

Trans-Allegheny Dispatch

The newsletter of the West Virginia Reenactors Association
2019 - May - Edition V

Upcoming Events

Civil War Sponsored

Beverly Heritage Days, July 12-14

Sanctioned

None

Other Events recommended by WVRA members

New Market, May 18-19, 2019, New Market,
Virginia (USV) <https://www.vmi.edu>

Fort Mulligan, August 17, Petersburg, WV -
ranger749@yahoo.com or 304-749-7657

Shenandoah 1864, Oct. 4-6 (USV)

Burlington, WV Oct. 4-6 - 304-749-7657

155th Cedar Creek, Oct. 18-20, 2019 (USV)

Other Events

Droop Mountain, October 11-13, 2019
<https://battleofdroopmountain.com>

Other Time Periods.

World War II

May 4 **Bataan Death March Memorial**
- Wellsburg, WV

June 7-9 Butler PA **Jeep Fest**

June 22-23 PA **Trolley Museum**

September 6-8 **Brooke County WV Fair**

WW II Battle Reenactments:

August 2-4 **Operation Market Garden**,
Tidioute, PA

August 16-18 **D-Day**, Conneaut, Ohio.

18th Century:

Memorial Day Weekend, (possible) **French
and Indian War encampment**

July 5-7 Siege of Fort Niagara, Niagara
State Park, NY

August 23-25, **French and Indian War
Muster**, Fort Frederick MD

Labor Day Weekend - **Siege of Fort
Henry**, Oglebay Park, Wheeling, WV.

Miscellaneous

June 21-23, **Wild West Weekend**, Old
Bedford Village, Bedford, PA.

(Editor's Note: All events listed under the heading "Other Time Periods" were suggested by Jim Barnes and questions about those events should be directed to Jim.)

Next Meeting

At this time no meeting has been scheduled.

Official Records of the War of the Rebellion

The Waldomere in Clarksburg has accepted our offer. I met with Cathy Norko a representative of the Waldomere library in April and she expressed an interest in receiving our donation. We will work on transferring the books from my possession to Waldomere in May.

Many of you may remember Waldomere as we camped on the lawn once or twice over the years as part of Clarksburg's West Virginia Day celebration. Waldomere was built by Waldo Goff and his wife Harriet Moore Goff in 1839. A small genealogy and local history library is located on a portion of the second floor.

The WVRA received this donation from an individual in Charleston a number of years past. The donation consisted of a complete set of the "War of the Rebellion Official Records" otherwise known as "The O.R." This donation has been generously stored at the home of Jack and Tonya Daft since then. The Dafts requested that books be relocated. Some of the books are still shrink wrapped and a handful have suffered some water damage caused by a leak in the roof of the Daft's storage building.

Chuck Critchfield received the books from Tonya on February 17 and is temporarily storing them at his church in Clarksburg until a permanent home can be found for them. The WVRA contacted Beverly Heritage group but that organization was not interested because as it turned out, they had a set of the OR after all. . Phil Caskey, outstanding teacher at University High School in Morgantown has expressed an interest in the books and the Executive Committee voted to donate the WVRA O.

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R. volumes to University High School. Unfortunately UHS did not have enough room for the books.

-- C. L. Critchfield

and the registration forms can be obtained at <https://www.vmi.edu>.

Kevin Skaggs will be in overall command of the Federal Army at New Market in the absence of Darrell Markijohn (see Editor's Corner).

If you are planning to attend, please let 1st West Virginia Unit Representative Mark Tennant know that you are planning to attend. (mtennant6@yahoo.com)

Treasurer's Report

April 1-30, 2019

Beginning balance	\$2944.05
Credits	
Memberships	\$105.00
Ending Balance	\$3049.05

Submitted by Jack Rush

Insurance

There have been several inquiries about insurance. Jack Rush has received the Certificate of Liability Insurance and will bring a copy to the next meeting of the WVRA.

Upcoming Events

Beverly Heritage Days: Centuries of History

July 12, 13, 14, 2019
Beverly, West Virginia

Living Historians and Reenactors from 1750 through 1950 are invited to join the Beverly Heritage Center for our timeline heritage event to share the history of settlement, conflict, and daily life in the Tygart Valley. Living history camps will include Native American, Pioneer, Civil War, and World War II eras with scenarios welcome for any part of our timeline, military and civilian. Living history, first person impressions, demonstrations, heritage crafts and displays are all welcome. Planned scenarios and demonstrations are strongly encouraged. This event is FREE with pre-registration, and includes camp amenities and one meal. For information and registration see www.beverlyheritagecenter.org (watch for updates coming soon) or call 304-637-7424.

New Market

A few members of the 1st have expressed interest in attending the 155th anniversary reenactment of the battle of New Market. Registration is by mail only

Other Features



Pam and Chuck Critchfield talk about Civil War-related topics to a Monongalia County adult education class in April. In addition to discussing what they were wearing, Chuck talked about the causes of the war and made a presentation on historical flags of the era.

155 Years Ago (May 1864)

*My continuing effort to remember the men who fought with the 1st and 12th West Virginia through the writing of **Joshua Winters, Joseph Thoburn and Thomas Jefferson Orr.***

In May of 1864, the 1st West Virginia Infantry and the 12th West Virginia Infantry were organized into the same brigade -- the Second Brigade, of the First Division of the Department of West Virginia. The Department was commanded by Major General Franz Sigel, the Division by Brigadier

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General Jeremiah Sullivan and the Brigade by the 1st's own, Colonel Joseph Thoburn.

As part of US Grant's plan for May of 1864, Sigel would apply pressure to the Confederate defenses by advancing up (or down depending on your perspective) the Shenandoah Valley eventually threatening and destroying the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad. As Thoburn wrote: "...Lt. Gen'l Grant seems to have been more eager thus far in preparing for a grand movement of the whole army than to protect and strengthen all the smaller points. This should be the wiser policy...and more decisive victories on our part."

Sullivan's Division comprised the infantry portion of Sigel's little army, gathering around Martinsburg in late April. Thoburn's Brigade being one brigade of the Division and August Moor commanding the First Brigade of the Division. Thoburn's Brigade was composed of the 1st and 12th West Virginia, 34th Massachusetts and 54th Pennsylvania regiments. Cautiously, Sigel advanced southward in the Shenandoah, conscious that Confederate partisans and irregulars were threatening his supply line all the way back to the B&O.

As the middle of the month approached, Sigel's force had inched its way to Woodstock and the nearby area. On the 14th at 9 am, the 1st West Virginia and 34th Massachusetts were detached from Thoburn and added to an advance towards New Market. The 12th remained with Thoburn at Mt. Jackson. At 11 am, under the command of Moor, the 1st and 34th Mass along with artillery and cavalry marched southward towards Mount Jackson where they met and drove Confederate forces. Along the way the 123rd Ohio Infantry joined the foot soldiers. The 14th was yet another rainy day, adding to the work of driving the Confederates back on New Market. The 1st was under the command of Major Ed. W. Stephens at this point according to Rawling.

Rawling, who was not with the Regiment, writes that 1st was about a mile north of New Market after helping to drive the Confederates back. Here they prepared to camp when around nightfall "orders came to the major in command to advance to the north edge of a piece of woods to the right." Judging from old maps, these woods were in Indian Hollow and these woods extended all the way to the old road to the river west of town and in front of the Confederate main line on Shirley Hill. Once reaching the north edge of the woods, the 1st sent out skirmishers where they discovered Southern pickets at the southern edge of the woods. Confederate pickets began to drive the 1st's pickets in the dark, back on the main line where the enemy was stopped by a volley. The 1st sent forth pickets once again, but found the enemy in line who pressed the 1st's skirmish line back to within 150 yards of the regiment where a "steady, well-sustained, and, no doubt, destructive fire..." stopped their advance.

The 1st slept on their arms until daylight on the 15th, another rainy day. The regiment was moved forward (and probably to the left) where it supported Snow's Battery located near St. Matthew's church. The 1st now occupied the far left flank of the advance with its flank resting on the Valley Pike. The Federals were now strung out from New Market north to Mount Jackson and dispersed like this, were vulnerable to an attack by a smaller, yet concentrated Confederate force. Sigel began to move some of his men forward, including Thoburn and the 12th.

ON the 15th the Confederates advanced on the forward Federal line overlapping the flank and forcing the Northern men back. Sigel ordered Thoburn forward and by shortly after noon Thoburn and two regiments (including the 12th) moved forward towards New Market. "I made the six miles forward in a little over an hour."

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The men had marched at the double quick in the mud reaching the front by 2 pm when the Confederates were pushing the Federals back to the vicinity of the Bushong Farm.

At the end of this activity Sigel's main line had been established on Bushong Hill down to Valley Pike with two batteries and Thoburn's Brigade. Cavalry held the left flank on the other side of the pike. The 1st and 54th Pennsylvania were in a slight ravine hidden from the enemy. The 34th Massachusetts occupied the ridgeline to the top of Bushong's Hill and could be seen by the Confederates. Thoburn wrote that the advanced line of the 18th Connecticut and 123rd Ohio "yielded and poured back through our second line. I immediately advanced my line out of the ravine so that I could rake the enemy as they emerged from the ravine."

Differing Accounts

In reading Rawlings, Thoburn and William C. Davis's account in **The Battle of New Market**, you get three different accounts of what happened next. Thoburn's account leads one to believe he ordered an advance out of the ravine so the brigade could "...rake the enemy as they emerged.." Davis writes that Sigel ordered a general advance around 3pm of Thoburn's Brigade - the 12th was held in reserve or was unmanageable according to whose account you read. In any event, the fact that three regiments from Thoburn's Brigade moved forward to attack and that the 1st was ahead of the regiments to either side is not in dispute. The attack was repulsed by the Confederate line after an advance of about 100 yards. In this advance First Sergeant James M. Burns (B) saved the colors and rescued another soldier earning the Medal of Honor. Thoburn and Rawling lead you to believe the 1st retired in good order and made a good stand. Davis would make you believe the 1st kept on going headed north on the Pike.

All during this time, the actions of the 12th are likewise debated. Hewitt, like Rawling,

was not at the battle, but writes his book based on the eyewitness or report of other in his regiment. Undoubtedly, the 12th remained in the rear of the line as the reserve. Still the men took some fire in the form of overshoots from the Confederates, that fell amongst their ranks. At some point Sigel ordered Colonel Curtis to send two companies of the 12th to the right of the batteries to drive away Confederate pickets that had worked their way up along the wooded bluff over the river and were now picking off gunners on Carlin's Battery. Hewitt writes that Companies A and B were sent to the right. Sigel writes in his report that to his surprise ..."the men could not be moved an inch." He reports that finally about 20 members of the 12th were persuaded to move to the right where the gunners said they gave no support. James Miller of Company A, writes that "Our company was ordered to the right of the line to prevent a flank movement..." giving support to Hewitt's writing. Thomas Jefferson Orr of the 12th, still with Sullivan's Headquarters staff, witnessed the battle from behind the lines but offers not detail about how the 12th fought. Sigel wrote in 1891 that the 12th was a good unit but inexperienced at New Market. This inexperience "created considerable trouble at the beginning of the fight" he wrote and added at some point they fired over the heads of the 34th Massachusetts without orders.

Thoburn praised his men after the battle and criticized Sigel for posting the men "in a very poor manner and were too much divided." That Sigel never concentrated his forces is the universal criticism. He wasted his 2 to 1 advantage. The 1st suffered 81 casualties which is approaching about 1/4th of the regimental strength. The 12th suffered 46.

The Federals would retreat after their defeat back to Cedar Creek where they would remain a while. Thoburn's May 22 diary entry commented "Maj. Gen'l Sigel was

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relieved yesterday by Maj. Gen'l Hunter. I rejoice at the change. Hunter will be a very Sigel." However Hunter got off on the wrong foot according to Thoburn. "...I would rather have seen him made a better start. To begin with, his first Gen'l order promising the men half rations and mule meat was not wise. Men can endure a great deal but they should not be promised the worst until we get to the worst." Hunter then required every man to carry extra shoes, extra rounds in knapsacks "when there is not a knapsack in the command, all having been left at Martinsburg. And there is not one hundred rounds of ammunition to the man to be had." Thoburn added mater-of-factly two days later that his brother had been killed in a railroad accident near Grafton. Thoburn's Brigade was ordered to move south once again and by the end of the month was at Rude's Hill just a mile or two from the New Market battlefield.

Jonathan Winters, who wrote little of the battle (they drove us hard to Rudes Hill), recorded the weather and routine events around camp during the second half of May. Although apparently there were 100 rounds to be had, despite Thoburn's comments. on the 24th "we drew 100 rounds of catridgers today. Our knap sacks got hear today." Hewitt remarks that the 12th got ten days' rations of coffee and sugar and three days' rations of hard bread." He also commented that each man was required to carry 80 to 100 rounds. Thomas Jefferson Orr commented on the 17th that the 12th had "saved our right from much severe loss than they would otherwise have sustained."

Civil War Letters and Diary of Joshua Winters
Edited by WVRA member Elizabeth Davis Swiger.
History of the First Regiment West Virginia Infantry, by C. J. RAWling. A Company of Boys in Blue by Mark Paul and Thomas Jefferson Orr.
History of the 12th West Virginia Volunteer Infantry by William Hewitt

Other Time Periods

Jim Barnes submitted a list of suggested events seen above.

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"They Said It (or didn't)"

"Never interfere with the enemy when he is in the process of destroying himself."

-- Napoleon

"A shot struck my knapsack and sunk deep in my blanket, shelter tent and rubber blanket. In an instant another went through my pant leg, grazing the skin. At this moment I heard something jingle and said to Lt. Hess that a bullet had gone through my canteen. He replied 'No, it went through your frying-pan.' I had strapped it to my haversack.....At this instant the Lt. fell backward shot through the heart."

-- Jesse Tyler Sturm, 14th West Virginia Infantry, battle of Fisher's Hill

"...in the rout which ensued four members of our company, including myself, were taken prisoners. Fortunately we fell into the hands of brave captors, who treated us kindly. As we walked back over the battlefield....My guard permitted me to pick up a blanket, and also a well filled haversack and both these became of good service to me in my long imprisonment."

-- James N. Miller, Co. A, 12th West Virginia Infantry, after New Market

"O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose, not only the tyranny, but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. Asia, and Africa, have long expelled her. Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. O! receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind."

--Thomas Pain, Common Sense

"And now if I leave here and go elsewhere, violence may overtake me in my retreat, and I have no more claim upon the protection of any other community than I have upon this; and I

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have concluded, after consultation with my friends and earnestly seeking counsel of God, to remain at Alton, and here to insist on protectino in the exercise of my rights. If the civil authorities refuse to protect me, I must look to God; and if I die, I have determine to make my grave in Alton."

-- Elijah Lovejoy, abolitionist printer, Nov. 3, 1837. He was shot to death four days later outside his Alton Observer newspaper by a pro-slavery mob.

Other Sites

American Battlefield Trust - www.battlefields.org
Beverly Heritage Center -
www.beverlyheritagecenter.org
Mason Dixon Civil War Roundtable
www.wvmasondixoncwrt.org/

WVRA Officers 2019

Jim Barnes - President
Ken Connell - Vice President
Jack Rush - Secretary/Treasurer
Diane Tennant - Unit Rep (TASAS)
Mark Tennant - Unit Rep (1st W. Va. Infantry)
Bill Brisendine - Unit Rep (25th Virginia Infantry)
Unit Rep (artillery) - TBD
Webmaster - Peter Baxter
Editor - Chuck Critchfield

ATTENTION - Please do not send any correspondence to the PO Box in Buckhannon. Membership information can be sent to me. Remember you must be a member of record to qualify for membership benefits. To be covered under the liability insurance policy purchased by the WVRA, you must be a member of record.

There are two Facebook pages currently in use as avenues of communication by WVRA members. One is the WVRA-The Trans-Allegheny Soldiers Aid Society group page. The other group is labeled simply West Virginia Reenactors Association. Tonya Daft is the administrator on the West Virginia Reenactors Association page. Please address all questions to her about that page. I am not sure who is administrator to the WVRA-TASAS page. I continue to use the WVRA-TASAS page

to post announcements as it has been the page getting the most use.

As newsletter editor, I encourage submissions from members or readers, that are related to American history. I retain the right as editor to make a final decision on the content of this publication. Abusive or political submissions will not be published.

Editor's Corner

The Editor's chance to speak

THANK YOU to Peter Baxter. Thank you to Hunter Lesser, Jack Rush and Lt. Colonel Pete Taylor for their contributions to this edition of the Dispatch

INSUFFICIENT TIME - I apologize, but I had to throw this issue together quickly. Too many other things going on right now.

PERSONALS - Please keep Jennifer Smith in your prayers.

SO YOU THINK THE CIVIL WAR IS OVER?!? - I visited the Confederate memorial in Mingo Flats in late March. The damage to the inscription consists of pock marks caused by a firearm or pick ax or something similar. The red paint has been flung over the side of the soldier gracing the top of the monument.

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This newsletter is available free to members by email. It will be mailed by US Mail for \$10 per year fee.

The views expressed here are not necessarily the views of the WVRA.

WVRA website - wvra.org

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"The lack of a sense of history is the damnation of the modern world - Robert Penn Warren