

A BGES Civil War Field University Program:

The Siege of Vicksburg:

Part 7 of Our Signature Vicksburg Campaign Study

Presented by Brigadier General James Parker Hills, Ret.

From Vicksburg, MS, March 4-7, 2020

After six preparatory sessions and three years, the epic saga of the Vicksburg Campaign heads into its final stages. In this final Vicksburg based campaign, enter the 43 days of siege operations and the unique aspect of the campaign—the Second Front. You will see the wild and remote back country not seen by anyone other than people who travel with BGES. We will examine mining operations, and talk about tunnel rats and the people who lived with them. You will visit Rawhide, and Phoenix (Mississippi). We even will go see where Grant fell off the wagon at a place known as Satartia.

Wednesday, March 4, 2020

5 PM. Meet at the Hampton Inn to pick up your reading books and enjoy the hospitality hour at the hotel, which starts at 5 PM.

6:30 PM. We will adjourn to the meeting room for an opening lecture. Parker Hills takes great pride in his PowerPoint presentations, and it shows. His lecture will bring you up to and then discuss the siege and operations on the so called “Second Front.” We will enjoy pizza and other snacks during his lecture.

Thursday, March 5, 2020

8:00 AM. Today we will take you to the “lost” portions of the Vicksburg National Military Park—that is, parts that were handed over to the City of Vicksburg in the later part of the 1960s so that I-20 could be built through. We will see the siege operations in that area and visit monuments long forgotten to most visitors—a true travesty of historic preservation. We then will enter the modern park to show you places that are out of view of the roads and which truly nobody ever sees as we examine siege operations.

Before leaving Vicksburg, we will follow the progress of the Union armies and the increasing desperation of the Confederates and their civilian wards until Grant wins a Confederate surrender. We then will follow the victorious Grant as he enters Vicksburg and goes immediately to the waterfront to welcome and thank Admiral Porter. While downtown, we will visit the city’s eclectic but historic museum at the Old Courthouse and a number of other important and surviving historic sites.

We will return to the hotel in time for happy hour. You will have lunch with us, but dinner is on your own.

Friday, March 6, 2020

8 AM. Today is one of those days that explains why you select BGES, as we get out onto the dirt and gravel roads of the Second Front. It has been sadly noted that even cell phones don't work where we are going. Of course, the Second Front is designed to make sure Joseph E. Johnston and his army of relief does not threaten Grant's slow destruction of the Confederate army in Vicksburg.

What you will notice today is that the signs are not visited nor are they marked or interpreted. Rural Mississippi yawns before you. Why this day? Joe Johnston and what he doesn't do and how Sherman makes sure he doesn't do any different. We will return to the hotel in time for happy hour. We will provide lunch and dinner.

Saturday, March 7, 2020

8 AM. Once Grant sewed Pemberton into the cul de sac that was Vicksburg, the end was not in doubt. While Sherman was tethered to Grant's rear, once Vicksburg was reduced, Sherman took off after Johnston. We follow Sherman as he besieges Johnston briefly before marching into Jackson, where it will be ransacked and once again burned. We will make sure you understand why Jackson was derisively nicknamed "Chimneyville" well into the 20th century.

We will return to the hotel for happy hour and then dismiss. We provide lunch. The eight-hand final part will convene in Baton Rouge in the fall of 2020.

About the Faculty

Parker Hills is the nation's leading historian on the Vicksburg Campaign and a scholar of some note on the Gettysburg Campaign. He has a well-earned reputation for the highest standards of preparation on tours and the exceptional educational value of his content. Being with Hills is like taking a senior military service school course in which you surely will leave with far more knowledge than when you arrived. Parker is a graduate of the U.S. Army War College, and he is in high demand from businesses and military organizations that want his leadership training. Hills is the founder of BattleFocus and is a retired general officer who served on both active duty as a battery commander in Korea, and as an aide to General of the Army Omar Bradley. He was the Director of Public Affairs for the Mississippi National Guard and he founded the Regional Counter Drug Training Academy in Meridian, Mississippi. Parker is the coauthor of *Receding Tide, Vicksburg and Gettysburg, The Campaigns that Changed the Civil War*. Parker also has published the *Vicksburg Campaign Driving Guide* and *The Art of Commemoration*—a book that reveals the symbolism

and beauty of the commemorative memorialization at the Vicksburg park. He also is the driving force for Civil War preservation in the state of Mississippi, and largely through his efforts the Raymond Battlefield Park exists. Given this outstanding résumé, his programs cost a little more, but, you quickly will see that they are well worth it.

Hotel Information

Our headquarters hotel is the Hampton Inn on Clay Street, across from the Vicksburg National Military Park. Our block rate is \$96 per night plus tax. Call 601-636-6100 and ask for Group Code BGE. Reservations must be made by February 19th or you are subject to paying the rack rate.

Transportation

The closest servicing airport is Jackson (JAN), they do have a limo service, Go-FER-Girls (601-636-2574) to and from Vicksburg for \$75 one way. We have used them and they were reliable and timely. You can get a much better airfare flying into New Orleans (MSY) and driving the 150 miles to the program. This is a program where driving is a great option. Amtrak does service Jackson, Mississippi.

Recommended Reading

You will be provided with a reading book and maps upon arrival. Amazon.com has a program to support non-profits IF YOU SIGN UP to support Blue and Gray Education Society (EIN 54-1720582) at [AmazonSmile](#). When you sign up there rather than the normal Amazon site, one-half of one percent of your purchase price will be provided to BGES as a donation from Amazon. This will apply not only on this purchase but others you may make at other times.

Edwin C. Bearss and James P. Hills: [*Receding Tide: Vicksburg and Gettysburg, The Campaigns that Changed the Civil War*](#)

Warren Grabau: [*Ninety-Eight Days: A Geographer's View of the Vicksburg Campaign*](#)

Registration Form
The Siege of Vicksburg, Part 7 of
The BGES' Signature Campaign Study
A BGES Field University Program

Presented by Brigadier General James Parker Hills, Ret.
March 4-7, 2020 from Vicksburg, Mississippi

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Registration includes three lunches, a group dinner, nightly happy hours, a reading book with maps, the academic program, support of a professional historian, a tour director, park admission, and transportation. We also will provide snacks, bottled water, and a limited selection of sodas.

_____ Registration \$825

_____ Current BGES member \$775

_____ I am not a member but would like to join so that I can get the member's rate, or I am a member who is past due to renew. Please accept my donation of \$_____ (must be \$75 or more which is tax deductible)

_____ I am sending a deposit of \$300 per person plus full payment for any memberships. Total enclosed is \$_____. I will pay the balance due before the event.

_____ Check enclosed

Charge my (circle one) MC VISA AMEXP Discover \$_____

#_____

Exp: _____ CVV: _____

Signature: _____

Mail to BGES Seminars, PO Box 1176, Chatham, VA 24531 or fax credit card registrations to 434-432-0596.