BGES is Proud to Present Receding Tide:
The Book and The Tour: Part 1
The Vicksburg Campaign
April 27-May 5, 2013

Ten years ago, Parker Hills and I conceptualized a four year program divided over 8 tours of three or four days each to break apart Ed Bearss’ seminal trilogy The Vicksburg Campaign. This ambitious project was designed to walk in Bearss’ footsteps by finding all the nuanced and unvisited sites he described in his campaign analysis. After one cycle and the numerous insights that came from finding places not seen in a historical sense for over 145 years and seeing and placing other historical correspondence and events in context, we approached Ed about doing a book on the relationship between the theaters and the two major campaigns of the period—Vicksburg and Gettysburg. The concept excited Ed and the National Geographic Society, who agreed to publish the book. Receding Tide was released in the spring of 2010. In the meantime, BGES Field University programs uncovered new insights from both campaigns. This pair of tours (Gettysburg in August) is a sesquicentennial reflection oriented around the book and 9 years of trekking these off route hidden and overlooked pearls.

This series is dedicated to our mentor and friend, Ed Bearss. Although he is soon going to be 90 years old, he continues to amaze everyone who sees him—we thought a pair of 9 day programs would be too rigorous for him. Nonetheless, I spoke with him just a week ago and he remains singularly proud of this work and believes it may very well be his best book ever—he wishes you well and knows you will enjoy this condensed tour based on his book.

Co-author Parker Hills was the editor and primary researcher for Receding Tide. The retired brigadier general has a well-earned reputation as one of the best prepared historians and tour leaders in the country. A highly respected leadership trainer, Hills sees military campaign through the prism of the leaders who were involved. This is a special week of insights, pearls of history and remote discovery. You are in for a treat.

Saturday, April 27, 2013

The road portion of this trip includes your hotel; however, you have your own choice in Memphis. We have a block of rooms and will meet at the Courtyard by Marriott Airport Memphis at 6 PM for the opening lecture. Parker’s PowerPoint presentations have become a long anticipated feature of these tours and this talk on “Grant’s First Attempt” will set the stage. We will break so that you can have dinner on your own. For those who would like to join us, we are going to find some BBQ—separate checks.

Sunday, April 28, 2013
The start of the Civil War created an economic disaster for the United States by closing the navigation of the Mississippi River. The political ramifications were immediate and significant—a Democratic Congressman, John Logan had declared that the men of his region would hew their way to the gulf to reopen the trade routes. Now military strategy had begun to reflect that reality. A powerful and mobile Federal force under the command of Major General US Grant, hero of Fort Donelson and survivor of a near disaster at Shiloh, was prepared to move against Vicksburg using his own troops and additional troops recruited by Congressman turned Major General, John A. McClernand that were arriving in Memphis. It is December 1862. Grant’s plans will be derailed literally.

Today we examine Nathan Bedford Forrest’s and Earl Van Dorn’s December 1862 raids on Grant’s supply lines. At this point, Grant had been dependent upon railroads to supply his army. Indeed he had violated Henry Halleck’s directive not to allow engines below Grand Junction, Tennessee. Forrest’s raid which culminated with the battle at Parker’s Crossroads is our first theme. We will then move via Grand Junction to Holly Springs, the depot for his advanced operations from Oxford, Mississippi. These two overlooked raids caused the unsupported disaster which General Sherman experienced at Chickasaw Bayou and caused Grant to change his plan of campaign and supply from one based on the railroads to one based on the Mississippi River and a series of intermediate ports at Memphis, Helena and Lake Providence. Lunch will be included but lodging in Memphis and dinner is on your own. At 8 PM, we will have another presentation on “The Bayou Expeditions.”

**Monday, April 29, 2013**

Boots and Saddles, we are headed for Vicksburg. We will make arrangements for you to leave your cars at the Courtyard. We will return there on Sunday.

After the disaster at Chickasaw Bayou, McClernand catches up with his troops and assumes command. Within two weeks he will be at Arkansas Post and after a successful expedition, Grant comes down to rope in the political general and take command of the operations near Vicksburg. While Pemberton’s troops grow soft in garrison, Grant approves a series of operations which harden his troops and come disturbingly close to success in the early spring of 1863. Today we will examine those en route to Vicksburg where we will spend the next six nights.

After visiting the Memphis waterfront to describe McClernand’s humiliating arrival we will go with his troops and Sherman down to Helena, Arkansas. Here we will examine both the site as a staging area and as the scene of a tardy and inept Confederate effort on July 4, 1863 to create a diversion to relieve a besieged Vicksburg.

Perhaps Grant’s most subtle strategic operations involved the Bayou Expeditions. From Helena we will go look at perhaps the most brilliant of them—The Yazoo Pass Expedition. We will show you where the levee was cut to bring Federal vessels into Moon Lake and then we will move along the Yazoo Pass and via the intricate river
network to Fort Pemberton near Greenwood where the expedition comes to an end. We will then press on to our lodging at the Hampton Inn in Vicksburg. Here at 8 PM we will have another Powerpoint presentation entitled “Grant Moves South.”

Your lodging is included in the registration fee for these next six nights (it is what causes the fee to be a bit higher) but while we will offer dinner trips you will be paying for your own dinner.

Note, we have found that many people would prefer to control what they eat. I would have to charge you $30 extra per day to pick up the cost of your meals—that is a $240 cost avoidance. You can join us at various sites and pay your way or stay in and order pizza delivery or other quick food options.

Tuesday, April 30, 2013

The first two days of this trip should have given you pause to reflect on the scope of the field of operations in this campaign. It is massive and complex. Today we will start by retreating to December 1862 and presenting the battle of Chickasaw Bayou. Immediately after that we will go to the National Park and the USS Cairo display to discuss Eads’ Ironclads and Grant’s naval support—the Mississippi Squadron of David Dixon Porter. This one of a kind relic was a victim of the intricate defensive network established by the Confederates.

The intense pace of the tour continues with a visit to Grant’s Canal where we will discuss from here and Young’s Point the attempt by Grant to bypass the city of Vicksburg by cutting relief canals to divert the Mississippi River above and below Vicksburg. These activities eventually allowed Grant to move down the west bank of the Mississippi River and cross it well below Vicksburg. We will follow that route as we finish the day poised to cross the river. After returning to the hotel and gathering some libations we will have a lecture on “Grant’s March to Destiny Part 1.” We will make a dinner run after the lecture.

Wednesday, May 1, 2013

Today we will get Grant to the east side of the Mississippi River. The move against Grand Gulf did not go as planned and the battle, while loud, showed Grant that he needed to push further downstream. After visiting and discussing Forts Wade and Cobun at Grand Gulf, we will head to the vicinity of Bruinsburg Landing and will discuss the crossing at Windsor Plantation. Once ashore Grant moves to Port Gibson. Here we will discuss the Federal assault and the Confederate response to it. This discussion on the 150th anniversary of the battle is special.

At this point Grant has some significant decisions to make and we will lay out the entire strategic direction while at the same time dispelling myths about Grant and his management of his lines of communications. In many ways this is the most interesting
aspect of the day and you will really find your understanding clarified in a significant way. We will align Grant’s corps and finish the day with Major General James Birdseye McPherson’s Corps moving towards Utica. We will return to the hotel and the lecture this evening will be the second part of Grant’s March to Destiny.

Thursday May 2, 2013

Grant has moved across a broad front confounding Pemberton’s plans. Having been ordered to defend Vicksburg to the last, the Confederate general now finds himself twisted between obeying his president and his departmental commander, General Joseph E. Johnston. Earlier in the war Pemberton had run afoul of politicians in South Carolina and he surely understood that Davis was not only his commander in chief—he was also his patron.

As Confederates are gathered piecemeal to oppose Grant’s movement a small Confederate brigade under Brigadier General John Gregg moved towards the town of Raymond. There on May 12th this brigade collided with McPherson’s Corps. We will visit Raymond and see one of BGES’ most recent charitable projects while studying the battle there. You will be amazed at the progress achieved on the Raymond battlefield.

Gregg’s move to Raymond and this battle convinced Grant that Johnston would be a problem and that the nature of this campaign would have to change. At Dillon Plantation Grant discussed this with Sherman and determined to change his plans—he would nab Jackson, destroy Johnston and then return to the railroad to work his way towards Vicksburg.

Not much remains of the Jackson battlefield and it is in a very rough section of town we will; however, make two stops and do an extensive field briefing on Grant’s intelligence network and Johnston’s pusillanimous response to Grant’s threat. We will then return to Clinton, Mississippi to see a practical display of Grant’s careful planning. The battle for Vicksburg will take place at Champion Hill. We will follow John Logan’s Division to Champion Hill before returning to the hotel. This evening we will do a PowerPoint briefing on Grant’s March to Destiny.

Friday, May 3, 2013

Today Grant seals the deal. Our studies will take us to four sites and to the residual crest of Champion Hill. This decisive battle ensured Johnston and Pemberton would not join forces and guaranteed that Pemberton’s army would at some point be compelled to surrender. The fight is tactically very interesting but is most noteworthy for the ineptness that Pemberton displays in allowing his army to be caught in a strung out position.

The second part of this day is tied to the rear guard action for Champion Hill at Big Black River Bridge. Pemberton felt compelled to keep a bridgehead open to support the Division of William Wing Loring; however, Loring had decided to desert Pemberton and
had taken his troops away. The Federal assault on May 17\textsuperscript{th} was over in short order and the shattered remainder of Pemberton’s troops retreated into the defensive works of Vicksburg.

We will finish our day along the Bridgeport Road and discuss the arrival of Sherman and McPherson’s Corps in front of Vicksburg. You will be particularly enlightened to find out how petulant Sherman had been and when and where he has an epiphany about Grant. Tonight’s PowerPoint briefing will be on the “Siege of Vicksburg.”

\textit{Saturday, May 4, 2013}

So few people really understand or know much about the campaign that you have just spent 6 days studying. What they know in proportion is what you will spend about 3/4 of the day on. Well over a million people a year see the siege and think it is the campaign.

You know that Grant made two attacks against the Confederate defenses—one was poorly organized and the other half-heartedly made by over half the army and unsupported where opportunity existed. We will walk and examine the attacks of May 19 and 22\textsuperscript{nd} and see how Grant’s plans to blow the Confederate lines up simultaneously finally bring a strangled and starving army and civilian populace to the point of surrender.

The day will finish with a special selected tour of monuments in and around the park that are laden with symbolism. Each participant will receive a copy of Parker’s most recent book, \textit{Art of Commemoration, Vicksburg}. Many of you may find this the most memorable take away from this singularly distinctive tour. We will have our final PowerPoint briefing on the Steele’s Bayou Expedition.

\textit{Sunday, May 5, 2013}

Again it is Boots and Saddles as we return to Memphis to dismiss. Rather than a boring deadhead back we have reserved one of the most interesting aspects of the campaign for today. Steele’s Bayou Expedition came within a mile of putting Sherman and Porter in the Yazoo River and behind the Confederates’ very substantial Vicksburg fortifications. Our stop at Hill’s Plantation and at Rolling Fork will give you food for much discussion over the 3 ½ hour return to Memphis. We will dismiss around 5 PM. Make sure to join us for the Gettysburg component in August—there will be a CONSIDERABLE financial incentive for doing so.

\textbf{The Faculty}

\textit{Parker Hills} is a retired Brigadier General living in Clinton, Mississippi. As co-author of \textit{Receding Tide: Vicksburg and Gettysburg, The Campaigns that Changed the Civil War}, he has become intimately and recently familiar with Stuart at Gettysburg. Parker is
a mover and shaker in the preservation of sites related to the Vicksburg Campaign. He is currently expanding the Raymond Battlefield Park. Hills is a corporate trainer who is the principal in the firm *Battle Focus*.

*Len Riedel* is the Executive Director of the BGES and is a retired Air Force officer with a Masters degree in History. He has given numerous talks on various aspects of the war and has planned over 250 different battlefield tours.

**Meeting Site and Hotel:** This program will be headquartered in the Courtyard Marriott, Memphis Airport, 1780 Nonconnah Blvd., Memphis, TN 38132. The phone number is 800-228-9290. Our group block is Blue and Gray Education Society. We have established a group rate of $79 plus tax is $91.60 single or double. This block is available until April 5th. AFTER THIS DATE YOU ARE LIABLE TO PAY A MUCH HIGHER RATE. The hotel has complimentary transportation to and from the airport.

**Airport and Transportation Arrangements:** The servicing airport is Memphis (MEM). If you fly in we can do a drop at the airport but do not plan a flight home before 6 PM. I cannot guarantee you can make an earlier flight.

**Key Publications and Recommended Reading** (includes shipping and handling)

You will receive Edwin Bearss’ and Parker Hills’, *Receding Tide: Vicksburg and Gettysburg, The Campaigns that Changed the Civil War*, Parker Hills’, *Art of Commemoration: Vicksburg* and maps which will provide you with all the support materials you will need to take full advantage of this registration. We offer the following reading list to enhance your advanced preparations for your participation.

_____ US Grant, *Memoirs* $20

_____ Edwin C. Bearss, *The Vicksburg Campaign (3 volumes)* $130

**BGES’ 2013 Registration Form:**

**Receding Tide: The Book, The Tour Part 1:**

**The Vicksburg Campaign**

April 27-May 5, 2013

Name (s): ____________________________________________

Address: ______________________________________________

Phone: ____________________________ Email: _____________________

*Your registration fee includes transportation and gratuities appropriate for the registration numbers, two professional tour guides and a tour coordinator, two published
books, 8 lectures, maps, all admissions, six nights lodging at the Hampton Inn, Vicksburg, 6 happy hours at Hampton Inn, 8 lunches, 6 breakfasts, snacks, water and sodas.

_____ Registration  $2500 single  _____ per person Double Occupancy $2200

_____ * Current BGES member  $2400 single  _____ per person double $2100

*Must have paid dues of at least $75 within the past 12 months. Rate also applies to members of the Museum of the Confederacy and South Carolina Historical Society

_____ Teacher/ FT student through Grad School  $2300 single  _____ $2000 double*

*Both room registrants must be eligible for the lower rate or must pay the regular rates for a double in their category

_____ Here is my deposit of $600 for each person registered.

_____ I have enclosed the entire amount due.

SPECIAL: Register for both Vicksburg and the August Gettysburg tour and save big. Both programs at student double occupancy rate regardless of BGES membership status. You must pay deposits on both for all registering at this rate. Thus you would be required to send a minimum deposit of $1200 per person. The deposit for Gettysburg will be held against your completion of that program. If you must cancel or do not attend that deposit of $600 per person will be refunded less the adjustment for the appropriate Vicksburg rate.

_____ Sign me up for both. My single registration for Vicksburg will be $2000 per person single or double. I am also enclosing a deposit of $600 for my August Gettysburg Registration. I am enclosing a minimum of $1200 per person deposit and understand that this rate is contingent upon participating in both programs and serves as a bond for the second event using this deposit. I understand my rate will be adjusted appropriately if I cancel my Gettysburg registration. Initial

_____ I am not a member of the BGES or my membership has lapsed. Please send me membership information

_____ Send me the books I’ve indicated. I’ve enclosed $ ____________.

Total Enclosed: $ ______________

Make checks payable to BGES and mail to PO Box 1176, Chatham, VA 24531

Or fax to 434-432-0596
Charge my Mastercard  VISA  American Express  Discover  $ _________
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