

THE CHARGER

CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE
P.O. BOX 18900, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44118

APRIL 1996

342ND MEETING

VOL. 17 #8

DATE:

Wednesday, April 17, 1996

PLACE:

The Hermit Club

SUBJECT:

"General George Armstrong Custer"

SPEAKER:

JEFFERY D. WERT. Mr. Wert is the author of many articles and essays and three previous books on the Civil War: From Winchester to Cedar Creek: The Shenandoah Campaign of 1864, Mosby's Rangers, and General James Longstreet: The Confederacy's Most Controversial Soldier. His latest book, a biography of Custer, is due to be published in June of this year. Also at this meeting will be booksellers from Breedlove Books who will have Mr. Wert's books available for purchase and autographed by the author as well as an assortment of other Civil War titles.



JEFFERY D. WERT

TIME:

Drinks 6PM Dinner 7PM

RESERVATIONS:

Please call JAC Buisness Communications at 861-5588.
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CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

1957 * 1996



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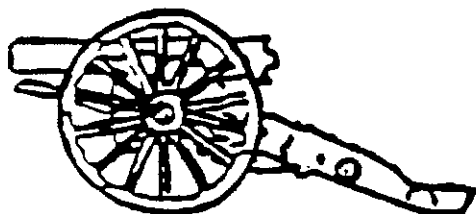
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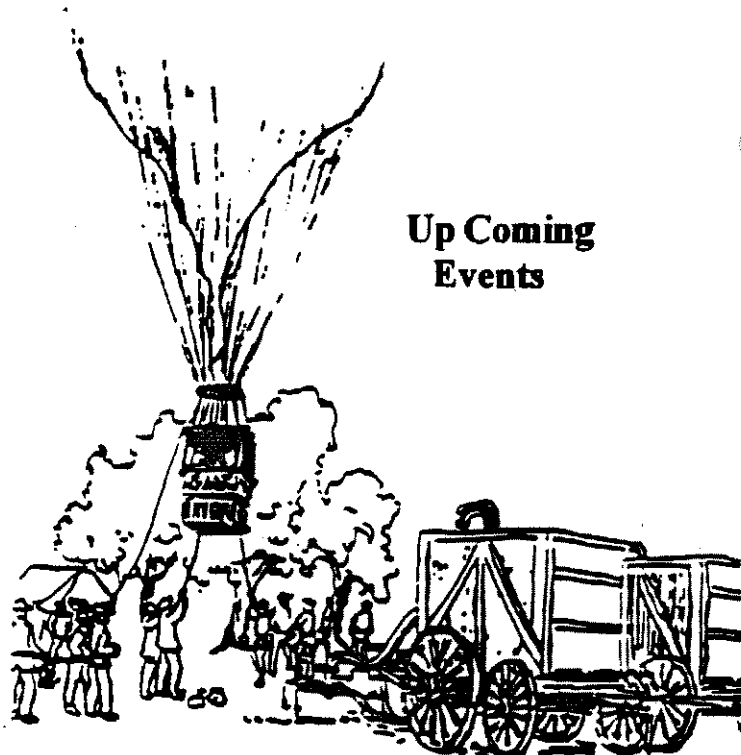


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NEW ADDRESS



PRESERVE YOUR BATTLEFIELDS

Up Coming Events



This Year's Schedule of Meetings & Speakers

April 17 -

Jeffery Wert
"Custer"

May 8 -

Ladies Night
William A. Young, Jr.
"Rev. Findley at
Pickett's Charge"



CLEVELAND CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

FALL 1996 FIELDTRIP

MANASSAS, VIRGINIA

SEPTEMBER 26-29, 1996

ITINERARY:	Thursday, Sept. 26	Dinner and Lecture
	Friday, Sept. 27	First Manassas (First Bull Run Battle)
	Saturday, Sept. 28	Second Manassas (Second Bull Run Battle)
	Sunday, Sept. 29	Leave by Noon

FEATURING: Chris Bryce
Park Ranger/ Historian

RESERVATION: \$65.00

COST: Hotel Accommodations at Hampton Inn Manassas
7295 Williamson Blvd.
Manassas, Va 22110 (703)-369-1100
Rate: Approx. \$58/night 2P/1B

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General James Longstreet's Winter of Discontent

By Dick Crews

Except for the outcome of the war, General James "Gloomy Pete" Longstreet's most unhappy moments during the War between the States were in the winter of 1863/1864.

Why? Because he and the 1st Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia spent the winter of 1863/1864 in **Eastern Tennessee**.

Eastern Tennessee is geographically in the "heart of Dixie" but not in the heart of support for separating from the Union. In fact a majority of the population openly supported the Union. These were mountain people who's ancestors fought at Cow Pens and King's Mountain against the British in the revolutionary war. They were and still are independent, self supporting people. They had little use for the slave owners who controlled their states of Tennessee and North Carolina. Whether General Longstreet clearly understood that he was in hostile territory or not he was soon to find out.

The campaign however had started very well. Following the battle of Gettysburg, Longstreet had urged the Confederate Secretary of War James Seddon to send his Corps to the join the Confederate armies fighting in the West.

General Robert E. Lee finally agreed to the plan and Longstreet's 1st Corps was sent by rail to General Braxton Bragg forces outside of Chattanooga, Tennessee in early September, 1863.

Longstreet forces helped the Army of Tennessee to a great Southern victory at Chickamauga Creek just south of Chattanooga.

This however, would prove to be the highlight of the Fall and winter of 1863/1864 for Longstreet. He thought that General Braxton Bragg was a complete idiot. He along with other Generals in Bragg's command petitioned Confederate President Jefferson Davis to Have Bragg removed.

President Davis made a personal visit to resolve the situation, however General Bragg was left in Command. When Relations between the two Generals reached a breaking point, General Longstreet and the 1st Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia were sent to attack Knoxville, Tennessee, now in control of Union forces commanded by Ambrose Burnside.

Longstreet's attack on Knoxville was a disaster, 881 confederate casualties to 15 for the Union.

When Longstreet learned that Union Forces under Ulysses Grant had routed Bragg at Chattanooga and Major General William Sherman Corps with 12,000 troops were marching to reinforce Knoxville; he retreated north to winter in **Eastern Tennessee**.

An army officer thought the region, "a bleak, desolate, inhospitable country." Army units were sent in mass to collect food in the countryside as local farmers would shoot at single Confederate soldiers. The people of Greeneville, Tennessee vacated their town as they thought the Confederates would burn it down. Greeneville, was described by the Confederate troops as the most disloyal town in the South.

At no other time during the war, except perhaps the third day of Gettysburg, was Longstreet so depressed. On December 30, 1863 he wrote to the War Department in Richmond, Virginia offering his resignation.

On March 8, 1864 Longstreet boarded a train for Virginia signaling the return of the 1st Corps to the Army of Northern Virginia. After a winter in **Eastern Tennessee** it must have felt good to return to the South. No wonder the favorite song of Longstreet's troops that winter was, "*Take me back to old Virginia.*"

MORE THAN YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT

☆ *Camille Armand Jules Marie, Prince de Polignac* ☆

Camille Armand Jules Marie, Prince de Polignac was born on February 16, 1832, at Millemont, Seine-et-Oise, France. Polignac's mother was English, and his father was a prominent member of French society, having served as president of Charles X's council of ministers. An excellent student, Polignac attended St. Stanislaus College and won first prize in a European-wide math competition. After college he entered the French army in 1853. Polignac fought in the Crimean War at Sevastopol as a lieutenant but resigned his commission in 1859 in order to pursue his love of science. He traveled to Central America to explore and study plants and was there when the Civil War began.

Polignac became acquainted with P.G.T. Beauregard while traveling through New York and wrote to offer his services to the Confederacy. His offer was accepted, and Polignac was commissioned a lieutenant colonel of infantry on July 16, 1861, and assigned as Beauregard's chief of staff. He was described as being a "fiery little man, erect in figure, with keen black eyes, white teeth that showed brilliantly when he smiled, and a dark waxed moustache which lent a fierceness to his expression...." His looks often brought stares and jeers from soldiers, but he handled it well. Polignac spoke fluent English and could swear "like a trooper." He apparently could sometimes drink like one too. One soldier recounted a time when Polignac, as a general, drank too much eggnog and "the gallant little French General...enlivened the house by singing every few minutes a verse of song, which had reference to one 'Madame Gregoire' whoever she may have been."

Polignac served Beauregard well at Shiloh and Corinth. When Beauregard was replaced by General Braxton Bragg, Polignac joined Bragg's staff and accompanied him on the Kentucky invasion in 1862. At the Battle of Richmond, Kentucky, Polignac was praised for bravery when he picked up the colors of the 5th Tennessee and carried them through the fight, calling on the men to stand firm. Because of his gallantry

Polignac was promoted to brigadier general on January 10, 1863, effective immediately. At first assigned to the Army of Tennessee, he was transferred in March to the Trans-Mississippi Department. There in early 1864 he was put in command of a Texas brigade of infantry in Lieutenant General Richard Taylor's army. The Texans, upset over being under "a damn frog-eating Frenchman" whose name they could not pronounce, promptly began to refer to Polignac as "polecat" and holding their noses when he passed by. Taylor finally quietened them by promising to transfer Polignac if the Texans were still dissatisfied with him after their first fight together.

In early 1864 Polignac launched a raid toward Vidalia, Louisiana, to disperse jayhawkers, capture needed horses and mules, and break up the Union lessee plantations in the area. With approximately two thousand men Polignac swept through east central Louisiana and then in early March engaged several Union gunboats on the Oachita River near Harrisonburg. Although never heavily engaged, Polignac's expedition was deemed a success, and Taylor wrote that the Frenchman had gained his men's confidence "by his coolness under fire."

Polignac rejoined Taylor at Alexandria in time to meet Union Major General Nathaniel Banks' Red River Campaign. Placed in the division of Brigadier General Alfred Mouton, the Texas brigade retreated with the army to Mansfield. There on April 8, 1864, Taylor engaged the enemy in battle. Hitting Banks before he could deploy all of his men, Taylor sent Mouton's division charging across a broad open field into a withering fire. Mouton was quickly killed, and Polignac had to take command of the badly shot up division. Taylor wrote, "The gallant Polignac pressed the shattered division stubbornly and steadily onward." One soldier claimed Polignac was slightly wounded in the battle, but there is no mention of it in official records. The day ended in a complete Confederate victory, with the Yankees having been forced back several miles. Because of the heavy casualties



This later war image, with beard and mustache, shows Polignac with a regulation kepi with two stars, suggesting that it was made after his April 1864 promotion to major general. (Duke University, Durham, N.C.)

suffered at Mansfield. Polignac's division was held in reserve the next day when Taylor attacked Banks at Pleasant Hill. This time the Yankees stubbornly beat back Taylor's attack, and Polignac was called into action late in the day. Upon receiving his orders Polignac stood up in his stirrups and called out, "My boys, follow your Polignac." He then led them in the attack, but he too was repulsed. Despite his tactical victory at Pleasant Hill, Banks retreated down Red River. Polignac skirmished heavily with the enemy during the retreat and fought a pitched battle at Yellow Bayou on May 18. There in the last fight of the campaign Polignac attacked a fortified Union position and suffered heavy losses. Although Banks escaped destruction, Polignac's men praised the general's performance during the campaign, and the officers of his Texas brigade demonstrated their admiration by presenting him with a horse.

Polignac was promoted to major general on June 13, 1864, effective from April 8, and was given permanent command of Mouton's division. That summer Taylor was ordered to cross the Mississippi River and help defend Mobile. When Polignac's division reached the river, however, trouble began. Many of his own men feared the Union gunboats patrolling the river, and others claimed they were fighting only to defend the Trans-Mississippi Department. Mutiny was threatened, and several hundred men deserted. Finally Polignac's orders were changed, and he marched to Arkansas instead of crossing the river. There he spent the winter and returned to north Louisiana in early 1865. By then the South was in a desperate position, and Polignac offered to go to France to make a plea to Napoleon III for aid. He successfully ran the blockade in March, but the war ended while he was traveling through Spain.

Polignac returned to his French estate and resumed his academic career. He studied math and political economy but also found time to write numerous articles about the Civil War. Polignac married twice, his first wife dying in childbirth, and had four children. When the Franco-Prussian War began, he was appointed a major general and led the 1st French Division in several battles, winning the Legion of Honor. While working on a math problem that had perplexed him for years, he died at his desk on November 15, 1913, from cerebral edema. Having survived three wars and served as a major general in two armies, Polignac was the last surviving Confederate

From Confederate General Vol. V

PRESERVATION REPORT

Lee just said he was sorry

By Paul Greenberg

How strange in 1996 to perform this ritual, to make this annual pilgrimage, this attempt to commune with a spirit so different from the carefully staged events and careers of our technicolored times. It is like comparing a Matthew Brady photograph etched in black and white with a computer-generated color graphic made to order from virtual reality.

Yet it would be wrong to assume that the 19th century, too, did not know of glitz. On the contrary, it may have been the stagiest of centuries. George B. McClellan did not tuck his hand into his tunic by accident when he posed for his photographs in the best napoleonic style of the day.

And a great Battle of the Memoirs flourished in multivolume sets after The War. Was there a single general in that conflict who would accept responsibility for reverses, or who did not write his memoirs after the war?

Yes, there was.

The greatest general the war produced — some would say the greatest in American history — had not a book, not a chapter, not a word to put into print. After the decisive day of the decisive battle of the war, when the smoke still hung in the air heavy as the confusion and the desperation, the commander of the Confederate forces rode out to meet the remnant of Pickett's no longer existing division.

All he said was: "It's all my

fault." And he proceeded to organize the retreat as methodically and daringly as he had prepared for the battle.

When the usual stay-at-home critics were heard from, and the general had time to report at length to Jefferson Davis in Richmond, he did not explain or excuse his defeat, or gloss over the results of his decisions, or blame subordinates.

While others eagerly assigned blame, he had not a word of criticism for Longstreet or Ewell or Stuart. Instead of a defense, this general offered the president of the Confederacy his resignation. Naturally it was not accepted. Jefferson Davis had his drawbacks as a leader, but even he knew it would be impossible, unthinkable, to replace Robert E. Lee.

Here was a general who did not indulge in recriminations or excuses. And he had no need to defend his honor and rectitude, for they were as incontestable as his character.

Surely such a leader would never amount to much in a more sophisticated age, when self-promotion and self-protection have become so automatic and all-encompassing that they have merged into self-absorption. No wonder such a leader's simple candor should now be hailed as the rarest humility.

The general's entrance on a scene elevated all, as if time had entered a different, stiller dimension. His presence seems to have invested even the most minute action with grace, solitude and

detachment. No other commander, looking down from the heights of victory on the decimation of the enemy below, would observe: "It is well war is so terrible, or we should get too fond of it." He moved through time in the light of some standard quite beyond time. His was the standard of duty, which he called "the sublimest word in our language."

The dashing general in full color, the victor of Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg, the daring commander who remained on the offensive and poised to break out till the last, who in the month of Cold Harbor would inflict losses on the enemy equal to the total strength of his own command ... such leaders, rare as they may be, have their counterparts in all cultures. But the leader who accepts responsibility for his failure, who sees himself without filter or flattery, there is the rarity of all times.

It is not the most victorious hero but the general after Gettysburg, the lone rider in the rain after Appomattox, the old man returning home to teach the next generation and asking only to do his duty, the solitary figure transcending victory and defeat, who moves us beyond pride and adoration to the one bridge with the past and the future: love.

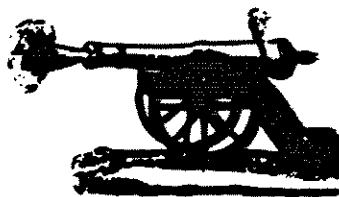
Even now, even in the furthest reaches of the Southern diaspora, his name is enough to rekindle that familiar old amazement and a new loyalty. For wherever Southerners are scattered, it requires only one name to unite us, and put an end to our rhetoric and posturing, our wonderful stories and empty gestures and all that is false and affected, and raise us every time above our own callow, calculating selves.

Lee 1931

Greenberg is a columnist for the Los Angeles Times Syndicate.

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The Eagle Has Landed

Story by LTC Parker Hills

Spinning furiously in the hurricane-like downdraft of a CH-47 "Chinook" helicopter, the 2000 pound bronze eagle of the Illinois Memorial in Vicksburg's National Military Park was airborne for the first time in 89 years. The eight foot bronze bird was gently flown across the former fields of fire, and gingerly placed on the soft grass of a parking lot median in front of a Confederate fort 20 yards away. After curious reporters, television crews, and interested spectators took their photos and admired the artistry of bronze-casters long since departed, the bird was whisked away on a park service truck for its first bath in close to a century.

The marble perch for the national symbol is the 62 foot high marble panteon of the Illinois Memorial, completed in 1906 on the very ground that many Illinoisians fought for 47 momentous days in 1863. Lately, however, the bird had been looking tired and weathered, and the green patina of the bronze was beginning to streak and stain the marbled portico. Originally, the eagle was covered with a thin layer of gold, but mother nature had jealously reclaimed her precious metal over the last 90 or so years.

Recognizing the plight of their memorial, the members of Illinois Civil War Roundtables donated \$5,000, which was matched by local contributions for the \$10,000 price tag of a new golden coat. However, one major problem remained--how to get the bird down.

Park officials contacted the Mississippi National Guard for assistance with a crane, but the bird was just up

too high. So members of Company G, 185th Aviation at Meridian were asked to use a Chinook for the mission. After all, the Chinook is used to transport troops and equipment, as well as to remove damaged equipment from the battlefield. Why not remove a damaged eagle from a battlefield, albeit an 1863 one?

During a preliminary inspection of the eagle in the mid-summer heat, National Guardsmen and Park Service personnel climbed onto the eagle's perch and discovered that four 2" bronze bolts were all that kept the bird earthbound. Remarkably, the nuts on the bolts were also bronze, and were easily loosened. The next part of the operation was the safe harnessing of the huge statue to ensure that stress and casting fractures did not cause the bird to pull apart when being hoisted into the heavens. Through careful study, the Guardsmen designed a harnessing procedure to protect the eagle from its own weight.

When the "Chinook" arrived to lift the eagle, Sergeant Cliff Dunavant remained tethered on the monu-

ment's marble roof to attach the hoisting line. As the helicopter was expertly positioned over the monument, the line lowered like a silk thread from a spider's spinaret, and Dunavant connected heaven and earth with a snap of a hook. Slowly, the bird was raised from its mooring, the metal complaining very little as the base slid from the bolts. The eagle flew only for a minute or so before it was landed, and sighs of relief and delight were heard amidst the announcement, "the eagle has landed!"

The eagle was successfully removed, and will be regilded to shine in the Mississippi sunlight for generations to come. According to Park Superintendent William O. Nichols, "This will further restore what is already the most spectacular monument of any Civil War park."

Of course, when it comes time for the eagle to fly again, the members of Company G will lend a hand. According to pilot Chief Warrant Officer Gary Fisher, "This is interesting; it makes you a part of history. Besides, my kids can come back and say, 'My dad did that.'"



1996 Civil War

Donewall in the Valley

April 10-14, 1996 • Washington, DC
Historian Guide: Frank O'Reilly

Civil War on the Gulf Coast

April 15-21, 1996 • New Orleans, LA
Historian Guide: Ed Bearss



The Trans-Mississippi

May 22-28, 1996 • Little Rock, AR
Historian Guide: Ed Bearss

Shiloh

September 19-22, 1996 • Nashville, TN
Historian Guide: Stacy Allen

Riding With Forrest

September 24-29, 1996 • Memphis, TN
Historian Guide: Ed Bearss



Civil War Steamboatin'

American Queen
August 30-September 6, 1996
Memphis, TN—New Orleans, LA
Civil War Historians

Abraham Lincoln

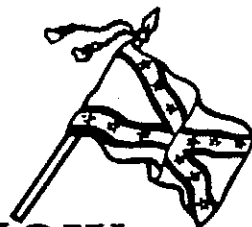
Nantucket Clipper
May 4-11, 1996
Washington, DC—Baltimore, MD
Historian Guide: David Long

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19th ANNUAL



OHIO CIVIL WAR COLLECTORS SHOW AND



4th ANNUAL ARTILLERY SHOW

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Sunday, May 5, 1996 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

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Meet Dale Galon, noted Civil War Print Artist in Person - Saturday Only.
10th Annual Civil War Veterans Historical Association Encampment
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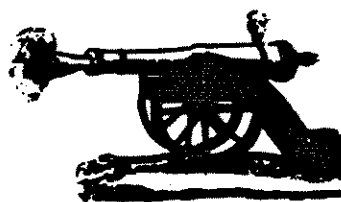
FOR INFORMATION CALL: (419) 289-3120

SOME MORE INTERNET:

From member Larry Stevens, Newark OH:
Ohio in the Civil War: <http://www.infinet.com/~1stevens/a/civil.html>

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The Ohio Civil War Association

Invites you to attend the
Ohio Civil War Association's Second Annual Civil War Conference
June 7-9, 1996
At the Ohio History Center in Columbus, Ohio

Conference Theme: "Controversies of the Civil War - Part I"

Conference proceeds go towards battlefield and historic preservation.

Featured Speakers and Topics:

- ♦ **Dr. Richard McMurry** - Author, Lecturer, Battlefield Tour Guide - *Topic to be announced later.*
- ♦ **Alan Nolan** - author - *"Lee Considered"* (Based on his book of the same title.)
- ♦ **Dr. Larry Daniel** - Author - *"Albert Sidney Johnston and P.G.T. Beauregard - a Partnership of Weakness"*
- ♦ **Bill Scaife** - Author and Lecturer - *"What Really Happened at Cassville."*
- ♦ **Michael Phipps** - Author and Gettysburg Battlefield Guide - *"Lee's Use of Cavalry at Gettysburg."*
- ♦ **Dave Smith** - Cincinnati Civil War Roundtable - *"Pemberton vs. Johnston: They Didn't Really Like Each Other Much."*
- ♦ **Dr. Hugh Earnhart** - Professor, Youngstown State University - *"What Really Made Lincoln Issue the Emancipation Proclamation."*
- ♦ **Jamie Ryan** - Central Ohio Civil War Roundtable - *"The Court Martial of Fitz-John Porter."*
- ♦ **Jerry Maxwell** - Michigan Regimental Civil War Roundtable - *"William Clarke Quantrill"*
- ♦ **Jay Simson** - Western Ohio Civil War Roundtable - *"Sheridan's Relief of Gouverneur K. Warren."*

Tentative Listing of Exhibitors and Vendors Attending:

- ♦ The General's Books/Blue & Gray Magazine
- ♦ History America Tours, Inc
- ♦ Fredericksburg Historical Prints
- ♦ Civil War Roundtable Associates
- ♦ Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites
- ♦ The Warren Motts Military Museum

Raffles and silent auction will also be held!

The Ohio Civil War Association is proud to announce our second conference. The conference is open to anyone interested - you don't have to be a "Buckeye" to attend! Conveniently located in Columbus, Ohio's geographic center, it is a short drive from most locations in the Midwest. The Ohio History Center itself features an excellent museum, the State Archives, and the Ohio Village, a recreation of a typical Civil War era Ohio town. Come spend an exciting weekend studying, learning, and socializing with fellow Civil War enthusiasts from across the Midwest!

The conference will open Friday evening and run through early Sunday morning. Price includes some meals. Lodging is not included, although we are negotiating with some local hotels for special rates. You will receive information on lodging with your confirmation letter.

Price for the conference is \$120 per person. If your Civil War Roundtable or other organization is a member of the Ohio Civil War Association, you get the special membership conference rate of \$100 per person. (Membership in the Ohio Civil War Association will be verified.) Pay by check, MasterCard or Visa! Make your check payable to The Ohio Civil War Association. Mail your payment and registration form to Karel Lea Biggs, Secretary, Ohio Civil War Association, 106 Haig Street, Celina, OH 45822. Questions? Call (419) 586-5294, FAX (419) 586-6763, or email at Biggsk@aol.com

Name: _____

Name you want on your name badge: _____

Roundtable or Organization (if applicable) _____

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MIDWEST CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



15TH



CONFERENCE

APRIL 19, 20 & 21, 1996
CINCINNATI MARRIOTT
11320 Chester Road, Cincinnati, Ohio

Speakers:

Jim Ogden, Historian at Chickamauga/Chattanooga NMP
A. Wilson Greene, Exec. Director Pamplin Park
Art Bergeron, Louisiana State Park System
John Hennessy, Fredericksburg NMP
Frank O'Reilly, Historian, Jackson Shrine NMP
Scott Hartwig, Historian, Gettysburg NMP

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CINCINNATI & HAMILTON CIVIL WAR
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MIDWEST CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE 15TH CONFERENCE

REGISTRATION FORM

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CONFERENCE REGISTRATION:

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\$100.00 per person X _____ = _____

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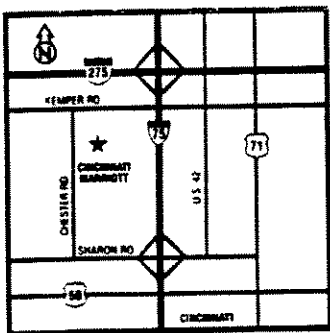
Phone Reservations:

Questions?? Conference Chairman: Michael Rhein (513) 984-3227

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Cincinnati Civil War Round Table

(Registration Starts At 7:00am)



CINCINNATI MARRIOTT
(SHARONVILLE, OHIO)
11320 CHESTER ROAD
(513) 772-1720

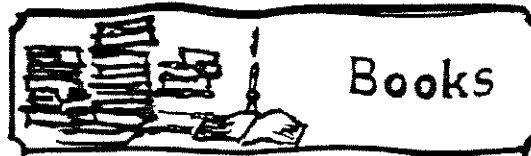
Rate Per Night: \$72.00

Please Indicate You Are With Civil War Conference

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**CINCINNATI & HAMILTON CIVIL WAR
ROUND TABLES**

BOOK REVIEW



A photograph of soldiers relaxing in a bunker, then known as a "bombproof," from "Landscapes of the Civil War" illustrates a lighter side of the conflict.

Primitive Civil War photos still had immense impact

LANDSCAPES OF THE CIVIL WAR: Newly Discovered Photographs From the Medford Historical Society. Edited by Constance Sullivan. Knopf, 145 pp., \$40.

Among its many "firsts," the Civil War was the first American war to be extensively photographed. "Landscapes of the Civil War" handsomely reproduces 97 battlefield photos, selected from what is billed as a newly discovered cache of 5400 prints.

This claim of novelty, although literally true, is highly misleading, inasmuch as most, if not all, of these photographs have already been widely reproduced over the years, though seldom with such clarity of detail.

Since the primitive state of photography made

it impossible to take action shots of the Civil War, these photos are necessarily limited to scenes taken either before or after battles. Those taken before, such as a snapshot of Union soldiers relaxing in their "bombproofs," illustrate the lighter side of war. Those taken after, with their haunting images of scattered corpses, bloated horses and ruined cities, belie the collection's oddly bucolic title, "Landscapes."

Even to eyes jaded by the horrors of our century, these images are shattering. One can only guess at the impact they must have had in the 1860s when they brought the disasters of war for the first time to the average American's front parlor.

Allan Peskin

Civil War Bookshelf
by William F.B. Vodrey
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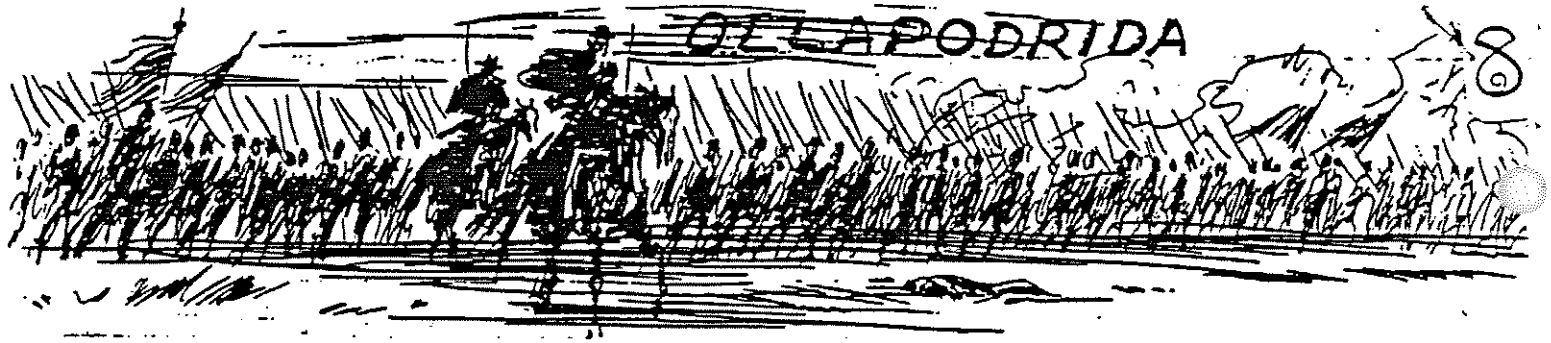
The movie Gettysburg reintroduced a new generation to a long-obscure hero of the battle, Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain. The movie credits Chamberlain, then colonel of the 20th Maine, with saving the Union left with a desperate bayonet charge down Little Round Top on July 2, 1863. Chamberlain was also prominently featured in Ken Burns's PBS series. Although some revisionists now say that Chamberlain was not the towering, pivotal figure his admirers claim, he was undeniably a hero, much deserving of our admiration and respect.

Chamberlain was a professor at Bowdoin College, Maine at the outbreak of the war, and he asked for a sabbatical to study in Europe. Upon receiving permission, he promptly joined the Army instead, much to the faculty's displeasure - they didn't want to lose so fine a teacher on the battlefield. He taught himself to be a soldier from both books and hard experience; he fought valiantly in most of the battles of the east, won the Congressional Medal of Honor, was wounded repeatedly and grievously, and rose to the rank of major general. U.S. Grant personally selected him to receive the Confederate surrender at Appomattox. After the war, he served four terms as governor of Maine and then was president of Bowdoin College, teaching virtually every subject in the school's curriculum.

Three books will tell you just about all you need to know about Chamberlain. He was a prolific and talented writer himself, and his The Passing of the Armies (1915; Bantam Books reprinting, 1993) is a detailed description of the final exhausting days of the war, when the Army of the Potomac broke through Lee's lines around Petersburg, and Lee tried to escape to the southwest. Although Chamberlain's writing may be a bit flowery for modern readers, the book is still an interesting account of the final death agonies of Lee's army, and the growing exhilaration of the Federal troops giving chase. Chamberlain also stoutly defends Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren against those (Gen. Phil Sheridan among them) who criticized Warren's conduct at the Battle of Five Forks. And when silence falls at last at Appomattox, you can easily imagine you are there.

A lightly fictionalized introduction to Chamberlain is Michael Shaara's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel The Killer Angels (1974, but frequently reprinted) which focuses upon Chamberlain and Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee, exploring their thoughts, hopes and dreams as the Battle of Gettysburg breaks in all its fury around them. (Gen. George G. Meade, on the other hand, is a bit player in Shaara's book). The movie Gettysburg closely follows Shaara's book, but Shaara goes into much greater depth in exploring the character of these two extraordinary men, and how the battle changed them both. Shaara's book is a quick, fascinating read, and probably one of the finest Civil War novels ever written.

If you want more detail, you can't go wrong with Alice Rains Trulock's In the Hands of Providence: Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain and the American Civil War (University of North Carolina Press, 1992). The book was a labor of love for Trulock, a talented historian and writer who died shortly after completing it. The book follows Chamberlain from his birth on September 8, 1828 until his death, directly attributable to his Civil War wounds, on February 24, 1914, on the eve of another great war that would change America. Although Trulock by no means stints on the war years (including Chamberlain's near-capture by Confederate troops, whom he deceived with a badly-faded uniform coat and a quickly improvised Virginia drawl), the book is also thorough and interesting in its exploration of Chamberlain's later life. His courage and determination were just as evident in his civilian as in his military service; he faced down political rivals and rebellious students with equal determination. We learn that had the political winds blown just slightly differently, Chamberlain would likely have been a U.S. Senator and possibly even, in time, President of the United States - and wouldn't that have been something? We could do much worse, then and now.



During General Joseph Johnston's withdrawal to the Chattahoochie River line outside of Atlanta, Brigadier General Alfred G. Vaughn, who commanded a brigade in Cheatham's Division, was wounded by an exploding shell near Vining's Station - necessitating the amputation of his foot. On the way to the hospital, his ambulance passed division headquarters and General Cheatham came out to express his sympathy. Observing that Vaughn was quite pale, he gave him a stiff drink. As the ambulance continued past corps headquarters General Hardee came out and likewise offered him a drink. General Vaughn later described the last phase of his trip to the hospital: "I continued to feel better....and in a short time passed General Johnston's headquarters. He came out and said I was looking pale. He happened to have some very fine apple brandy and gave me a big drink. From this time on I knew nothing until I awoke on the platform in Atlanta at sunrise the next morning."

--- The Campaign for Atlanta by William R. Scaife pp75

As the captured Confederates at Fort Donelson were being ushered aboard transports to carry them North to Yankee prison camps, a Yankee band serenaded their departure by playing "Yankee Doodle". One impertinent Union Colonel asked Confederate General Simon Boliver Buckner, who had graduated from West Point and had served in the U.S. Army before the outbreak of hostilities, if the band's playing "Yankee Doodle" did not rekindle fond memories of the old army for Buckner. Buckner answered by noting how one of his men was drummed out of the regiment for some offense just before the surrender, and the unit band had struck up the customary "Rouge's March". "Stop", cried the victim, "you have mistaken the tune. Play Yankee Doodle. A half a million rogues march to that every day."

--- Forts Henry and Donelson: The Key to the Confederate Heartland by Benjamin Franklin Cooling pp 221

Over the years, while working in Washington, D.C., Alexander Gardner photographed Lincoln more than any other photographer. He took a total of 37 photos of the President, twice as many as his nearest competitor. He was deeply honored when Lincoln stated that he considered Gardner his favorite photographer. Gardner was also one of only a privileged few to photograph BOTH of Lincoln's inaugurations. After Lincoln's assassination and the killing of John Wilkes Booth, he was commissioned to photograph the autopsy of Booth. He made only one negative and one print of the autopsy, both of which were confiscated by the U.S. Government, possibly to prevent Booth from becoming a martyr. The photograph exists as a wood engraving, which was reproduced in Harper's Weekly. It is odd

that Gardner can be seen in the engraving since he personally took the picture. Historians are not sure, but it is believed the engraver for unknown reasons, place him in the scene. Gardner was also instructed to photographically identify the Lincoln conspirators. For this task he used a front and side pose of each person. Although a simple concept, it was the first time in history this technique was employed. It is still used today, commonly called "mug shots."

--- John DiNuzzo of the Robert E. Lee CWRT of Central New Jersey

THE NAVAL WAR

[Editor's Note: I found these interesting entries, which fit very well with this month's talk, in the *Civil War Naval Chronology, 1861-1865*, Washington: 1971.]

February 9, 1864.

Acting Master Gerhard C. Schulze "received six refugees" on board U.S.S. *Jacob Bell* off Blakistone Island, Virginia. One of the men, Joseph Lenty, an Englishman, had worked in Richmond for four years and brought the North further news of recent refinement by Confederates of their ingenious torpedoes. "...they are now making a shell which looks exactly like a piece of coal, pieces of which were taken from a coal pile as patterns to imitate. I have made these shells myself. I believe these shells have power enough to burst any boiler. After they were thrown in a coal pile I could not tell the difference between them and coal myself." The "coal torpedo" was reported to have been placed in production late in January 1864 and was suspected of having been the agent of several unexplained explosions and fires during the remainder of the war (see 27 November 1864). A general order issued by Rear Admiral Porter on the subject testified to the genuine alarm with which Union commanders viewed the new weapon: "The Enemy have adopted new inventions to destroy human life and vessels in the shape of torpedoes, and an article resembling coal, which is to be placed in our coal piles for the purpose of blowing the vessels up, or injuring them. Officers will have to be careful in overlooking coal barges. Guards will be placed over them at all times, and anyone found attempting to place any of these things amongst the coal will be shot on the spot."

February 9, 1864.

Life on board Confederate commerce raiders was taxing and little relieved by relaxation. This date C.S.S. *Alabama* made one of her few "port calls" putting into the island of Johanna between Africa and Madagascar for provisions. Captain Semmes later wrote: "I gave my sailors a run on shore, but this sort of 'liberty' was awful hard work for Jack. There was no such thing as a glass of grog to be found in the whole town, and as for a fiddle, and Sal for a partner—all of which would have been a matter of course in civilized countries—there were no such luxuries to be thought of. They found it a difficult matter to get through with the day, and were all down at the beach long before sunset—the hour appointed for Their coming off—waiting for the approach of the welcome boat. I told Kell to let them go on shore as often as they pleased, but no one made a second application."

An entry for 10 February 1864 showed the following intriguing information:

U.S.S. *Florida*, Commander Pierce Crosby, forced blockade runner *Fanny and Jenny*, aground near Masonboro Inlet, North Carolina. Immediately thereafter, Crosby sighted blockade runner *Emily* aground nearby. Unable to get either steamer afloat and under fire from a Confederate Whitworth battery, Crosby burned them. *Fanny and Jenny* carried an assorted cargo including a quantity of coal; *Emily* carried a cargo of salt. On *Fanny and Jenny* was also found a solid gold Jewel-studded sword inscribed: "To General Robert E. Lee, from his British sympathizers." Crosby reported that information given him by the captured crew members of *Fanny and Jenny* indicated that ten blockade runners had sailed from Nassau for Wilmington "... during this dark of the moon. Three have been destroyed, and one put back, broken down, leaving six others to be heard from."

[Editor's Note: Does anyone know what happened to the "solid gold jewel-studded sword" for Robert E. Lee?]

TAKE FROM:
THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

From The President's Desk

From The President's Desk

From The President's Desk

From The President's Desk

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

The final reminder concerning the change of dates of our meeting this month from the second Wednesday in April to April 17, which is the third Wednesday. This is a change for this meeting only to the third Wednesday of the month. The speaker this month will be Jeffrey Wert. Mr. Wert is a noted biographer of James Longstreet and has written concerning Mosby's Rangers.

In addition, I am having Breedlove's Bookstore from Zoar, Ohio, hold a book sale. The last time we had a sale I believe was in 1991 when we last had the September meeting at Dr. Ken Callahan's home. Mr. Breedlove has promised me to bring a wide selection of material including some of Mr. Wert's previous works. In addition, the bookstore will be donating this month's raffle prizes for our treasury.

I think that this is going to be an excellent meeting. I would like to have a strong turnout as this is one of the more widely known authors that we have had in the last several years.

The Hermit Club has promised me an excellent dinner for everyone so I look forward to seeing you on April 17th. Make sure you make your reservations by calling 861-5588 by April 15th to confirm your dinner.

John D. Sutula

1. The first step in the process of the development of a new product is the identification of a market need.

2. The second step is the selection of a product concept.



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