THE CONFEDERATE MEMORIAL AT WEST PARK IN PITTSBURGH

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This tablet marks the site of the old Western Penitentiary, which served as the prison in 1863–64 for 118 junior officers and enlisted men of Major General John H. Morgan’s Confederate cavalry. It is the third memorial erected by the Pennsylvania Historical Commission in commemoration of outstanding events in the War between the States. Five years ago in the dooryard of a Pennsylvania home where the state road winds up into the foothills of the Blue Mountain, near Carlisle, was placed a huge boulder to mark the point farthest north reached by the vanguard of General Lee’s army in the invasion of 1863, and two years later the commission unveiled a tablet near McConnellsburg which recalls the last Confederate camp-fire north of Mason and Dixon’s Line. In no other northern commonwealth has similar interest been shown in official acts for the preservation of historic places in the stirring era of the sixties.

During the month of June, 1863, when Lee’s Confederates, elated over their victory at Chancellorsville, were advancing into Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh was looked upon as an especial prize for the invaders and the city prepared for the emergency. It was then that the ring of redoubts and rifle pits—some of which are still visible on surrounding hills—was erected round about Pittsburgh. Civilians were pressed into service in digging the trenches, munitions were collected and the Department of the Monongahela was created to take over troops intended for the defense of this region. It was a season of alarm and Pittsburgh prepared grimly for the possibilities of a siege. But the defeat of Pickett’s charge on the slopes of Cemetery Hill at Gettysburg on July third quieted any fears for the safety of Pittsburgh. Ten days later Lee’s veterans were

1 An address of welcome delivered at the unveiling of the monument on June 2, 1934. Mr. Neel is a vice president and former secretary of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. Ed.
back over the Potomac and Pittsburgh's civilian defenders were back in
their offices, stores, and shops.

Then came a new alarm—this time from the west. General Morgan,
at the head of nearly two thousand cavalry, overran Kentucky, crossed
the Ohio River into Indiana, and spread terror among the inhabitants in
one of the most daring and spectacular raids of the war. The excitement
here was scarcely less than that when General Lee's advance was pre-
dicted.

For two weeks Morgan's cavalrmen rode at will through the south-
eastern portion of Indiana and southern Ohio. They foraged the farms,
impressed fresh horses, and threw villagers into panic, playing hide and
seek with Union volunteers and Home Guard. Finally, outnumbered
and harried by his pursuers who closed in on him from all directions,
Morgan endeavored to turn back to the southern side of the Ohio and
escape into Virginia. He almost succeeded. Near Pomeroy, Ohio, he at-
temted a crossing, but Burnside's men were close on his heels. Morgan's
force was caught in a neck of land enclosed by a bend in the river. It
proved to be a poor defensive position. Here was fought the battle of Buf-
fington Island. Morgan and a few hundred men cut their way out of
the blue-coated cordon and rode northeastward, spreading alarm among
the townspeople of Zanesville, Cambridge, and Cadiz.

Again Morgan planned to cross the Ohio and suddenly appeared on
the highlands above Steubenville, and his long line of horsemen riding
single file against the western horizon made a formidable demonstration
to companies watching from the valley below and from the hills of Holli-
day's Cove across the river. But he accurately counted his foes and
decided not to try the crossing. His horses were worn out and his men
weary from constant riding were beginning to straggle. Dispirited and
broken down by fatigue, the remnant of the raiders struck out in the di-
rection of Salineville. At this time news of their approach reached Pitts-
burgh and reinforcements were dispatched to the Ohio border. Others
rushed up from Wheeling and ever-increasing bodies of fresh troops
thundered in hot pursuit of the Confederates. Morgan's fate was sealed.

Near West Point, a village in Columbiana County, about ten miles
northwest of East Liverpool, in the early afternoon of July 26, 1863, the raid ended when Morgan opened negotiations for the surrender and parole of his force to a militia officer. The volunteer troops under Major George W. Rue came up and demanded the unconditional surrender of the Confederates and Morgan was compelled to comply. The prisoners of war were marched to Wellsville. General Morgan was taken with some of his senior officers to Columbus and placed in the Ohio State Penitentiary where he escaped after four months' imprisonment. Men in the ranks for the most part were taken to prisons in northern Ohio, while 118 men, comprising the line officers, a few noncommissioned officers, and two or three enlisted men were brought to Allegheny and locked up in the Western Penitentiary of Pennsylvania, erected here in 1824. Its high stone walls and turrets gave it the appearance of a medieval castle.

Morgan's men were regarded as little less than outlaws by the people in the North, and a safe prison was desired to hold them. That was the purpose in bringing the officers to Old Western. But the young captains and lieutenants who rode with Morgan were regularly commissioned in the Confederate army. They had served in the regularly organized cavalry units enlisted in Kentucky, Tennessee, and other southern states, and had seen hard service against the armies of Grant, Buell, and Rosecrans. On August 5, 1863, they were formally interned in the prison and closely guarded. They were believed to be desperate men.

The ex-raiders proved to be model prisoners. The majority of them had left fine old Kentucky homes in the Blue Grass region to enter the war. Many of them were college graduates or young college students and exemplified all the graces of society in the Old South. In a little time the prison discipline was relaxed and they were allowed the freedom of the penitentiary yard. They were well treated and fed. Their only photograph shows them seated about a table spread for a generous meal. Presently the news leaked outside the walls of Old Western that after all these were not such desperate men, and callers at the prison, especially the ladies, were impressed by the dignity and courtesy of the young Kentuckians and Tennesseans. Soon gifts of fruit and pastry and other good
things found their way into the hands of the prisoners. Books were loaned, newspapers were delivered to them regularly, and it is said that discipline was further relaxed, allowing an increase in the number of visitors. Morgan's men got the full round of enjoyment out of life as far as comfort could be given in a gloomy prison. This was the report given by these soldiers after the war, and the tradition is handed down by their descendants.

But the cordial relations between Morgan's men and the citizens of Allegheny proved the undoing of the prisoners. Word reached the War Department at Washington that discipline was not what it should be and an order was issued for their transfer to Point Lookout, Maryland. Accordingly, on March 18, 1864, lustily singing "My Maryland", the entire land marched out of Old Western and boarded a train for Baltimore—and Point Lookout, where they remained until the close of the war.

Now sixty-nine years have passed—today there is no North, no South, no East, no West, in terms of division, in terms of dissension. They constitute four great columns, differing in beauty, differing in stature, but united, sustaining the superstructure of the solid vital government, the most splendid government in the history of the world. When Grant stood up at Appomattox and in kindness and generosity extended his hand to Lee, and when Lee grasped that friendly hand, the chasm between the North and South was bridged, and we became one in love of flag and country. The flag once rent now floats without a seam. Each state is endeavoring to be one of the brightest jewels in America's great crown of glory.

One of the needs of this hour in this great republic is a return to the homely, vigorous virtues of the old pioneers and forefathers. We need a great revival of Washington's fervid patriotism. We need to feel as he and our fathers felt, that public honor is private honor, that public disgrace is private disgrace, that public failure is private failure, and that public success is private success. We need to feel again, as our forefathers felt, that a life like that of Thomas Jefferson, governed absolutely by service of country, though it may end in feeble bankruptcy and ruin,
far preferable to a life devoted to absorbing millions to be scattered in frivolous enjoyments and questionable dissipations.

In conclusion, let all of us, in whatever lines our lives may lie, in whatever sections we may live, crown them with the memories of a glorious past, thrilled and stirred by the achievements of our great ancestors, stirred by the possibilities of a great future. Feeling our responsibility, let all of us, with faces towards the future, determine to discharge the great responsibility placed on us by our common country and let each one of us resolve to aid this mighty republic to advance along the pathway of justice, equality, progress, and Christianity. In this spirit, Madam Chairman, United Daughters of the Confederacy and Friends, I bid you welcome.

Triumphant the bugle, a world gone mad,
The troops that pass are khaki clad,
Above fly planes that go fast and far,
'Tis another age; 'twas a different war.
Across the river float glorious flags,
And some I remember are sacred rags.
Near the Unknown Soldier, thro' mists I see,
With the brave of Valhalla, the spirit of Lee.