

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume LII, Battlefield Tour Edition

Chicago, Illinois

April 30, May 1-3, 1992

42nd Annual Battlefield Tour: Gettysburg

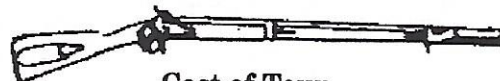
The Civil War Round Table of Chicago has selected, as the site for its 42nd Annual Battlefield Tour, the ground on which was fought the most prominent battle of the American Civil War. In and around the small Pennsylvania crossroads town of Gettysburg on July 1, 2 and 3, 1863, the Federal Army of the Potomac and the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia engaged in a struggle which has become, to most historians, the pivotal battle of the 1861-1865 conflict. Even though its historic significance has attracted the expected commercialism to the town there remains at Gettysburg a well-preserved battlefield park. We will be spending the entire four days becoming acquainted, or reacquainted, with the people and places that gave Gettysburg such a prominent place in world history. Because there are not great distances to be travelled between points on the battlefield, we hope to conduct the tour at a pace which will allow time to fully appreciate the events which took place there.

Our bivouac, while on the tour, will be the Ramada Inn, located five miles south of town on Business Route 15. The Ramada has excellent facilities, including an indoor swimming pool and well-stocked Command Post to provide relaxation and diversion after each day's activities.

Our tour guides will be three eminently-qualified gentlemen with whom many of you are already acquainted: Edwin C. Bearss, Chief Historian for the National Park Service, author, lecturer and the acknowledged expert on most areas of the Civil War; Marshall Krolick, past president of The Civil War Round Table of Chicago, lecturer and authority on the Civil War, particularly Gettysburg and the cavalry, and John Coverick, former officer of The Civil War Round Table of Chicago and expert cartographer whose encyclopedic knowledge of the terrain of the Gettysburg battlefield has resulted from years of research. We will, as usual, be transported over the battlefield by air-conditioned motor coaches complete with restrooms and liquid refreshments.

Transportation to Gettysburg is various on an individual basis. However, two buses will be available on Wednesday, April 29, 1992, at times to be announced, to pick up passengers at the Harrisburg (Middletown) Airport for the ride to the Ramada Inn. There will be an additional fee charged to those taking advantage of this service. On Sunday afternoon there will also be a bus, at no additional fee, to take tour members back to that same airport immediately after lunch.

The tour will, with certain exceptions, follow the chronological order of the battle. We will begin on Thursday



Cost of Tour

\$350.00. Two to a room (*): \$425.00 Single.

(*) Indicate person with whom you wish to share room.

Includes: Bus transportation in the field, motel room, lunches and dinners, (breakfasts are "on your own") group service tips, group admission fees where required, tour kits, literature, badges, refreshment on buses and a \$25.00 registration fee per person (not refundable) to cover promotional and overhead expenses.

For variations: Portions of tour, joining en route, individual meetings, write or phone Registrar Richard McAdoo, 638 Douglas, Elgin, Illinois 60120, phone (708) 697-8982.

Local CWRT groups and others joining in lunches or dinners, please make reservations through registrar so that caterer can be notified of number to prepare for and payment can be made.

morning, April 30, 1992, with an orientation visit to the National Park Service Visitor Center. There we will view the Electric Map and museum exhibits. The remainder of that day will be spent in the fields west and north of Gettysburg where the first day's fighting occurred, with lunch at Gettysburg College. In the afternoon we will also view the Coster Avenue mural and several places in the town itself where there were significant events during the Federal retreat. Among these will be the site of General Schimmelfennig's "headquarters." Thursday night dinner will be at the Ramada Inn and our speaker that evening will be Edwin C. Bearss who will discuss "Lee and His Problems With His Corps Commanders."

On Friday we will follow Longstreet's flank march and then examine the famous sites associated with his attack on the second day, such as the Peach Orchard, Wheatfield, Devil's Den, and Little Round Top. After lunch at Hickory Bridge Farm, the tour will stop at the Battle of Fairfield. In the late afternoon we will review the Battle of Hunterstown before returning to the Ramada Inn for dinner and John Coverick's description of "The Fighting for Culp's Hill and East Cemetery Hill."

The subject of John's remarks will be the first topic on Saturday morning. After a stop at Meade's headquarters and lunch at the historic Dobbin House we will recreate the

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THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

357 West Chicago Avenue

Chicago, Illinois 60610

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events of Pickett's Charge. Fun Nite will begin with a tour of the Eisenhower Farm and will continue with a family style dinner at the Harney Firehall hosted by the Friends of the National Parks at Gettysburg, a dedicated battlefield preservation organization. Among the festivities will be an auction, our traditional countdown, the awarding of the Confederate Purple Heart and much more.

Sunday morning will find us studying the cavalry battle at East Cavalry Field and the events of Farnsworth's Charge. Our final stop will appropriately be at the National Cemetery and the site of the Gettysburg Address. The tour will end with lunch back at the Ramada Inn.

THE GETTYSBURG CAMPAIGN

The campaign which reached its climax at Gettysburg was conceived by the Confederate leaders, principally Robert E. Lee, in the early days of 1863. The plan included a number of objectives important to the South. Among these were: to move the eastern theater of operations out of Virginia, to relieve military pressure on Vicksburg in the west and thus maintain direct contact with the Confederacy west of the Mississippi, and to achieve a Confederate victory in the

north, which might lead to a negotiated settlement of the conflict. The plan, having been approved by the Confederate government in mid May, was put in motion by Lee in early June 1863.

The Campaign Begins

On June 3 Lee began moving the Army of Northern Virginia west, around the right flank of the Army of the Potomac, toward the Shenandoah Valley. This march was led by Ewell's Second Corps and was followed by Longstreet's First Corps and A.P. Hill's Third Corps. Using the Blue Ridge Mountains and Stuart's cavalry as a screen Lee moved north almost undetected. By the time Hill and Longstreet moved over the mountains into the Shenandoah Valley on June 16, Ewell was across the Potomac. Stuart's cavalry continued to cover the Blue Ridge gaps, and thus screen Lee's army, until June 22. On June 23 Stuart received orders from Lee to gain contact with Ewell and to protect the army's right flank as Ewell moved north and east.

Unfortunately these orders allowed Stuart to decide how best to accomplish his mission. Probably because of his prior successes and perhaps to redeem the damage to his reputation, incurred at Brandy Station, Stuart elected to carry out his mission by another "ride-around" the Army of the Potomac. A series of unfortunate circumstances and unwise decisions on this ride served to effectively remove Stuart's command from any further contact during the march north with the Army of Northern Virginia and left Lee virtually without information on the movements of the Army of the Potomac. Not until June 28 was Lee advised, through the agent Harrison, that the Army of the Potomac, now commanded by Meade, was north of the Potomac River and in position to cut his line of communication.

When Lee's army began its move in early June 1863, Hooker, assuming another invasion of Maryland, proposed to attack the tail of Lee's army and move on Richmond. Lincoln and other Federal officials vetoed the plan and ordered Hooker to stay on the defensive and to protect Washington. This strategy gave Lee the initiative by allowing Hooker to make only countermoves. However, by June 28, Hooker's Army was located north of the Potomac around Frederick, Maryland between Lee and Washington D.C. Early in the morning on June 28, Hooker was relieved as commander of the Army of the Potomac by George G. Meade.

By that same date, Hill and Longstreet's Corps were located around Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, preparing to move north and east, while Ewell's advance was on the Susquehanna River opposite Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Upon receiving the information on the Federal army's position, Lee immediately ordered the Army of Northern Virginia to concentrate in the Cashtown-Gettysburg area.

Meade began moving the Army of the Potomac north from Frederick on June 29. Among the Federal commands searching for Lee's main force was Buford's First Cavalry Division. Late on the afternoon of June 30, two brigades of Buford's Division encountered skirmishers from Pettigrew's Confederate infantry brigade about one-half mile west of Gettysburg on the Chambersburg Pike. The Confederates, declining to bring on a major engagement, withdrew to positions near Cashtown. Buford's cavalry established itself on ridges west of town sending out pickets to the north and west.

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The First Day at Gettysburg

Early on the morning of July 1, the Confederates again advanced on Gettysburg with Heth's Division of Hill's Corps. Though considerably outnumbered, Buford's troopers, fighting dismounted, halted the initial Confederate advance. Buford sent word to Reynolds, who was commanding the left wing of Meade's army, that the Confederates were approaching Gettysburg in force. By 10:00 a.m. the leading elements of the Union First Corps began arriving on the battlefield. Shortly afterward Reynolds was killed by a sharpshooter and Union command temporarily passed to Abner Doubleday.

The battle quickly escalated with the balance of Hill's Corps being committed from the west, and Ewell's Corps arriving from the north. The Federals were supported by the balance of the First Corps and the arrival of the Eleventh Corps. The battle remained fairly even until mid-afternoon when Early's Division came onto the field squarely on the right flank of the Eleventh Corps. Howard's troops gave way, thus making the First Corps position untenable. The Federals were forced to retreat through the town and regroup on Cemetery Hill.

Fortunately for the Federals, the fighting had taken its toll on the Confederates and the pursuit was neither in force nor well organized. In the late afternoon Lee sensed the confused state of the Federal forces and sent word to Ewell to attack Cemetery Hill, "if practicable." Ewell, in contrast to his predecessor Jackson, was not accustomed to discretionary orders and delayed determining the "practicality" until far too late to make an attack. While even a successful attack by Ewell would probably not have destroyed the Federal army it would have forced them out of a strong defensive position.

During the night of July 1-2 each army continued to be reinforced, the Federals more heavily than the Confederates, with the Confederate line being established along Seminary Ridge and through town while the Federals established the famous "Fishhook" line anchored on the flanks by Culp's Hill and Little Round Top.

The Second Day

By the morning of July 2, Lee had decided to have Longstreet attack the Federal left while Ewell demonstrated heavily on their right. However, both of these generals were lethargic with Longstreet in particular attempting to change Lee's tactics entirely. During the early afternoon, prior to Longstreet's attack, Sickles, without Meade's knowledge, advanced his Third Corps from its position on Cemetery Ridge to a position about three quarters of a mile to its front. This move left Little Round Top, which commanded the entire Federal line, unoccupied, while both flanks of the Third Corps and the left flank of the Second Corps were unprotected. When Longstreet finally attacked, late in the afternoon, he unexpectedly found one of Sickles' divisions immediately in his front. During this attack, Confederate occupation of Little Round Top was prevented by Warren who frantically commandeered troops to defend it.

Although Sickles' Corps was effectively destroyed, the Cemetery Ridge Line, with reinforcements from Culp's Hill, held. Ewell's attack on the Federal right at Culp's Hill did not materialize until after the fighting on the Union left had ceased, allowing Meade to affectively shift troops from one end of his line to the other. Although Ewell's attacks enjoyed some initial success, partly because of the withdrawal of

Tour Schedule

Variations will be announced on the tour.

All times are approximate.

Thursday, April 30, 1992

Breakfast on your own, as on each day of the tour

8:15 a.m.—Board buses.

8:30 a.m.—Visitor Center, Electric Map, Museum, Book Store.

10:15 a.m.—Site of "first shot."

10:30 a.m.—1st Corps front.

1:00 p.m.—Lunch, Gettysburg College.

2:15 p.m.—XIth Corps front.

3:30 p.m.—Coster Avenue mural, retreat through town, Schimmelfennig "headquarters" site.

5:00 p.m.—Return to motel.

6:30 p.m.—Command Post (cash bar).

7:30 p.m.—Dinner. Speaker: Edwin C. Bearss on "Lee and His Problems With His Corps Commanders."

Friday, May 1, 1992

8:30 a.m.—Board buses.

8:45 a.m.—Longstreet's flank march and attack on second day, including Peach Orchard, Wheatfield and Devil's Den.

12:30 p.m.—Lunch, Hickory Bridge Farm.

1:45 p.m.—Battle of Fairfield

2:30 p.m.—Continue Longstreet's attack and the battle for Little Round Top.

4:00 p.m.—Battle of Hunterstown.

5:00 p.m.—Return to motel.

6:30 p.m.—Command Post (cash bar).

7:30 p.m.—Dinner. Speaker: John Coverick on "The Fighting for Culp's Hill and East Cemetery Hill."

Saturday, May 2, 1992

8:30 a.m.—Board buses.

8:45 a.m.—Benner's Hill, Culp's Hill and East Cemetery Hill.

11:30 a.m.—Widow Leister's House and Meade's Council of War.

12:30 p.m.—Lunch, Dobbin House.

1:45 p.m.—Pickett's Charge

4:15 p.m.—Return to motel.

5:00 p.m.—Board buses for tour of Eisenhower Farm.

7:00 p.m.—Dinner and Fun Night at Harney Firehall, co-sponsored by the Friends of the National Parks at Gettysburg.

Sunday, May 3, 1992

8:30 a.m.—Board buses.

8:45 a.m.—Farnsworth's Charge.

10:00 a.m.—East Cavalry Field.

11:30 a.m.—National Cemetery and the site of the Gettysburg Address.

1:00 p.m.—Lunch, Ramada Inn.

2:00 p.m.—Tour ends.

Federal troops from Culp's Hill to reinforce the Federal left, they ultimately were repulsed or were ineffective. The fighting of July 2 had resulted in no significant change in the position of either army.

The Third Day

Having failed to turn either of the Federal flanks and believing that the Federals were weak somewhere, Lee decided that the concluding effort should be an assault by Longstreet on the Union center while Ewell continued to attack the Federal right flank. Stuart, having finally arrived with his cavalry on the evening of July 2, was to circle

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Orders and Ammunition

by Marshall D. Krolick



The literature of the Gettysburg Campaign is so vast that any bibliography must be very selective. Emphasis has been placed on more recent books and those more readily available.

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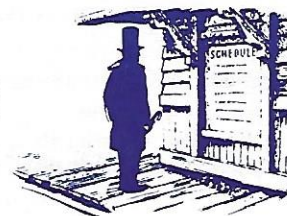
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BULLETIN BOARD



ON THE TOUR: Please be prompt in boarding the buses at the appropriate time each morning to allow maximum time for touring. A bus marshal will be on each bus to help you. If you plan a side excursion, or for any other reason will not be on the bus, you must notify your bus marshal so that buses are not detained waiting for you.

east of town to cover the Confederate left and to exploit the expected breakthrough in the Federal center. Ewell's attack was to commence "in the early gray of the morning."

However, the battle was opened, at approximately 4:30 a.m., July 3, on Culp's Hill by the Federals rather than by Confederate infantry as anticipated. The Northerners were successful in recapturing the ground lost during the Confederate assault the night before, but more importantly, they destroyed the Southerners' initiative in this sector, leaving the Federal right flank secure.

Lee since early morning had been consulting with Longstreet in an attempt to commence the attack on the Union center. Longstreet remained adamant that such an attack would fail and continued to argue for a maneuver around the Federal left flank. Lee, after agreeing to substitute two divisions of A.P. Hill's Corps for the two divisions which Longstreet felt should not be included, decided to proceed with the attack.

Just after 1:00 p.m., when the battle on Culp's Hill had been over for hours, the Confederate artillery bombardment of the Federal center began and lasted for approximately two hours. Immediately following, the now historic charge by the divisions of Pickett, Trimble and Pettigrew took place.

At approximately the same time that the charge occurred, Stuart, posted on the Confederate left east of town, attempted to pass the Federal right flank and thus attack the Federal rear while the Federal center was under attack from the front. Stuart was defeated at what is now known as East Cavalry Field by Federal cavalry under Gregg and Custer. His withdrawal and a foolish cavalry charge ordered by Kilpatrick at the south end of the Confederate line effectively marked the end of the fighting of the battle of Gettysburg.

Aftermath

On the evening of July 3 Lee concentrated his army, by withdrawing Ewell from the Culp's Hill area and Longstreet from the Devils Den area. Both armies declined to offer further battle until the evening of July 4, at which time Lee began to withdraw in a driving rainstorm. Meade did not begin to pursue until after noon on July 5 and except for some skirmishing did not seriously impede Lee's retreat. Lee recrossed the Potomac river on July 13 and effectively ended the Gettysburg campaign. Gettysburg is considered the "high tide" of the war for the Confederacy, as it was never again able to mount an offensive campaign against the Federal armies in the east.