



THE CHARGER

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some more of the meeting programs this past year. He has, therefore, written a President’s Message incorporating the meeting presentations made by Ed Gantt on the United States Colored Troops, Professor Brian Mitchell on Louisiana Reconstruction Governor Oscar Dunn, and Brian Burtka on General Winfield Scott Hancock.

Accordingly, we here present you with this “Special Supplement” to the May 2026 issue of “The Charger.” The next regular issue of “The Charger” will be published for August 2026 (Vol. 51, No. 1). In the meantime, please enjoy this supplement and the Special Series of past “Charger” articles being published by Dave Carrino on the CCWRT website. Thank you for a great year!

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[EDITOR’S NOTE] As Judge Patton leaves office as CCWRT President for the 2025-2026 campaign year, he requests the opportunity to publish in “The Charger” his thoughts on

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President's Message

[Judge Charles Patton, as President of CCWRT for the year 2025-2026, has submitted the following message covering his thoughts on some of the meeting programs for this last year. Accordingly, we are publishing this "Special Supplement" for the May 2026 issue of "The Charger."]

****United States Colored Troops, Edward Gantt, CCWRT Meeting on 11-13-25***

Ed Gantt explained, there are a lot of historians who wrote about the Civil War, most of your readings were from people who were 20th century historians. They are going through the archives, which one do you think has more credibility? Well, we could make some assumptions, but every woman in this room knows that men lie and exaggerate. Even if he was there, on the battlefield you still have to take it with a little bit of a grain of salt, maybe not as much of a grain of salt, as someone who is one hundred years later writing about it.

Gantt told us some of the writers he studied were there during the Civil War and they wrote about army life, some published their writing in 1887, the yellow writing on the picture he showed us, indicates that some books are available as a free download on something called the Gutenberg Project, you can look it up yourself, in fact that's a good point for me to say right now, don't take my word for anything I say tonight, really I mean that from the bottom of my heart. When I taught high school for 18 years I told my students, it is in a book someplace, find it find a source and when you find it in that source, go look at another source and then let that inspire you to go look at another source.

But do not take the win! We get suckered in too frequently by people who sound convincing, who look convincing, who make promises that they know they cannot keep, he urged us not to let that happen tonight.

Do not take my word for it, I have a few other references, here is what Joseph Wilson had to say, this is in the forward of his book. He is talking now the 1880s and he is writing about the United States Colored Troops that probably most Americans did

not know anything about prior to the movie "Glory" coming out in 1989.

The organization and discipline of over 200,000 men of a race that for more than two centuries had patiently borne the burden of unrequited Bondage for the maintenance of laws which had guaranteed to them, neither rights nor protections, was indeed a magnificent undertaking. I agree with what Joseph T Wilson said.

Gantt told us, "Before we get started let us make a few agreements, first is and this was necessary when you talked about the Civil War, what is a fact? Something that could be proven! If you cannot prove it, it might have happened, but that is not a fact! Carl Sagan said, it is called the evidence, it is not the evidence of absence, we run into that all the time with the Civil War, people spout things out and offer them as facts, but there is no proof. In the absence of proof, you cannot consider that a fact. It may have happened, we do not know for sure. We will get to some things tonight, I guarantee that you believe are facts, but the evidence does not support it.

Therefore, based on my definition, the statement is not a fact.

Another agreement, the incomplete nature of telling history, especially history regarding American History or specifically the Civil War. Gantt asked, "no matter what we bring up, what we discuss something is going to be left out, don't get mad at me, don't throw anything at me if I don't bring up the thing, that you consider most important aspect of the Civil War, that battle which you know a lot about, you know the ends and outs of the movements of the troops, and the thoughts of the Generals. If I do not mention that one today, do not be disappointed. We cannot discuss everything in our 40 minutes; we may not agree on the meaning of interpretation or interpretation of some things we discussed. I mean that again that is the nature of the American Civil War 165 years ago and we are still debating issues today and hotly debating issues you will get into this evening.

Some people will get into a fight with some other people over the American Civil War. If you hold fast to a certain position,

The question was asked, "What was the United States Colored Troops, USCT? It was a branch of the

United States Army, founded in 1863, that is important; to recruit, organize and oversee the service of African American soldiers during the American Civil War, the war from 1861 to 1865. The USCT Regiments consisted of Black enlisted men, lead in almost all cases by white officers. By the end of the Civil War, 200,000 African American men had served in the USCT.



Well don't take my word for it, again, the real question is, if it happened, if there were 200,000 African American men who served during the Civil War, why did most Americans grow up in the 20th century having little or no knowledge that the USCT existed, or that the USCT was 10% of the Federal Army in 1864? In 1865 the last months of the war there were more Black Soldiers in the federal army than there were total soldiers in the confederate army. We grew up in the 20th century and did not know that.

I did not learn this until 2008. In Washington DC, there is a memorial that sits across from the African American Civil War Museum right off U Street in Washington DC, not far from Howard University's campus.

What you cannot really see in this picture is that is a wall, with names of the men who served with the USCT, it wraps around and a semi circle behind this Statue of Freedom, which is the name of it. The Director of the Museum, Doctor Frank Smith, went to the National Archives when this was still an idea and asked for military records of the Members of the USCT. They gave him the records!

Now we have facts from the National Archives of men who served in the USCT. They gave Frank Smith the records of 237,000 people and some of those were probably duplicates, but all that he could

condense with some type of corroboration; 209,100 names appear on this wall behind the monument, The Statue of Freedom, men who served with the USCT.

Gantt also said, "I have a personal preference for reading the stories from guys who were there and wrote about it. Three of those gentlemen, James Henry Gooding was a free Black man living in New Bedford, MA. He worked on a Whaler Before the Civil War. When he heard the 54th Massachusetts USCT was being formed, he made his way to a recruiting center. During the war he was wounded in combat in 1864, he wrote letters from the front and the letters were eventually compiled into a book, *On the Altar of Freedom, a Black Soldier's Letters during the Civil War*.

There are lots of details about the Civil War army life in both George Washington Williams book and Joseph T Wilson's book, the *Black Phalanx*, a history of the Negro Soldier in the United States. He wrote a lot of letters from the front also.

Another illiterate Black man, George Washington Williams made his way to a recruiting station and signed up with the 54th Massachusetts. He served during the war and survived, his book, *The History of the Negro Troops, 1861 to 1865*. Published in 1887

J T Wilson's book starts at the American Revolution and includes African American Soldiers who fought in every American war all the way up to the Civil War. Another one of those areas that when we are growing up in America, we do not remember hearing about, in American History books from some of the white officers who served in USCT and authored their story.

Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a White Officer in the USCT wrote, *Army Life in a Black Regiment*, again this book is available on free download from the Gutenberg project. Nolan P Hollowell, we believe he is the guy who took over the 54th Massachusetts when Colonel Robert Gould Shaw was killed there at Battery Wagner in South Carolina.

Louie Emilio was the son of Spanish immigrants and served as a Captain in one of the companies of the 54th Massachusetts. His book has a particular story of heroism, Gantt said, "I hope we will get to that before we are done.

A few more contemporary historians wrote and in their writings include some aspects of the USCT. We are familiar with the Civil War writings of James McPherson and fortunately, by the second half of the 20th century the story that USCT started to float up to the top of the bookshelves, and historians began to write more about it.

If you go back to an early 20th century writing or the late 19th century, you may not see any mention whatsoever of the USCT. The reason is because of the influence of the United Daughters of Confederacy, to whom the United States Government gave editorial rights to our educational curriculum regarding the United States Civil War. Anything that was not favorable to the confederate cause was taken out of the History Books and news media. History repeats, look at what is going on today with history. Anything from the lost cause was prominently displayed in bookstores and public schools and libraries as part of their narrative of American history.

Gantt reminded us, we know more now and hopefully we can keep from going down that same path again, being selective with history, scratching things out of textbooks, excising certain paragraphs, tearing pages out of the history book, because we do not like the story, the truth does not always come out. History depends on who is telling the story.

Here is how I like to approach the history Gantt said, because we frequently want to discuss the Civil War when it started 1861. Then it ended in 1865. There are some things that happened before 1860, which kind of created the situation that we learned about in 1861. If you go into understanding the war, the mindset of why the Civil War was fought, you must look before 1861 and in many cases after 1865, let us look at some things.

Gantt said, When I tell the story, I choose a convenient start point, 1789 the United States Constitution and the Continental Congress, they did something, they kind of set this wheel in motion, we learned about the 3/5 compromise, that is probably a two-line entry in that High School history lesson. There is one thing they did to begin with re-writing history, remember there were four and a half million slaves living in the southern states before the Civil War.

There were not quite as many slaves in America in 1817, that meant the slave population or at least 3/5 of it is going to be counted for congressional representation! What that meant is, if you had more slaves you would get more congress people to represent your interest in the Congress.

The citizens in slave states also get more Electoral College votes when it comes time to vote for President. What that did is, it really protected the institution of slavery because it gave more than their fair share of power to the slaveholding states, by counting slave populations and that becomes a political issue all the way up through 1861.

The Haitian slave revolt, the only successful slave revolt in the western hemisphere, perhaps in the history of the world. An African slave revolt, which was close to America, caused a lot of stress on southern plantations in the US. This revolt was on the minds of Americans as we get closer to the Civil War. Every time there is something that looks like a slave insurrection or slave uprising the Haitian slave revolt is what comes to mind, to the people of the south. Elected officials in Washington and state capitals all over the south are preoccupied with the Haitian slave revolt.

In 1792 The US passed the Militia Act, and this legislation said only able-bodied white men could serve in the State Militia.

We know through studying American History that is not what happened, we know there were African Americans who fought the Revolutionary War, fought in the War of 1812, we know that they were a lot more sensitive to slave revolts taking place in slave states. By the time the Civil War came along, the slave owners were a lot more sensitive to putting arms in the hands of Black men.

The invention of Eli Whitney's cotton gin made slavery much more profitable, so much so that as we get closer to the Civil War, the southern United States is among the wealthiest regions in the world. This newfound wealth came mostly from the cotton production on the slave plantations. However, Europe had started to back away from the institution of slavery by 1808.

The U S banned the importation of African slaves, then we get to Nat Turners rebellion and remember

the Haitian revolt, the people in the south think another one of those revolts will happen in America and it's going to end up like Haiti, well they really came down harder on Nat Turner's rebellion.

In Southampton, Virginia at the end of Nat Turner's Rebellion, his band of men were killed, Turner was decapitated his head was placed on a stake and left there on the side of the road as a sign to anyone else who would think about starting a slave rebellion.

In the 1850's, there is a battle of words and ideology between the north and the south. It goes back and forth in Congress and the southern states, partly because of their larger representation in Congress, can pass the Fugitive Slave Act.

Language in the fugitive slave act allows the slave owners to deputize every white male American and make him a slave catcher, even in free states!

Gantt told us, no matter where you lived in the United States, white males are required by law, if someone has been identified as a runaway slave, you are required to return that person to their master. In 1859, John Brown and his men, attacked the Federal Arsenal at Harpers Ferry, West Va. He is planning to start a slave insurrection; he is going to get the weapons stored in Harpers Ferry Armory and pass them out to the enslaved population on a plantation in Virginia.

The State of Virginia came down hard on John Brown and the men with him at trial in Va, to make sure that did not happen again.

Abraham Lincoln's election in 1860 occurred after the trial, Abraham Lincoln even though he had said he was not going to touch the institution of slavery if he was elected, the southern states did not believe him. They believed Abraham Lincoln was an abolitionist at heart. The Southern States had made-up their minds that if Lincoln was elected they were leaving the USA, particularly South Carolina, "if he gets elected we are leaving. by 1861,"

Eleven confederate States of America by the spring of 1861, had seceded from the United States. The reason those border states are yellow on the map is because they become critical to every decision that Abraham Lincoln makes during this war, Gantt said. Those are commonly referred to as the border states, Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland, and Delaware. Those

states decided not to secede, but to stay with the Union. They were slaveholding states and Abraham Lincoln was walking a tight rope for his entire presidency to make sure that he did not do anything with the institution of slavery, to push these folks to join the Confederacy.

In the other Border States except Delaware there was constant push and pull between the anti-slavery and pro slavery abolitionist factions. It could have gone either way on any day. In 1861 in April, Fort Sumter was fired on, and the Civil War started.

This is a critically important action taken by General Benjamin Butler, Gantt said, you may have heard Benjamin Butler's name, it seems like, no matter where he was, he became famous or infamous depending on which side you were on. In New Orleans, he put cannons up on the hill and threatened to blow up the city, if they did not get out of the way and stopped impeding the Union Troops who were passing through the city.

Benjamin Butler was the commanding General in the Hampton Roads area; he is at Fort Monroe in May of 1865. Gantt had a map showing Fort Monroe, it is just across the water, from Norfolk VA. four miles or so to the other shore. In May 1861 three enslaved men escaped from Norfolk, which is being held by the Confederate Army. Fort Monroe was held for the entire war by the Union, and those three men, slaves make their way across the Hampton Road and seek asylum at the U.S. Fort. They are followed, the next day their owner, a Confederate Commander who demands the return of those slaves, citing the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law.



General Benjamin Butler who is an Attorney, responds, he said, you are no longer part of the United States, therefore our laws don't apply to you and by the way, if the laws did apply, I would not return these three gentlemen because they are going

back to help you build your fortifications to engage in warfare against the US.

I will consider them just as I would if I had found your cannon on the battlefield abandoned, or your horse or any other supplies I will take possession of those and consider that Contraband of War. That was not a popular decision at first, the folks in Washington DC were not supportive of General Butler's decision but eventually it caught on and other Union officers were doing the same thing.

Eventually, Congress passed the First Confiscation Act that said the Union Army can hire fugitive slaves as laborers.

At the same time there were other Union Generals who did exactly what the confederate commander had demanded. They returned runaway slaves to the confederates, citing the fugitive slave act.

In September 1861 there is a group of Black Soldiers down in New Orleans who are descendants of French and African men who fought alongside Andrew Jackson in the War of 1812, they approach the Confederate Army Commander and said, we are here to fight for our homeland too and they are natives of New Orleans, Louisiana.

The Confederates remember the Haitian revolt and Nat Turners rebellion and John Brown's attempt to start his insurrection. The Confederate Officer said, "no thank you, we are not ready for you yet; not to put guns in your hands" and they turned the native New Orleans soldiers down.

When General Butler finally arrives in New Orleans, the Louisiana Native Guard, Black Soldiers approaches the Union Commander and offers their support to the Union side. The Union accepts this offer to have Black Soldiers fighting for the North, this is without authority from Washington. The Louisiana Native Guard became one of the early American military organizations, before the 54th Massachusetts.

Abraham Lincoln is trying to hold all of that back because he is concerned that those border states will get upset and leave the union. If Maryland decided to succeed, Confederate States would completely surround Washington DC. Abraham Lincoln does a lot of extraordinary things to keep from upsetting the balance with the four border states.

Gantt told us, there were other Generals around such as General John C Fremont, who in Missouri declared all the slaves of disloyal owners to be free without any authority from Washington DC. He is admonished and told to modify the placement of Black men in the US Army, and not to exceed Congressional Laws.

Abraham Lincoln is still concerned that this will upset that balance with the border States. A month later General Hunter issued an order saying, slaves in South Carolina, Florida, and Georgia are free.

Lincoln issued a proclamation nullifying that action. Lincoln is being pushed by certain Generals, who were abolitionists. James Lane an abolitionist Senator, organized the First Kansas Colored Volunteers, ignoring the orders from Lincoln to enroll white troops only. What we have is a conflict that is growing, and you are familiar with this. Abraham Lincoln said, if I could save the union without freeing any slaves, I would do it. If I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it and if I could save it by freeing some leaving others alone, I would also do that. What a politician! Ask him where he really stands, he does not stand anywhere.

Gantt said, this is OK, I understand the border states issue now after studying the map and the history; Lincoln cannot move too far in one direction or the other, he really cannot.

The Second Confiscation Act comes about in 1862; Congress finally agrees to let Black men into the army as workers and soldiers. They understand Butler's idea, you can employ African Americans as workers, but that did not allow the forming of Black Soldiers in the Army. There are lots of Black men, who were employed as laborers, digging fortifications or scouts or wagon operators. Teamsters, the wagon drivers made \$15 a month, compared to \$13 a month for a soldier

Gantt reminded us, one of the things that it is critical to understand this point is, all these Confederate States that left the United States had a large Congressional representation, they were no longer in Congress. After they succeeded with the Union they could not oppose any of those actions in Congress. The things that were holding Lincoln back are those four border states.

People like Frederick Douglass, who was an adviser to President Lincoln, from time to time, William

Lloyd Garrison on the left, they continue to push for the abolition of slavery. Not unusual for the President, he was looking at the bigger picture and must keep the States together. Douglass and Garrison think Abraham Lincoln is dragging his feet currently.

In the summer of 1862, Lincoln announces he is finally going to advance the Emancipation Proclamation. There were two things which would benefit the union caused by emancipation, one it would cause the slaves working on plantations who could get away, if you know you're free, then you make your way across the river and it also meant that we could get more manpower in uniform, we'll get to that in a minute, Gantt said.

Lincoln was advised to hold off on announcing the Emancipation Proclamation, his Cabinet told him to wait until we had a battlefield victory. Gantt reminded us that it was from Ken Burns Civil War series on PBS. Lincoln is waiting until after the battle of Antietam, which he considers enough of a victory, then he can make his announcement that in 90 days he is going to Emancipate the Slaves.

Lincoln believed that it was a requirement to provide the "legal notice" to someone or a State, you must give them sufficient notice and that is what that 90-day warning was about in Abraham Lincoln's mind.

Robert E Lee makes his way up to Antietam, you are familiar with that battle and the proclamation, Lincoln says, those who are free are forever free, that did not go over very well in the South! As expected, one of the things that came out of the Emancipation Proclamation that we could now enlist African American men as soldiers in the United States Army.

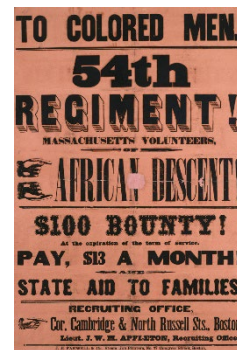
It was important because, prior to the Militia Act of 1791, white men and many people still understand, the second confiscation act opened the door a little bit, to allow former slaves to work for the army. Here is the other thing about the Emancipation Proclamation, it takes effect on January first, if you were a slave on December 31st, somewhere in America you were still a slave on January 2nd now what does that mean?

Gantt explained what this means is, Abraham Lincoln remembers the map that had the four states in yellow, they were all excluded from the Emancipation Proclamation. There were other areas in America that were excluded from the terms of the Emancipation

Proclamation, areas in Tennessee that were under Union control. Also excluded were areas in Louisiana that were under Union control, were excluded from the Emancipation Proclamation.

At first the EP freed zero slaves! One thing it did, it said that African American men can now enlist in the United States Army. A few months later the Bureau of Colored Troops was established.

Between January and May, the governor of Massachusetts, John A. Andrew was given special permission to create a Regiment of African American soldiers, the 54th Massachusetts. So many men showed up to volunteer, they signed up to serve, but they ended up creating the 54th Massachusetts, the 55th Massachusetts and the Fifth-Colored Cavalry all trained in the Boston area.



They were engaged in the war by the summer of 1863, troops had the role of going around recruiting more soldiers and once they were recruited additional places for training were established, places where they could train and be equipped and ready for battle.

Ed Gantt asked the question during his talk, what was the life of the USCT soldier like? It kind of depended on where you were and who was in position to help or hurt you. That was the nature of the Life.

There were many reported massacres, like Ft Pillow, in the Memphis, Tennessee area and the Lawrence Massacre in Kansas. During the war there was a congressional investigation into the massacres of USCT soldiers.

The former Governor of New York said, no more bloodshed to satisfy the abolitionist in New York. The Governor said the bloody barbarous revolutionary pledged to maintain and defend the sovereignty of New York against the unconstitutional violations by the federal government.

You can understand why Abraham Lincoln is kind of walking this tight rope, because there are people all over the country not just in the South who are not necessarily of the same mindset that he was.



Fort Pillow

As the Bureau of Colored Troops started to gather large numbers of of USCT and units, most of the time they were used for supply and guard duties, because there was some question in the minds of white soldiers whether black soldiers would stand and fight when the battle became tough.

The USCT faced discrimination in that they were paid less than their white counterparts, at least in the first year and a half of of their existence the white soldiers received \$13 a month, and African American soldier received \$10 a month and out of that \$10, three were taken away to pay for the uniform. That went on for a while and then eventually the United States decided to make the pay equal to all the soldiers.

This one is important, Gantt said, by the time the war ended there were probably one hundred African American officers serving in the union army, almost all were either doctors or chaplains. There are a few who led troops into combat. There are none who led white troops in combat.

Twenty percent of the USCT were killed in action or died from disease. About 35% higher rate than that of the white Union troops. Here is something we need to bring up every now and then, they fought valiantly and many officers praised their conduct.

There were some Union officers who were not necessarily on board with the idea of having Black Troops; you can read in some of the official reports, from the white officers, these guys threw their guns down and ran away. That happened with union soldiers also when at the first battle of Manassas, in the first year of the war, white soldiers threw down

their guns and ran away. I think of many other battles with numerous reports of USCT being murdered while attempting to surrender.

What about Fort Pillow, Tennessee, Fort Springs, Arkansas Selena and Ft Plymouth, and others?

Here is something I want us to take away, Gantt said, 18 African American soldiers received the Medal of Honor for bravery during the Civil War, there has never been a movie about them. Gantt asked another question, who was the commander of this Unit? General Benjamin Butler?

This is the Battle of New Market Heights, just to the east of Richmond. Fourteen African Americans received the Medal of Honor for charging those confederate defenses, being pushed back, reforming, charging again, being pushed back, reforming and charged again, Gantt said, we see that kind of behavior in a few other battles such as the battle of Nashville for example or Port Hudson in Mississippi,

Battery Wagner is what was portrayed at the end of the movie Glory. The USCT 54th Mass is storming the Confederate defenses at Vicksburg and Port Hudson along the Mississippi River. This is part of Grants campaign against Vicksburg. Vicksburg eventually falls in July of 1863.



A few things I want to point out, Gantt said, most of us grew up and did not know; near the siege of Petersburg, that siege went on for about 10 months. We are into early 1864, let us back up to December of 1864. Someone I have not read who made this decision. There were Black Troops in General Butler's Army of the James and General Meade's army of the Potomac, they were all involved in that siege at Petersburg. One of the units that was in

General Meade's army was the 5th USCT from here in Ohio.

In late November early December, they combined with the Black Soldiers from General Meads's army and created for the first time in American history an all-Black Army Corps of about 30,000 men.

Let us move forward into the last days of Petersburg standing and we end up with the end of March. The story about President Jefferson Davis at Church on Sunday in Richmond and he gets a note that Petersburg can no longer be defended. As the Confederates are evacuating Richmond, they set the city on fire, at the risk of being completely destroyed. First there was a fire to burn anything that the federal army could make use of.

Then the local crowd got angry when they found out that in the food warehouses there was food and they were starving. The food is being held for the Confederate army, and they set more buildings on fire, and then the confederate army discovered the kegs of alcohol, the whiskey, they broke those open in the streets and set those on fire. Richmond is at risk of being completely destroyed.

The Union army, the 25th Army Corps under general Godfrey Wentzel a German immigrant, is approaching from Petersburg. The mayor of the confederate capital sends a message out to the approaching Union General for help in restoring order and saving his city, the 25th Army Corps that organization with 30,000 black men is one of the first groups that arrived in Richmond to restore a little bit of order and put out the fires.



After they put out the fires, they headed on to Appomattox along with the rest of the Union army. There is a marker for the battle of New Market Heights. Let me point out something that you probably cannot see, that was publicized 50 years

earlier. You had no idea that happened. This one is 1883 where 14 African Americans received the Medal of Honor. Five thousand United States Colored Troops were present and part of that Appomattox activity in the last few days of the war.

This one is 1863, there was just so much about what happened between 1861 and 1865, Americans do not know regarding what African American soldiers did. Do you remember the movie *Glory* and the ending of it? The Black troops go charging across the beach and they are storming Battery Wagner. They finally make their way up over the hill and suddenly these cannons fire and then the last thing you see is the USCT being thrown in the mass grave.

I never saw John Wayne get blown up at the end of a movie, there is just something wrong with that *Glory* story. In the movie *Glory*, they suffered 40% casualties in the 54th Massachusetts, the movie makes you think that they all died.

No, because eight months later, that same unit, the 54th, is engaged in a battle down in Florida, the largest land battle in Florida during the war, the battle of the Olustee, Florida. In February of 1864 and the Union loses this battle. The Union is retreating under General Seymour, retreating to Jacksonville. The Confederates are pursuing the 54th Massachusetts. They are directed to be the rear guard, to cover the retreat, they do not retreat, one of the trains carrying wounded union soldiers breaks down, and the 54th Massachusetts, rose to the occasion and attached a rope to the train, to the engine and the cars and began pulling the train a few miles to keep the train from falling in the hands of pursuing Confederates.

Gantt ended with a comment about the movie *Glory*. "I thought, why did the movie *Glory* not end with heroism? Now that is what we are used to seeing in American movies. Maybe when I make the movie it will have a different ending. It will be different, but that same Group, one of the heroes on the entree on the retreat away from the battle of Olustee, Florida, back to Jacksonville, where the USCT's physically pulled the train to keep it from falling in the hands of pursuing confederates. That story comes from Luis Emily's book. It tells me that I must tell the story to anyone who will listen and that is what brought me out here today. Thank you for your interest and I will make myself available for questions.

Q>> on May 24th & 25 the Union Army marches though Washington DC, they are celebrating the end of the war, let me tell that story after the surrender at Appomattox Courthouse and the surrender in North Carolina, there was a victory March and down Pennsylvania Ave. in Washington DC

The march took two days, to have all the soldiers marched by the President Andrew Johnson.

By this time, the USCT were the newest members of the army, and they were left in the field to patrol the south and protect the former slaves. However General Grant was advised there were Black people in Texas still being held in bondage, Grant told General G Mead to get 2,000 USCT and go to Texas and free the slaves. Where do you find 2,000 USCT's? Somewhere on the southeast and Gulf coast.

Remember that 25th Army Corps mentioned earlier, it went into Richmond. On the next day, they loaded aboard ships in City Point, South of Richmond in Virginia. They were sent to Texas, the first of that 25th Core that arrived in Texas was June 19th, when they arrived in Galveston TX.

The Juneteenth holiday you heard about is related to that same group arriving in Galveston. Now they were not the only union force that arrived in Texas. Why did they go to Texas? Well, there is some belief that Mexico was under Spanish or French rule at the time, and they might try to take advantage of the United States, being weakened after four years of civil war and trying to reclaim their lost territory of Texas.

Texas had only been in the Union for only 20 years when the Civil War started.

It kind of makes sense, Grant sent the Union troops down to guard the border to make sure no one from Spain, France or Mexico comes across the border to try to reclaim territory.

There was no USCT in the big parade in Washington DC, they were fighting in Texas and other places in the south.

They later had a parade for the USCT. The leadership in Pennsylvania was the mayor in Harrisburg, PA who found out about the USCT being left out of the parade in DC and invited the USCT to come to Harrisburg; and they had their own victory march in October of 1865. Then in 2015 we had a reenactment

of the victory march in Washington DC, and I was there, Gantt said.

Q>> my favorite civil war movie is Glory, are there any particular glaring errors in the movie?

EG>> Yes glaring error is that movie would lead you to believe that the 54th Massachusetts was made-up of runaways, because Denzel Washington talks about when he ran away in the movie Glory and he has been running ever since, he ran for President in another movie. But in 1862, the recruiters for the 54th Mass specifically sought out literate African American men and free men, living in the Boston area.

You may or may not know the fighting that lasted in Petersburg, remember that lasted all the way up through the end of 64 and the 65 November 1864 the presidential elections were held. The first African Americans to ever vote for President were members of the 5th USCT from Ohio, the Governor allowed them to vote for President, by mail, 194 African American men cast ballots for Abraham Lincoln!

CCWRT Presidents Message:

This was one of the Civil War Roundtable meetings I was looking forward too. Over the years, I have had a lot of people tell me, "No people of color fought in the Civil War." Edward Gantt and I met in the cemetery at Gettysburg; he was in Civil War uniform and had his rifle in hand. Earlier in the day, it was a chilly day in November, I was stopped in my car because of a parade, reenactors were marching.

I saw a banner, it said USCT, Brigadier General Edward Ferrero, the same General who the Cleveland CWRT debated five or six years ago, presented in the debate, (think about the Crater.) Gen John A. Logan, Bob Pence, won the debate that year.

Later in the day back at the cemetery, Ed Gantt asked if I had attended Howard University and was that my SUV at the Gatehouse? I responded who else in this place would have a Howard University Decal on the front plate. He asked what year, 1977, he said that was his year also, Engineering School. Our paths had never crossed in DC, on campus and here we are hundreds of miles north in a battlefield cemetery.

I hope all the CCWRT members enjoyed the presentation.

**** “Why Don’t We Know Governor
Oscar Dunn?”**

CCWRT, February 11, 2026

Professor Brian Mitchell is the speaker.

Professor Mitchell started his presentation to the CCWRT by telling us about interactions with his students, he very often asks his students to tell him, the first time they fell in love with history. When I go to conferences, and I ask people the same question, everybody can tell me exactly when they fell in love with history and that is how I know he or she has what it takes to be an academic historian.

They must have a passion for it, a love for learning, they have to want to do this, even if they do not find the answer that they are looking for in a week or a month or two weeks or two years, you have to be addicted to it.

When I listened to Vice President John Syrone who spoke with me before the meeting started and talked about the upcoming battlefield tour planned for next year, and I looked in his eyes, he had that passion; I know that he did. This may have been the only battle he followed. I know that he looks at all these battles over and over again. He knows every General that was there, he knows every movement of those troops, it is really important.

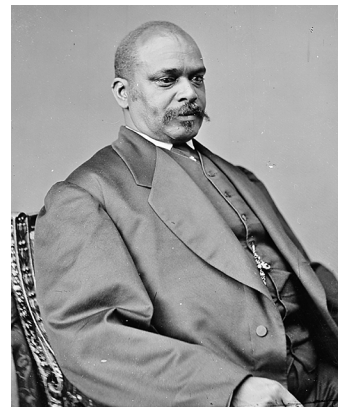
Prof Mitchell told us about when he fell in love with history. He showed us a family portrait and said, “in this family picture there is a little girl, she is my great, great grandmother, her name is Maddie Jackson Dunn. She was born in 1897 in Clinton, Louisiana, it is east of Baton Rouge in a Parish called East Feliciana. The man right next to her is her father, Robert Jackson, he is the son of a plantation owner, Elisha Jackson. He is the great grandson of the first plantation owner, Revolutionary War Officer, Thomas Jackson, who is given the Land Grant in Louisiana. He has two sons and then eventually his grandson will have a child with one of his slaves.”

Not having any other children, my great grandfather twice removed will take over the plantation. My Great Grandmother grew up in a sort of privileged position in comparison other African Americans that were surrounding her, she had a plantation, she had a carriage, her sisters went to normal school, they all became teachers. They had an extremely privileged background, at 19 years old she married a man, by the name of Emmanuel Dunn, the man was not wealthy not in the way the Jacksons were, however, he had something going for him.

Otherwise, how would her father allow this guy who was not particularly wealthy to marry his daughter? It is all in the last name, Dunn. How many people have heard of Oscar James Dunn, not a single hand went up, except one, tonight, we will talk about Oscar J Dunn, why don’t we know about him, if he is so important how does he get intentionally erased from history?

Brian Mitchell showed us another picture, he said, this is my grandmother, as I knew her, little Bonnet on her head. Our story starts in 1972 with a cute kid in the picture who does not look like me now. In 1976, My mother decided to return to the city of New Orleans, she had been up at UIC, University of Illinois, Chicago and she was completing studies. “She sent me home before graduation so she could study.”

She said she would join me in Louisiana after she finished her exams, I had gone down and stayed with a great grandmother, Hattie Dunn. I went to Paul Lawrence Dunbar Elementary School every day. The building was from the early 20th century, a wooden structure, it is no longer there.



Oscar Dunn

Mitchell said, "It was while I was going to that school that I heard the name Oscar Dunn for the first time, he is my fifth great uncle, and he will be the nation 's first Black Lieutenant Governor, first Acting Governor, and the first African American considered to be the Vice President of the United States."

At school, my friends would ask me, what do you do every day with your great grandmother? She was sort of the oddball on the block. She did not watch television; there was no TV at her house. She did not even have a radio; in fact, she read a lot and she played music every day. I would come home and I would either go outside and play with the kids on the block, or I would go through scrapbooks and photo albums in her library. It is really interesting.

I came across a scrapbook and there was an article in it from March 13, 1872, "Dunn was to them and the them they're talking about is Black Americans, their preservative, their leader, the embodiment of their Hopes, the real Moses as they fainted and vanished in the struggle to reach the goal of acknowledged manhood, smoke the rock of adversity till it gushed forth, the cheering waters of hope, it was Oscar James Dunn, who led his people from the land of oppression and bondage.

Mitchell said, "The thing that struck me about this article when I read it, was the last name Dunn, my grandmother 's last name, it had been my mother 's maiden name. I had a lot of questions about this when she finally decided to finish dinner and she sat down. I ask her, do we know this person? She said your Grandfather Emmanuel, he died the year I was born, I could not ask him, that was your grandfathers great uncle. I said, "this is fantastic."

Another picture showed us the bicentennial year which we are talking about in government class every day. I went into class Mitchell explained, and the teacher asked if anybody knew any Governors or Lieutenant Governors of our state? I am just learning this, I was so excited waving my hand back-and-forth, I can barely sit In the seat, and I was the new kid in the class, I wanted to be able to share, and I told her, our teacher, I said my Great, great, great, Uncle was Lt Governor of the State, his name was Oscar James Dunn. She said there has never been a Negro Lt Governor of the State of Louisiana!

By this time, I had been with my grandmother for several months, every day we would sit down and have little history lessons about Louisiana. She told me there were three Black Lieutenant Governors, one Black Governor and that Dunn had been Acting Governor. I made a mistake of correcting the teacher, who said there had never been a Black Lieutenant Governor. Brian told her there have been three of them, he proceeded to name them in order, the first is Oscar James Dunn, the next is PBS Pinchback, a native of Ohio, and next Caesar Carpenter Antoine, 1872 to 1876. For this I was sent to the principal's office. I ran all the way home to my grandmother 's house, tears in my eyes and asked her, why did you lie to me?

She said, "I did not lie to you they have just forgotten it. That is particularly important to this story, especially important to the story, this idea of selective memory in regard to this history.

History is not accidental, not remembering Dunn or any of these other men is not accidental. I went through elementary school and middle school, and I went through high school and never heard Dunn, Pinchback or Carpenter 's name, Mitchell continued. It was not until I went to college for the first time in my academic career, I had an African American male as a teacher. Ask yourself in the city that's majority Black, I did not have a black male teacher until I got to college, his name was Dr Raphael Cashmir. The school was Lehigh.

To me he was brilliant, for the first time, there was someone who could answer my questions. The reason I am having this discussion today is that right now our histories are under attack, and people are choosing narratives which are knowingly not true. We have a decision to make, one of the people who actually filled in a lot of blanks for me was Dr Cashmir.

Who was Oscar James Dunn and why should we remember Him? He was born a slave in 1822 inside of the French Quarter, owned by a woman by the name of Marie. She shows up as married, she was the property of George P Bowers.

He was in the state of enslavement until his ninth birthday. His mother will start a relationship with a free black man, the black man come to New Orleans from the city of Petersburg, Virginia. He arrives in New Orleans in November 1819, would go all the

way to New Orleans, it has a lot to do with what he does, he is a stage Carpenter he works for a man who would become the national theater Impresario, a man by the name of James Henry Caldwell,

In New Orleans there are official birth and death records for everyone, you will see initials behind free people of colors names. Oscar (a slave) does not have a family, he meets Marie, falls in love with Marrie and convinces Bowers not only to sell Ann Marie but to sell him, Oscar, and their newborn daughter, my great, great, great grandmother and he do this for \$800.

We know exactly when the purchase took place, more importantly, we know exactly the day that he frees them all, and to free people it is an awkward thing. He has to go to the police, pay a fee and then he needs white people to vouch for him.

He gets James Henry Kowell, who is a very wealthy man, to vouch for them, everyone is freed. The difference in New Orleans is in the deep south, if you are enslaved, you do not have a last name, in all records, we just see your first name.

For the first time Oscar has a last name and when he decides what last name he is going to assume, he takes the last and the middle name of his stepfather, who has freed him. He becomes Oscar James Dunn.

We know a lot about James Dunn the stepfather, one of the things that is interesting about James Dunn, even though he could not read and write himself and all of his documents were signed with an X, he wanted Oscar Dunn to be able to sign his name and read. He realizes the utility importance of being able to read and write and he decides to send his stepson off to boarding school.

By this point, he is not only making all of the props for the theater, but by this time he's built his own hotel, and his wife works and runs the hotel with him. He sent Oscar to what is called an English school, which studied using the Lancaster teaching method and most of us have seen it even though we do not know what the Lancaster method is, how many people remember Little House on the Prairie?

The one room school house with kids of all sorts of ages and the older ones are helping the teacher teach the little ones, that method, this is called the Lancaster Method, which was brought over from

England, and it was used later on in the south with emancipated free people to double the number of teachers.

They figured by the time you can teach someone else, one way of perfecting your skills is to be able to teach or relate the knowledge to someone else. Not only does he have his academic career that he follows, but his father knew that at some point, he would have to make a living, he decided to apprentice him as a plasterer. We live in the land of sheet rock today and for generations my family has been plasterers and carpenters, plastering was an art form, when you see the ceiling medallions in the beautiful southern homes, those are hand thrown.

When You see the floating staircases in the city of New Orleans, men like Dunn would have created those floating staircases. Dunn loved school and we know this because there is a series of eulogies and there is a series of obituaries that were written by his friends and past employers.

One of the things he loved more than anything, reading books. George Cable will create a character in one of his books and model it after Dunn, believing that if Dunn had taken another path, he probably would've become the owner of a bookstore he likes to read so much.

We had that in common. We know a little bit about his career as a plasterer, we know he did not like the arduous challenging work, and we know at some point he has abscond from work. It is interesting about him. Scott had a really good relationship in the beginning with his boss. His boss was a man by the name of Dryden, who had at one point been an Opera Singer in the city and then opened his own contracting business in the 30s.

By the late 1830s, The two men had fallen on rough times, Dunn no longer wanted to work for him, but as an apprentice, he was required to do the work assigned to him. He will take flights from work, and this will cause historians later on to confuse him with a runaway slave. It was not that he was running away from slavery, he was running away from this work contract.

The reason I talked about Dryden a little bit was that Dunn was fascinated with Dryden's ability to sing, and he often sang on the job site. So much so that he asked Dryden to teach him about music.

The initial music lessons that Dunn takes from Dryden, his supervisor, and the man, who is his master, the plasterer he works under, but eventually he will surpass Dryden 's talent and will decide to accept another instrument, the guitar. He goes to an Italian master Levine, a man living in the city and began studying, classical guitar. He becomes a master himself. He refers to being of a grift color, this is an important distinction in New Orleans. It is like the Caribbean in South America.

Mitchell explained that in New Orleans we have gradients of blackness that are based on its proximity to Whiteness, to be White is to be at the top of the social and economic pyramid in New Orleans. Everyone knows exactly how black or white they are. A slave just arrived from Africa that has sex with her master and has a child. That child is a Mulatto, if that child has sex with a white master the next child is a Quadroon. If that Quadroon shall have sex and an offspring that offspring is an Octaroon, and a Grift is a Mulatto and everyone knows it, it is on Official birth Records. There is a database I created called the enslaved at MSU.

If you go there and look up the people from New Orleans, you will see what level of blackness everyone has. Yes, they use this and yes, it describes socially how you fit in as a black person. Octaroons were socially more acceptable to whites. They look white, in fact, any of them could pass for white, and many of them did pass for white. Most people do not know within the 1900 census, just after Plessy vs. Ferguson, 300,000 people disappeared from the census. Many of them passing for White from New Orleans. Evidence we have of this comes from the Pope.

The Pope's family is from New Orleans; they came up to Chicago. They passed; they physically looked white. Specifically, a grift is the child of a mulatto and someone who is all African. It is a step backward, you can move up, or you could move down. Moving up means you have gotten whiter.

We have to explain the popularity of Fancy Girls and why there are so many Fancy Girls and why there is a particular market for Fancy Girls in New Orleans. New Orleans was probably the country's premier market for what was called Fancy Girls. And Fancy Girls only had one purpose, and that was sex, and white men wanted black women that look

physiologically as close to white women as they possibly could.

You could buy several plantations for the cost of a Fancy Girl, that amount of money is a fortune today. Yes, sir this idea of race and gradients of race is extremely important in Louisiana, The Caribbean and in South America. The Spanish and French colonies were established in such a manner that women were not allowed to come over to the New World, only men, you had to be Catholic, and you had to be male to come to the New World.

They send all these men here with slaves eventually, you're going to find a partner and that partner is going to be either African or native American, but the problem with that is you have all these colonies and you have all these mixed people coming and you want to have enslavement based on race, how do you keep that system working?

Eventually the Pope will outlaw Fancy girls, and he creates a code of conduct for the Americas, the code called "code noir,"

Now they are flush with cash. How did they do this? You have a mistress and in New Orleans this tradition of being a mistress for wealthy white, becomes a practice, today we call it, "concubinage" but there is a term that we use in Louisiana Planche and the woman is called a Place, and this becomes a preferred method for women who are capable of this because it allowed them to have comfort and security and protection for their children, something enslavement never could. The hope of having a better life and freedom in a place like Haiti, where your life expectancy is five years, from the time you arrive upon the island to the time you died in the Sugar cane fields, is five years.

Imagine the choice that you have, white men around you and they tell you are beautiful. Move in with me, I will sign a contract that says I will take care of you. All I want is exclusivity and many of these men, I do not want to say, they did not love the woman they were with, but many of these relationship relationships were built on duress, the women did not have very much choice, and it becomes the way of life.

In fact, these white fathers begin to instruct their daughters to do the same thing. If you heard the term Octaroon Ball, to determine and describe social settings where white men would see these mixed women and would bid money for them, it sounds quite perverse, because it was, but that's how that system worked.



This Church is on the edge of the first African American neighborhood in the United States, Treme. The name of the church is Saint James AME. The Church is extremely important for a number of reasons and in the deep south for the most part outside of Carolina, and Virginia, the AME church was not allowed. The AME church was always seen as a conduit for abolitionists to ensure a route that propaganda against slavery would enter the ears of slaves that might be within listening range.

It was the largest AME church in the deep south. It is a church today and it is just a couple of blocks off Canal St. If you were going up Canal Street toward the Cemeteries or toward the lake, if you get off, at Claiborne, you were within six blocks of it. It is a beautiful church.

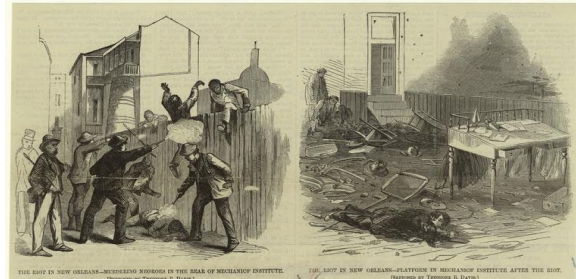
African American Masons and African Americans are responsible for bringing the AME Church to New Orleans. They brought the church to the Midwest. They brought the church to the West and wherever you see an African American free black community spring up soon, you see an AME church at its height in the pre-Civil War era.

They were as many as 5000 members of that church. The AME Church will be an avenue to political power for Oscar James Dunn, during reconstruction.

Oscar James Dunn was among the first people that are appointed as government officials who are African Americans and one of the questions everybody might be asking themselves, why would the union decide to appoint African Americans.

African Americans in New Orleans were among the first African Americans to take up arms in the USCT, they are the first African Americans to see combat in a major battle and that is a battle of Port Hudson and the first Black officer that dies in the union is Andre Kalu. The first black War hero of the Civil War would be in New Orleans.

In 1866 there would be two riots in the American south that would shake the country to its core. The first of these riots takes place in the city of Memphis, the second riot takes place in New Orleans on July 30, 1866. These two riots convince Congress of the need to keep a military force occupied in the south to ensure that the war did not break out again.



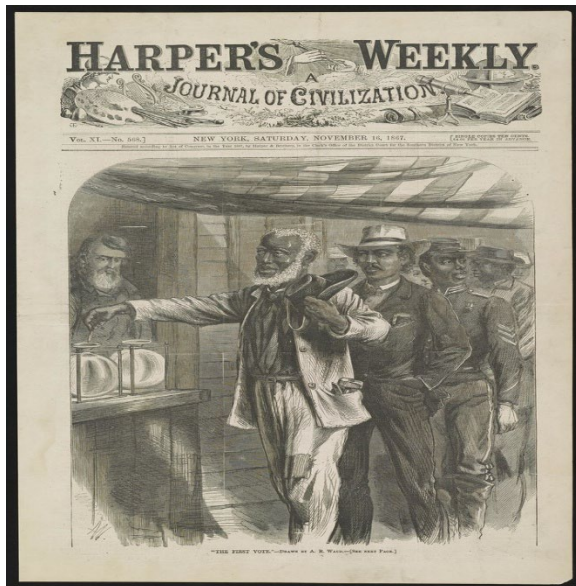
It also convinces the leadership there, a man like Phillip Sheridan that the Confederates could not be trusted in the deep south. Many of the Confederates have been pulled from their positions and replaced with African Americans and one of the people that Phillip Sheridan looked to was Oscar Dunn. The very first post Oscar Dunn was given was a post on what was the City Council, Dunn was given an appointment on the Board of Albin and in the same year he was given control of a Recording District, and recorders were like miniature mayors in the District in a Municipal Court. Assistant Recorder in the Second District, Dunn also has a Judicial capacity. Cases could be brought to the Recorders Court and Dunn is the first African American man of record to serve as a Judge in the deep south.

The next question I often get asked is what was Dunn's relationship with the Lieutenant Governor Henry Clay Warmoth? Henry Clay Warmoth is seen as notorious Carpet Bagger; he had been a Colonel in

the Union Army and Gen Grant gave him a dishonorable discharge for cowardness.

However, he will appeal his case directly with Abraham Lincoln, who will change that to an honorable discharge, which will change the fortunes of Henry Clay Warmoth who will go to Texas, become a Judge, work in the Customs House, be accused of stealing cotton, and then find his way to New Orleans.

One of the first people he met when he came to the city of New Orleans was Oscar James Dunn. Realizing that there was a suffrage movement already afoot the black men of the city of New Orleans came together in 1863 and founded an association called the Friends of Universal Suffrage, and one of the first acts of the Friends of Universal Suffrage is to try to attain Universal Suffrage for its members. At this first meeting over 1500 free Black people got together to raise the money to send two messengers to Washington DC in hopes that they will meet with Abraham Lincoln.



This is a longshot they are taking, why would the President take in two Black Men into the White House give them audience. They have to be extremely selective in who they choose to see Lincoln. They choose two men for a few varied reasons, the first man they selected was a man by the name of Arnold Berman was a son of a planter and wine merchant. Physiologically he looked white. He spoke fluent French and English; the other name was

Jock Rudeness he was the son of a white planter, his grandfather, a white planter, his great grandfather was a white planter. He was from an extremely wealthy family, and he had gone to college in France. They send these two men, who are more educated than most of the white men they encounter. They are indistinguishable from the white men they encounter, and they are given an audience with the President. If you wonder about this petition, it still exists in the Library of Congress.

If you go to the pictures of Abraham Lincoln online you can find their petition there. On it, you will find the signatures of all 1500+ black men. Do we know how Abraham Lincoln received these men? Did he embrace them? There is only one strand of evidence that lets us know how Lincoln felt about these men. That is the very last speech that he gives. In that last speech he embraces the idea of limited Negro Suffrage and when I say limited, Lincoln outlines who he sees, these potential candidates for this limited Suffrage. Those men who were intelligent like the men that visited the President and those men who had served in the Army, like Arnold Burnell who had been an officer in the Native Guard.

Who is in the audience when that speech is delivered? John Wilks Booth, and his initial plan had been just to kidnap Lincoln, restart the war, and use Lincoln as leverage. However, after he hears that speech, he realizes, "He can't live" and the assassination plan is hatch.

Once again there's connection to New Orleans and its free Black community, which goes all the way to the White House. Dunn had been a part of that committee that selected the men to go. He had also invited Salmon Chase to the city of New Orleans, why would the people of New Orleans know who Salmon Chase was? Why do they think he would come New Orleans to see Black men?

Chase is often called the Attorney General for the Runway Slaves because of his deeds in the Matilda case of 1837. A slave by the name of Matilda Lawrence would escape from her Master, who was actually her father and she would hide in Cincinnati. Chase would take her case and even though he would lose that case, his arguments become the basis of the arguments in 1850s of the Republicans. They believe

that Chase will hear them, and they know that Chase supports the cause of freeing slaves.

However, Chase does not appear, and they must go on without him. Getting back to Dunn, he has one lamentation at the time of his death and the one lamentation that he has involves his Governor Henry Clay Warner.

Dunn had invited Clay to the Friends of Universal Suffrage and Membership in fact the black community that joined the Republican Party, would vote to change the constitution of the state, lowering the age, just so Warmouth could become Governor. His first act of Governor, the Legislator sent a Civil Rights Bill to his desk, the Civil Rights Bill codifies for the Black community, Equal Rights and when it gets to his desk the Governor will refuse to sign it. That immediately causes a schism in the Louisiana Republican Party. One conservative faction said, "go slow" and a radical fraction comprised of these free Black men who had sent representatives to see Abraham Lincoln, who said now is the time for suffrage.

This war between Warmoth and Dunn would continue. Its bloodiest year would be before 1870, Dunn will take a trip, and this trip will take him along the eastern seaboard, he would travel north, attend a wedding in Cincinnati, before going to Washington DC. In Washington DC he will meet with President Grant who never liked Warmoth. After that, however, on the eve of Warmoth's impeachment Dunn will go to a banquet, will fall gravely ill that night and within two days, will die. Everyone was speculating that he had been given poison in New Orleans.

In New Orleans history, Dunn has the largest Funeral processional on record, some accounts put the crowd at 50,000 individuals in attendance, Republicans and Democrats attended the funeral, Even Beauregard, who once had been a critic of Dunns said that he preferred Dunn over Warmoth.

I want to talk a little bit about the legacy of Dunn. This comes from a Washington DC newspaper called the New National Era and there is a description of Dunn right after his funeral. Gifted with remarkably sound judgment, there is no man in Louisiana whose opinion and counsel upon the questions of State were more often sought by honest men of both parties. His parliamentarian talent has long been the theme of admiration and for the dispatch of business, and his

official chair, few men in the Union have been an equal.

I went to graduate school; I was told by the advisor why would you want to do a dissertation about Oscar J Dunn? You'll never find any primary sources of information out there. If nobody's written on him in all these years, there's probably not a lot there. When I started graduate school, there were in total, three journal articles on him, the longest being 32 pages, the shortest being three. There was not a lot to start with. I remember the impact of finding out about Dunn and what it did to my life.

How it awakens my love for history. I did the dissertation and then years later I received a call from a student in Columbus, Ohio, and it's not often that you get a call from a little kid in your office at the University. I asked, excuse me, could I help you? He was on the phone with his father, he said "Are you Dr. Brian Mitchell? Yes I am. He said I want to call and thank you for your dissertation. I am in eighth grade. It is a gifted program, and we were talking about Reconstruction, and we wanted to read something on a politician, something biographical and my teacher said this was really good. I really enjoyed it.

Of course, you never believe the students, last night they read the 30-page journal article. I asked him a few questions about the characters in the book. What is your favorite part of the book? He said, "I love the voodoo party and Dunn inside of the church in the voodoo ceremony that takes place in Saint James A&E," but I was intrigued by the fact that an eighth grader in Columbus, Ohio likes to read reconstruction history as much as I do.

He said it would be great if this were a comic book, because I think a lot of kids could really get into this comic graphic history. I said to myself, call some publishers and make this happen. I called the publisher in New Orleans Historic District, New Orleans Collection in the University in Virginia. They decided to come together and do this project, and it became the first **graphic history of reconstruction**.

Why is it important today? Reconstruction is essential today to understand what is going on politically and what could happen. It is really important that we begin talking about worst case scenarios because we are truly divided, we need to

find ways to come together, and very few people are looking back to history to provide answers.

How can we proceed in challenging times? These scenes are taken from the Graphic History book; the middle scene is Dunn and Warmoth in their debate or argument. The other is President Ulysses Grant meeting with Dunn in Washington. That is an image of Dunn, he is opposed to apprenticeship programs, particularly plantation owners who are just using children to return them into slavery after the 13th amendment.

One of my favorite quotes from *Black Reconstruction*, the book that starts revisionist history in 1935, to me perfectly encompasses what happened to Dunn, with sufficient general agreement and determination of the dominant classes, the truth of history may be utterly distorted and contradicted and changed into any fairytale the masters of men wished. By 1872 Dunn had cemented as one of Louisiana's most famous politicians, a man that is interested in bringing the races together and healing the wounds of the Civil War. One of the ways that he believes this had to be done.

It is not by forced integration of private spaces, he says publicly a man cannot invite himself into another man's parlor. He said the way we move forward to eradicate racism is by instructing our children.

In 1870 right after the Christmas break, Dunn integrates the public school system in the city, not by passing a law but by putting his own children into public school.

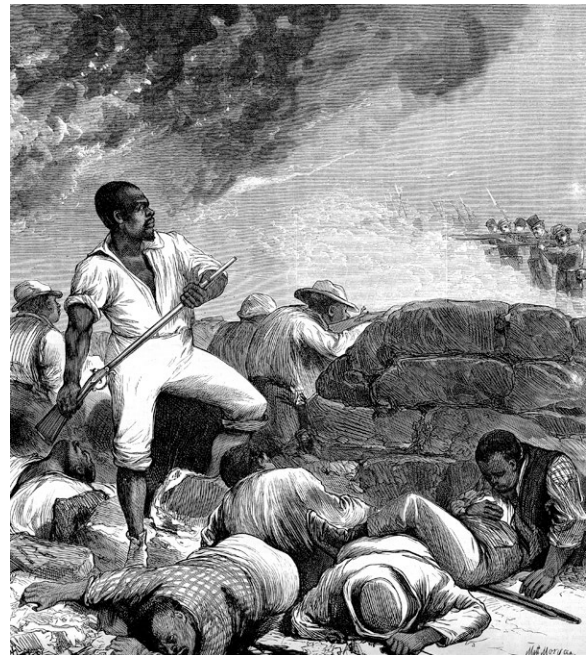
You have to imagine the first day after the Christmas break. The wife of the Governor shows up at the Madison school for Girls with three girls and they are admitted into the school, what was the response? White parents withdrew all of the children from the school. New Orleans has a lot of private church schools, and the birth of those schools are very much associated with this decision by Dunn to allow African American children to integrate the public schools.

Another thing that Dunn is responsible for was the creation of orphanages for Freedman's children who did not have parents. In fact, he exhausts his entire fortune doing this. In 1872 the state legislature creates two boards, one for the dedication of a

monument to Dunn, the other to build orphanages throughout the state.

Each Board is given \$5000, at that time in 1872, that is an enormous amount of money, but a fitting tomb in honor of Dunn was not built, the monuments have never been put up.

The 1872 election is disputed; Louisiana falls into violence as Republicans and Democrats both claim to have won the election. Does this sound familiar? On Easter morning April 13, 1873, in Colfax, African Americans will hear a rumor that former confederates are coming to take over the Parish Seat, and to place their Judge in charge of Colfax, which is in Grant Parish.



Colfax, Louisiana

They decide to defend the building, and 750 African American men show up with just a few pistols between them, they were not prepared when more than 500 former Confederate's show up all with rifles and a Cannon. As gun fighting erupts within a few minutes, The Parish seat is on fire. The Black men guarding the Parish Seat surrender. They are placed on their knees and they are executed. We do not have an exact number.

The number as high as 150 men slain has been used. This is not the only massacre to break out that year. In Coshida Parish, another massacre will take place, and these only build up to 1874. In 1874

Confederates will create an army of 5000 former confederates. They will march on the city of New Orleans taking over New Orleans for almost a week.

The election of 1876 was seen by many Democrats and Republicans as the showdown, in fact, we recently found in the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library a letter. It is so funny when you are reading and find something at a museum. Sometimes when you find things particularly if it is African American objects. There was a letter that was just described as this African American politician. I was called down to manuscripts to take a look at it and the letter was from Frederick Douglass.

It was written to PBS Pinchback, who was running as U S Senator on the 1872 ticket. Douglass is telling Pinchback in the letter not to worry; the election of 1876 will solve everything. For those of you that know the outcome of the election of 1876. They realize that the Compromise of 1877 solved nothing for the African Americans that are living in Louisiana.

This drawing comes from Harper's Weekly it is from 1868. Around the time when Dunn is elected Lieutenant Governor of the State. It is important to look at this to see a rising sentiment that is occurring in southern cities, Mitchell said.

In interpreting these sorts of images, students have a tough time with it. The figure on the left is representative of the Irish in the immigrant community, he has a cudgel that he is holding over his head inscribed with the words "a vote". The center gentleman, is a former confederate, showing the confederate states of America on his belt buckle, and he is holding a dagger in his hand. Can anybody see what that dagger has inscribed on it? "The lost cause"

At this point, Edward Alford Pollard has authored his famous book, *The Lost Cause*, the belief in the cause, has caught on with a fever. But who is the figure on the right and what does he represent? He represents industrialists and bankers in the north. Many who have tired of sending money, after money, have this standing army in the south and they want nothing more than to have reconstruction done with. All three are standing on the back of Freedman, just beyond the grasp of the Freedman is a battle ax, as he

holds the colors, he is still in his uniform, you can see his hat.

The election of 1876 will be among the most violent in our nation's history and is particularly violent in the state of Louisiana. There's voter intimidation and here you see people intimidating, a black man that has shown up with the ballot, telling him not to vote or to vote for their candidate.

It is ripe with terrorist groups, in Louisiana there was the White League, The Knights of the White Chameleon and without federal troops, with the pressure from the north to pull out, these Federal troops that are there were not pursuing, unless the acts of violence are directed at Federal employees or federally elected officials.

Dr Mitchell said, during my whole life, up to the first black mayor of the city, there was a monument that stood in that most prestigious location in the city of New Orleans, at the foot of Canal Street.

In Dunn's time at the foot of Canal St there had been a statue of Henry Clay. After reconstruction, that statue was removed, and it will be replaced with the Liberty Monument. At the base of the Liberty Monument, first thing I should say is the Liberty monument is dedicated to the revolt that took place in 1874. It is not a Civil War monument. It was the Battle of Liberty Place. It was the massacre that we talked about, 5000 Confederates attacking the city of New Orleans.

At the base of the monument is the inscription, United States Troops took over the state government and reinstated the usurpers.

But the national election of 1876 recognized white supremacy in the south and gave us our state. That stood at the foot of the river for most of my life, it wasn't until the 1980s when it was moved and the first time it was removed by Ernest Morell, The city's first Black Mayor. It was situated next to a hotel. It could not be permanently taken down, because it had been purchased with taxpayer money and the mayor was told he had to place it somewhere. The mayor argued that it would not sit in the most prominent spot in the city.

However, those monuments that were taken down in the city were the very first monuments that Mitch Landre decided should be removed from the city of New Orleans.

Imagine being an African American child and having to pass this monument every day in the city.

In this world of post reconstruction, the men who had fought against the federal government became heroes, these are the men who were put on trial for the Colfax Massacre, even though 500 former Confederates showed up only four men were put on trial.

This is a monument that is dedicated to them at the cemetery they are buried in. To the memory of Steven Decatur Parish, James Wes Hadnot and Sydney Harris. These three white men that who died in the Colfax Riot fighting for white supremacy on April 13, 1873.

The reason that there is no memory of Dunn is because the bills have been passed by the legislature that never materialized in the post reconstruction era, in fact, the deeds of Dunn and his memory were totally erased. It was not until last year that Dunn was recognized, the park that overlooks Jackson Square is named after Oscar Dunn.

A bust of Dunn was made and put in the State Capital and this upcoming June, Mason's from all over the country will be recognizing him and commissioning a statue in his honor to be placed in the park.



CCWRT Questions:

WV>> Did the Governor give a reason for vetoing the Civil Rights Act?

BM>> Very much like the Civil rights politicians who said this is happening too fast, Louisiana is not ready for it yet, the question will be if not now when? There is no definitive answer he could give. The radicals who put him in power decided, if we put you there, we can take you out.

Q>> the Colfax riots, were there any leaders there who were identified?

BM>> Yes there is a transcript of the case for the Colfax massacre called the Cruickshank case. The case will go all the way to the Supreme Court and it's my belief that this case opened the door for political violence throughout the reconstruction south. Because of the Supreme Court, many of its members had changed by then and the temperament of the nation had changed. it is not a movement towards civil rights for Black people or suffrage for Blacks, the temperament had changed to a point that we need to get troops out of the south. We need to stop bleeding all this money. The Supreme Court decides that its job is not to police what happens in homicide cases, which is for state government. Its job is to protect federal employees and federal officials and it maintains it will not interfere in criminal law there, that it is up to juries and it is up to the people of Louisiana to decide who sits on their benches.

It becomes critical at that point to control courtrooms and Judge's positions and one of the compromises that it's made after Colfax is a little known compromise but the Republicans decide to give up half the seats from the 1872 elections to Democrats, even the ones that were clearly won by the Republicans, and they want that for judges seats and they want these seats because they can determine the outcome of violence and there aren't any more convictions in any of these democrat held Parishes. There's a lot of violence that starts after this verdict is handed out by the U S Supreme Court.

*****General Winfield Hancock**

CCWRT Meeting, May 13th, 2026

Brian Burtka, who looks like a young General Hancock, gave his presentation in the first person, in period uniform with no notes. It was like an evening

talking to the General about his Command during the Civil War and questions from the CCWRT members.



General Winfield Scott Hancock, the Commander of the Second Corp, Army of the Potomac. My life just started in a small town just outside Philadelphia, Pennsylvania named Morristown. It is a couple of miles down the river from Vally Forge. We are actually from a military family, my grandfather, who was an officer in General Washington's Army during the revolution.

I was born in 1824. My father was a local politician with the Democratic Party. When I was 16, he used those connections to get an appointment at West Point. I graduated shortly after 1844. I will say that I have something that most people do not know about me, my best class at West Point my entire four years was drawing. I actually really enjoyed drawing; I would create little cartoons for some of the other cadets when they graduated from West Point.

I was commissioned with the 6th US Infantry, Private Second Lieutenant. Over the course of the next couple of years, I would find myself in various assignments, significantly amongst those, I was part of the Mexican War, part of the Army with General Winfield Scott, my own name's sake, someone who frequently was confused with me for similarity in Name. During the Mexican War I fought many of those battles and was part of the army of occupation in Mexico City during 1847 and 1848.

It was during that time, that I actually met two men who are close friends of mine, we would remain friends up to and through part of the Civil War for one of them, and for many years after the Civil War for the other. They are General Lewis Armistead and General Henry Heath, both of whom fought for the confederacy, I will return to both of them a little bit later on in our talk.

I was part of the army of occupation in Mexico, really got my baptism by Fire during that war. Eventually I moved back to the United States, when I came back, I was in St. Louis for about a year. It was during that time that I met the love of my life. One night at the time that I would have been with Lieutenant Henry Heath a friend of mine, he came to me and said let's take the band out about town to serenade some of the women of St. Louis.

We secured our commanding officer's permission, we did that, and while we were doing that, one of the women dropped her glove. Henry handed it to me in my pocket and a year later I called her, when I was back in St. Louis, her name was Almira Russell. We quickly hit it off and got married shortly after 1850. Within about a year, we had my first child, our son Russell, named after her family name.

When I think of my years before the Civil War which started of that decade, 1850, I really cannot imagine my life without my wife and my children. We got married in 1850, our first son was born, then my daughter. She would have been born in 1857. Her name was Ada. Throughout the decade, I spent my life in various posts, Kansas, another post in Florida, and eventually wound up in California and through all of that time, my wife and my family were with me and I know that was not easy for her.

What I really wanted to highlight is that in 1858, I got assigned to California. Now to get to California, you have to take a boat down to the farthest part of the land between North and South America. You have to get off March 35 miles in the jungle, then you have to get on another boat and come back up the west coast of North America. Total journey takes about 6 1/2 weeks, not for the faint of heart.

As soon as I arrived in San Francisco, I was told I was being sent to a small town in Southern California. It is a small town of a couple of thousand

people. You guys probably never heard of it. It is in the middle of nowhere. It is called Los Angeles, and I was told that I would be in charge of all the supplies there and I would be the lone Army Officer presence in Los Angeles.

This was quite different for me because up to that point I lived my entire life in the army. I went to West Point at age 16 but all my friends were there and pretty much since then everything I have been involved in has been involved in was army related to social services.

Once I got to Los Angeles, I was able to make some friends in the city who brought vastly different aspects to my life, and I actually very much enjoyed my life in California. I thought that those years would kind of go on forever. I was on indefinite assignment as a peacetime army, which means getting a promotion is an exceedingly rare event. However, 1960 started to be some discontent in the nation, ultimately with President Lincoln 's election in the 1960s.

I heard about the April 1861 firing in Fort Sumter. I heard about it sometime in June. It took a while to get out to the west coast. As soon as I heard about it, I put in a request, I believed that my abilities and my experience would be best for the battlefield as opposed to being a quartermaster officer in California. I received words shortly after that, my request was approved and then proceeded back through the long, fun journey around the west coast, back across the jungle and back towards New York City.

By the time I had settled all my affairs and got back to the East Coast it was late in September- October 1861. The army General McLean had done their winter training and began their winter camp. When I arrived in Washington, I reported to the Secretary of War, and I was immediately promoted to Captain, and I was assigned to a Quarter Master I did not want. Because I had spent the prior 10 years doing that work. It is decent work. As soon as he found out I was in town, he called me and said I should stop by for dinner. I did that same night I was told I was going to Kentucky and the next day I was promoted from Captain to Brigadier General. I was given a Brigade.

I spent the rest of 1861 to the beginning of 1862 getting my Brigade together, I originally was in a division in the Fourth Corp in the Army of the

Potomac and I would go on to the Peninsula Campaign in 1862. At the Battle of Williamsburg, I was posted on the right flank, there was an empty redoubt in front of me that the confederates had abandoned.

I went forward and I took it, that I was looking forward, I saw another redoubt that the confederate had also abandoned, I moved into that one as well. I sent word to the commanding officer on the field, saying that I had found a way around the Confederate army. The response I got was to retreat; I was not thrilled with this response. I sent another courier, a young Lieutenant by the name of George Custer back to the commanding officers. Repeating what I said before. It took him a few hours to respond; I waited about as long to respond as I could without being labeled as insubordinate and eventually I would withdraw my troops from that position.

General McClellan wrote to his wife in the letter. He said my tactical brilliance was superb, this got leaked to the press and I know General McClellan well enough to know that this was planned. A few months later at the Battle of Antietam, wrapping up the Peninsula campaign, we were eventually repulsed and pushed back towards Washington.

A few months later, General Lee decides to begin his Maryland campaign to invade North at the Battle of Antietam, I was mostly held in reserve. I did not have much front-line action. An important event occurred there, General Richardson of the Second Corp was mortally wounded and General McClellan promoted me to be Commander of the division that Richardson had.

It was actually at the Battle of Antietam, that I got a field promotion from Brigade to Division Commander, which was also when I moved to the Second Corp with him. I will remain for the next two years. Throughout the rest of the year, I was at every major battle with the Army of the Potomac.

I was at Fredericksburg where I had played a significant role on the first day of the battle. I was with the Second Division in line charging Maryes Heights, VA. I still remember that battle very vividly spending the night on the battlefield. It was freezing. It was the middle of December, but eventually that was a loss for us. I fortunately was not a part of the famous mud march of late December where the army moved 10 miles and then moved 10 miles back into their winter quarters.

Beginning in 1863 my prospects were beginning to look up. The soldiers were ready for the summer campaign. I had noticed a change in the Army of the Potomac, the soldiers were no longer green, they were veterans. They fought the Battles of Fredericksburg and Antietam, they had fought on the Peninsula, and they were ready to get out there, get in the field for the spring, ultimately the summer campaign.

Over the next few months, we would engage the Confederates in multiple different locations including Chancellorsville. Ultimately from June to July, General Lee would begin his invasion of Pennsylvania, which would culminate in the famous battle at Gettysburg.

During this time, it was May 1862 and after the Battle of Chancellorsville, I would be promoted to Commander of the Second Corp. I was promoted from Division to Corp Commander at that time, I would maintain that command for the next year and a half through the end of 1864. As the Commander of the Second Corp, it was in that position that I engaged in the Battle of Gettysburg.

General Hancock said, "I am going to spend a little bit of time talking about the Battle of Gettysburg, which is perhaps the battle I was most known and remembered for.

One thing that I want to focus on, June 30, General Meade approached me, and we started having a conversation. General Meade had just been appointed two days prior as Commander of the Army of the Potomac, he knew the Confederates were out there somewhere, he did not know exactly where. He had heard that an engagement had started at the Gettysburg, but he did not know how big, he did not know who was there.

There were rumors spreading around about what was going on. He came to me and he asked me, "I need you to go there, I need you to find out what is going on and I need eyes on the ground." He asked me this because he trusted me. We had fought together as Corp Commanders for a little time with the army of the Potomac and we knew each other going back, both being Pennsylvanians. On July 1st, I set out to the battlefield at Gettysburg to find out what was actually going on.

While I was riding up to Gettysburg, I found another Pennsylvanian I knew. Commander of the First Corp, John Reynolds had been shot and killed and from what I could gather from the soldiers who were fleeing on the road, there was just confusion and chaos going on up there. They did not really know who was in command, they did not know what to do.

I rode my horse up there, I was not with the rest of the Second Corp, it was me, my Chief of Staff, and the Signal Corp party from the Second Core. As I rode up the fields, I encountered General O. O. Howard, Commander of the 11th Corp. I informed him that General Meade had sent forward and specifically General Meade had given me orders to take command of the multiple Corps that we are on the field in Gettysburg.

The problem with that is Gen Howard technically out ranked me. We are both Major Generals but his commission, when he was promoted to Major General, dated before my own. If you know anything about Army officers, and I am one of them, we are a little prideful of our Rank and our dates of Commission. It is our "Mark of Office" it is something that is especially important to us. When I informed Gen Howard of this he told me, I am a senior officer.

I told him, I know. I offered to show him the written order that General Meade had given me because I had also informed General Meade of this. General Meade said, "Do not worry about it." Here is a written order to take, if he asks, show it to him. Shortly, I offered to show General Howard the written order, General Howard replied that it was fine. He trusts me at that point, we started to establish the Union defensive line on Cemetery Ridge.

The reason I mentioned this is because multiple officers there witnessed this exchange and wrote their accounts of it. According to some of them we got into a heated argument. He said something to me, and I said something to him, I want to dispel any of that illusion. I offered to show him the order. He said it was fine. We established the defensive line on Cemetery Ridge.

That is what happened, it is all that needs to be said. We establish this line in the afternoon of July 1; this would be the position that the Union would hold, roughly for the next three days. It is an extraordinarily strong position. General Meade had actually given me the authority to make the decision

whether we should stay there or whether we should retreat further back towards a defensive line that he was preparing.

I realized the ground was good. I realized that we could defend it quite easily, I decided to stay there, and I helped to stabilize the Union position. That night I turned over command to General Slocum, who was the senior ranking officer there and I rode back down to join the Second Corp. I ran into General Meade. I informed him of everything that had happened and that he had decided to stay there and fight. I got about two hours of sleep before I woke up and turned back around with my Corp and brought them up there onto the field.

On the second day of Gettysburg, I found myself roughly in the left center of the Line. Gettysburg is famous for its fishhook. I was facing the west, roughly in the center of the line, the most important thing I did on the second date was I save General Dan Sickles' bacon when he sent his Third Corp forward into the Peach Orchard.

He went forward and I still remember I turned to my Chief of Staff, and we were both shocked. I asked him if Colonel Morgan received any orders that General Sickles was supposed to be going forward. I was very confused. He said no. I sent a messenger to Gen Meade and asked him was this was supposed to happen. His response was no, then I turned to the Chief of Staff, and said, well they will soon come tumbling back. They are going into a very weak position and the most annoying part about him advancing forward, he left the left flank of the Second Corp wide-open.

Ultimately Confederates would attempt to breach that hole in our line, and I would have to send my own reserve division in to plug that gap and that is where a lot of the fighting at the Wheat Field occurred on the second day of the Battle of Gettysburg. That night we had a war council for every division commander and every Corp commander that was able to voice their opinion, ultimately, we decided that we were going to stay and we were going to go into a defensive position. We are going to wait for the Confederates to attack us.

I would remain in the same position on the Gettysburg line on the third day that I was on second day. As the morning went on, things were quiet, it

was odd, at one point Gen Gibbons came up to me and he said, one of his soldiers had acquired a rooster and he offered, if I wanted to join him for rooster stew and I did. We were sitting there, Center the line of Gettysburg, mid-morning on the third day, enjoying rooster stew. General Meade saw us, he came over. We were eating it, we all lit up a cigar, and we were sitting there wondering what was going to happen. Where is General Lee? Is he going to attack?

We knew he was out there and we knew his entire line was out there, but we did not know he was going to attack. Eventually we finished our cigars, finished our stew, General Meade went on his way. Shortly after that, right after lunch the largest cannonade that I had ever heard opened up. It was cannon fire which was meant to soften up our line before Pickett's Charge. When these cannons started, I had never heard anything like it! The battlefield was shaking, the deafening sound coming was incredible.

To my knowledge this was the largest artillery barrage on the continent of North America. It would last for an hour and a half, the sound was intense. During that time, I noticed my soldiers getting scared and I do not blame them. It was loud and it was frightening.

I told my standard bearer, with the flag, to come with me. I was on my horse behind the second line, I told him to come with me, and I rode in front of Union artillery that was not firing at that time. We were trying to conserve our gun powder, but I rode in front of the Union artillery in an attempt to inspire my soldiers and actually my Chief of Staff told me I shouldn't do it and I replied, and there are times that a Corp Commanders life does not matter and I rode along that line the entire length of the Second Corp. And even to this day when I encounter soldiers that is something they remember, I saw their morale go up from that and I knew it was the right thing to do. We ultimately repulsed that attack.

The Second Corp captured 28 Confederate battle flags that day, over the course of July 3 and I fell. I was riding my horse at the time, I was shot in the right thigh, I fell out of my saddle. I was caught by some officers from the Vermont Brigade. The interesting thing about being shot, I immediately pulled a ten penny nail out of my thigh, I thought the

Confederate must be getting pretty desperate if they're using nails for ammunition, but what I did not know at the time was that actually the bullet had gone through my saddle and that nail was from my own saddle so I would be carried off the field, be sent to Philadelphia where I would begin to recover.

However, it did not go well, even six weeks after the battle into September, the wound was not closing. My wife said I looked a sickly color of grey and did not look well. I was sick of the doctors. I had literally dozens of doctors over that time trying to get it out, sticking their fingers in my leg, which was not a pleasant sensation, ultimately, I told them, I am done, the wound is not going to close, I accepted my fate.

I was going to die, on an off chance after Jonathan Reed, who is an Army surgeon and a good friend of Dr. Meade and happened to be from my hometown and he was passing through. He stopped by and he said, "Do you mind if I take a look?" I did not really want him to, but he came with General Meade's recommendation.

He was going to be the last one. We were chatting and he asked me how I got shot. I told him I was on my saddle. I told him the position I was in, and he looked at me curiously. He said I am going to say something crazy. I asked what are you going to say? I want you to straddle the chair like you are riding a horse and just trust me, I did not want to, so we put a chair on my father 's dining room table, the table that I grew up eating at and I straddled his chair. He took a bullet probe, and for those of you who have never seen it, it is a metal cylinder about 10 inches long.

There is no hook on it. It is just a metal cylinder. It is meant to find a bullet. He dropped it onto my leg. It sunk about 8 inches before you heard a nice "ping." He found the bullet. The problem with the doctors before him was when they were trying to get into the wound, I was laying down on the table, and so my muscles were closed around the bullet, but now I was in the same position, which allowed the muscles to open up, so that he could get the bullet out.

He got it out that day, the wound closed within a week and about a month later I was back at my wife's family 's place in St. Louis. By the end of the year, I would actually rejoin the Army of the Potomac for the Campaign of 1864. I would be with the Army of

the Potomac as Commander of the Second Corp, throughout all of 1864.

My wound was still bothering me and there were multiple times when we were on a multi-day march, especially in April and May as we were chasing Lee down toward Richmond. Sometimes I had to ride in the back of an ambulance because I could not ride a horse, the wound bothered me that much. The bullet was removed, but there were occasionally small fragments which would rise to the surface, and I would pull them out of my leg.

That wound would force me to give up field command in November 1864. It was exceedingly difficult for me to do. I had been with the Second Corp for two years and in my farewell address, I told them that the Second Corp is not famous because of me, the Second Corp was famous because of the glory that we had earned on the battlefields, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg everything from the Overland Campaign to Gettysburg all of that fame as because of that, it was not because of me.

The remainder of the war early 1865, I was in an administrator role, commanding the troops in and around Washington City. I would continue my role in the army. I would actually remain in active service until my death in

After the war I rose to National prominence, as a potential democratic presidential candidate, my name was popular during both the 1868 and 1872 democratic conventions.

However, I never managed to secure the nomination.

Eventually 1880 rolled around and at that point I am told that I was strong enough that I could probably be nominated for the Democratic Party. I simply told the party representatives who were there, if that is what people want, I am more than happy to do it. If that is not what they want, fine whatever they decide I am happy to do. They would nominate me and I would run against a local hero in northeast Ohio, in the 1880 election against James Garfield.

Questions from the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable Membership:

Q>> Thank you for your service to this great Republic, I wonder why you would yield command to General Slocum on late July 1st given your written order from General Meade?

Gen H>> The command that General Meade gave me was to go up and survey the situation. Help make a decision whether to stay there or not, then come back and report to him. That night, I forgot the exact time I believe I left the field about 9 PM to 10 PM to head back to meet with General Meade. I believe it was my duty to go back and tell him what the decision was about, what was going on at the front, as I mentioned there was a lot of confusion. There were a lot of people who did not know what was going on and part of what General Meade wanted me to do was for us to come back and inform him of the situation there.

I also had the responsibility of getting my own Second Corp up there and deployed on the field the next day, which would have been why I left the field first and I turned command over to General Slocum, he was the ranking Officer.

Q>> As a member of the Democratic Party, how did you feel about representing the Democratic Party with their background history of being pro-southern?

Gen H>> Now can I ask for a clarifier on that? Are you thinking 1880 or are you thinking during the Civil War years? Certainly, during the Civil War, but even as the negative treatment of the Blacks was mostly done by the South, which continued well beyond the Civil War.

During the Civil War as I stated a little bit ago, I put my duty as an officer of the Army above my own personal political beliefs. I believed in the US Constitution and that was how I understood it during the Civil War itself. When it comes to 1880, I spent some time as a Reconstruction Commander, 1867. I was unpopular with the radical Republicans.

The war was over and at that point the Army was being used to enforce a political agenda by the radical Republicans in Congress. When I was instated as a Commander at President Johnson's insistence, he appreciated me because I went against the grain in many respects, in that regard I reinstated a lot of state officials in the Confederacy that General Sheridan,

who was in the Post before me, had stripped them of their power.

General Grant did not like this and he sent me a command telling me to overturn the commands I had given. I told him if you want me to do that send me to another post and that is what they did. Ultimately sending me to North Dakota for a few years.

My personal opinion on the matter, post war leading up to 1880, is that the Army during that time, of the reconstruction, was used to enforce some political agenda and I was generally not a fan of it. I believe that the federal government overstepped bounds and that stuff like that should have been left up to the states because the war was over.

Q>> I will ask two questions, the first is because my good friend Steve wants me to ask this question, because he wholeheartedly agrees with me that General Grant in the West and General Grant in the East were two completely different generals. In the West he was all about maneuvers, in the East it was let us do a frontal assault. We will finally be going to get all there is, we will do another frontal assault. Maybe we will throw another division. Would you care to comment on Grant in the East vs Grant in the West? I understand you really only know Grant in the East.

Gen H>> His understanding, which I believe was correct, was that if you crushed the army of Northern Virginia, you end the war in the East, effectively. He wanted to press both our numerical and material advantage. The way he did that was with multiple charges being ordered as you mentioned. I believe there could have been diverse ways to do it, but his idea of out maneuvering them, flanking the enemy, forcing them to go towards Richmond, forcing them to retreat. I believe this was an effective strategy.

--Charles Patton