

Meeting Schedule

Nov 11, 2024 Richard Selcer, columnist Ft Worth Star Telegram: "The Gettysburg Phantom Court of Inquiry"

Dec: 9, 2024 Dr. Debbie Liles :Women of Civil War Texas"

2025

Jan 13, 2025 Sam Houston Publisher of the Hood County News (as "the" Sam Houston)

Feb 10, 2025 Dr. Charles Gear "Sam Houston and the fate of Texas"

Mar 13, 2025 Dr. Julie Holcomb, Baylor University

Apr 14, 2025 Pat Falci (as A.P. Hill)

May 12, 2025 Dr. Curt Fields (as Gen Grant)

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North Central Texas Civil War Round Table

<http://www.ncentexcwrt.com/>

Granbury, Texas

Next Meeting: 11 November at Spring Creek BBQ Program starts at 6:30
Dr. Rick Selcer, PhD will speak on:
"Gettysburg: Phantom Court of Inquiry"



In November, Fort Worth historian and author , Richard Selcer who has authored 13 books, will recount the possibility that the CSA held a Court of Inquiry after the Battle of Gettysburg..

Richard Selcer is a Fort Worth native who has taught and written history for forty years. He received his B.A. and M.A. degrees from Austin College in Sherman, Texas (1972 and 1973) and his Ph.D. from

Texas Christian University in Fort Worth (1980). His teaching stops include Jarvis Christian College, Yankton College, Cottey College, Tarrant County College, and International Christian University (Vienna, Austria and Kiev, Ukraine) and TCU. He has written 13 books in Western and Civil War history and published more than 50 articles in magazines and journals. His latest book is Fort Worth Stories (University of North Texas Press, 2021). He has authored numerous historic markers for Fort Worth sites, is a member of the Tarrant County Historical Commission, and conducts walking tours of downtown Fort Worth. You may have read his articles on Ft Worth history in the Fort Worth Star Telegram.

Was there ever an official court of inquiry into the Confederate defeat at Gettysburg (July 1-3, 1863)? The answer has always been "No, of course not," At least it was until January 1896 when C.S.A. Gen. Cullen A. Battle spoke to the Petersburg, VA. Confederate Veterans post. The war hero (weren't they all?) told the elderly gentlemen that he had been a member of a court of inquiry that met in August 1863 seeking to assign blame for the defeat. He was able to describe in detail its proceedings – although the Official Records contain no reference to such a proceeding, nor did anyone mention it in his memoirs. His audience listened in rapt attention. So, in Battle's memory, who was blamed for Gettysburg? Was it Lee? Was it Longstreet or Stuart or all of the above? You may be as surprised as the gentlemen at Petersburg that evening to hear the answer. And for that matter, how do you respond to a guest speaker who claims to remember events that no one else in the room has ever heard of? Gettysburg's Phantom Court of Inquiry is a footnote in Lost Cause Mythology, but a footnote worth digging into, asking the question, "But what if there had been such a Court of Inquiry?"

Our purpose is education and information. From our inception we have kept a calculated balance mixing subjects, people, events and battles so as to appeal to all interests. If you examine our schedule of past speakers which is available on this website you will find this to be true. Speakers have included authors, professors, lecturers, dramatists, curators, and others who have some expertise in the subject of the Civil War.

Battle Facts

Adams County, PA | July 1, 1863

Result: Union Victory

COMMANDERS



UNION
George G. Meade

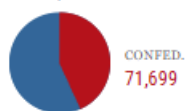


CONFEDERATE
Robert E. Lee

FORCES ENGAGED

165,620

UNION
93,921

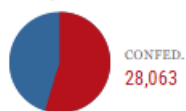


CONFED.
71,699

ESTIMATED CASUALTIES

51,112

UNION
23,049



CONFED.
28,063

Did You Know?

Myths of the Battle of Gettysburg

July 2-4 1963

<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/7-gettysburg-myths-and-misconceptions?ms=googlegrant&ms=googlepaid>

Myth 1: The Battle of Gettysburg was fought over shoes.

There was no mention of shoes having anything to do with the Battle of Gettysburg until 14 years after it happened. In 1877, Confederate General Henry Heth wrote, "Hearing that a supply of shoes was to be obtained in Gettysburg, eight miles distant from Cash-town, and greatly needing shoes for my men, I directed General Pettigrew to go to Gettysburg and get these supplies." Problem is, there were no shoe factories anywhere near Gettysburg in 1863. Rather, roads took the armies to Gettysburg. It was difficult to travel through south-central Pennsylvania without passing through Gettysburg.

Myth 2: The First Day was not a large battle.

Despite how it is often portrayed in movies and documentaries, the first day of the battle of Gettysburg involved nearly 50,000 soldiers and was one of the bloodiest days of the Civil War – with 16,000 men killed, wounded, missing, or captured. If the battle of Gettysburg ended after the first day, it would still rank in the top twenty bloodiest battles of the Civil War, with more casualties than Cold Harbor and almost as many as Fredericksburg.

Myth 3: John Wesley Culp was killed on his uncle's property.

John Wesley Culp moved South before the battle of Gettysburg and joined the Virginia ranks. Although his unit fought on Culp's Hill, and he was the only man in the 2nd Virginia Regiment killed at Gettysburg, he did not die on his uncle's property for which Culp's Hill is named. He most likely died on Abraham Spangler's property, or one of the farms far to the east of Culp's Hill.

Myth 4: The fight for Little Round Top was the most important combat of the battle.

Historians have long written about the disaster that would befall the Union army if Little Round Top fell into Confederate hands. But even before the fighting began, Gen. Meade had already ordered more than 10,000 reinforcements to the Union left. Had the Confederates captured Little Round Top, they would have been greatly outnumbered and low on ammunition, with a command structure in complete disarray. With nearly equal numbers, the Confederates almost captured Little Round Top twice during the battle. Why is it difficult to believe that organized and fully-supplied Union troops could not retake it with at least triple the number of troops?

For a more detailed debunking, check out The Myth of Little Round Top by the American Battlefield Trust's own Garry Adelman.

Myth 5: Pickett's Charge was the largest, most decisive, and most consequential charge of the war.

Although often portrayed as the greatest charge of the Civil War, it was far from the largest, most decisive, or most consequential. Those honors would belong on other battlefields at Gaines' Mill, Chickamauga, and Petersburg.

Myth 6: Abraham Lincoln finished the Gettysburg Address on the back of an envelope on the way to Gettysburg.

The original copy of the Gettysburg Address on its original stationery is in the possession of the Library of Congress. So, we know on what material he wrote it. It is also well documented that Abraham Lincoln wrote portions of the Address before he left Washington, and put the finishing touches on the Address in the home of David Wills at Gettysburg.

Confederate General H. B. Granbury's Company from Waco: Were They Really the Waco Guards? (con't)

Best Books on the Battle of Gettysburg
<https://www.civilwarmonitor.com/the-best-gettysburg-books/>

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See other historians recommendations at: <https://www.civilwarmonitor.com/the-best-gettysburg-books/>

1. *The Gettysburg Campaign: A Study in Command* (1968) by Edwin B. Coddington

Coddington's work has become the touchstone book for understanding the full scope of Gettysburg, treating the campaign and not just the battle, from Robert E. Lee's preparations to the crossing of the Potomac River at Williamsport and Falling Waters. Its great strength is its thoroughness, and it was the first to use in full the papers, letters, and testimonies assembled by John Bachelder from the battle's participants. Its weakness is its plodding, tedious style, which often makes it a book more recommended than read.

2. *High Tide at Gettysburg* (1958) by Glenn Tucker

High Tide at Gettysburg is a journalist's rather than a historian's work, and for sheer readability, there is no other single-volume history of the battle to match it. Tucker is long on personalities (which interested him the most) and short on military chitchat (there are, for instance, no maps), and he breathes a gentle but definite spirit of admiration for the Army of Northern Virginia, and especially for James Longstreet. Tucker's sympathetic portrayal of Longstreet was the background for Michael Shaara's depiction of Longstreet in *The Killer Angels*, and the foundation for much of the modern rehabilitation of Longstreet's reputation.

3. *Pickett's Charge—The Last Attack at Gettysburg* (2001) by Earl J. Hess

Hess' study is the model of a Gettysburg micro-history. It's done with a passion for completeness, and it's also the first book that took notice of the significance of the fence rails on either side of the Emmittsburg Road—a point that got me thinking about the larger meaning of the fences in the whole Gettysburg battle. The judgments about the most famous attack in American history are careful and judicious; Hess is not in love with Longstreet, and, on the whole, he does not consider the attack to have been some ghastly error on Lee's part.

4. *Retreat from Gettysburg* (2005) by Kent Masterson Brown

Retreat from Gettysburg does not at first seem like it ought to be on anyone's top-five list for any battle book, since (as Winston Churchill said about Dunkirk) evacuations are not victories, no matter how successful. Brown, however, has managed to write a wonderfully compelling, highly readable book about a subject that he never allows to lapse into dreariness. He is precise on timings, locations, and even heads of cattle brought off, and he is remarkably generous in estimating that while Lee may have lost the Battle of Gettysburg, he salvaged a good deal from the campaign (including 45 road miles' worth of captured stores).

5. *Gettysburg: The First Day* (2001) by Harry Pfanz

This is the first of three books that Pfanz, a longtime presence with the National Park Service staff at Gettysburg and the NPS chief historian, wrote about Gettysburg. Actually, any of the three (the other two are *Gettysburg: The Second Day*, which was the first of the trio, in 1987, and *Gettysburg: Culp's Hill and Cemetery Hill* in 1993) would be a good nominee for this slot, since they all follow the same meticulous pattern: scorchingly detailed accounts of troop movements and encounters and microscopic focus on individuals and good personal stories. Pfanz tries to steer middle courses through some of the first day's controversies (especially between Oliver Otis Howard and Winfield Scott Hancock). It may take longer to read Pfanz's accounts of the various actions that made up the battle than it did for them to occur, but the rewards for the Gettysburg-obsessed are wonderful.