Greene on "The Cracker Line and Chattanooga"

**May 10th:** Lynn and Julianne Herman on "The Allegheny Arsenal Explosion"

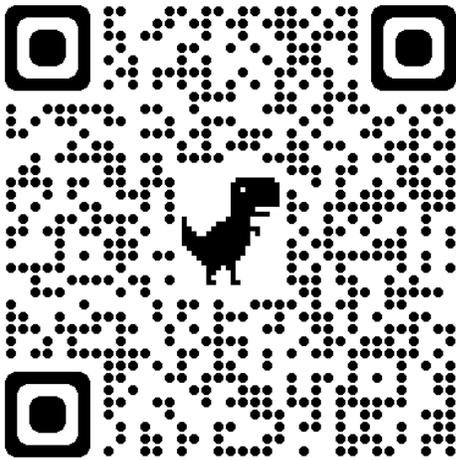
**June 14th:** Tim Smith (Nevins-Freeman Award) on "Vicksburg"

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The **Abraham Lincoln Book Shop's** facebook page airs "Take a Break with History", every first and third Friday of the month at 1 pm CST. For more, visit

<https://alincolnbookshop/>

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CWRT QR Code for instant access to the website