



THE CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

P. O. BOX 5028, CLEVELAND, OHIO 44101

JANUARY, 1978

VOL. 22 NO. 5

-----176th Meeting-----

Date: Tuesday, January 10, 1978
Speaker: Professor Frank L. Byrne
Subject: "Confederate Experiments with Prisoners as Manpower"
Place: The Hermit Club, Dodge Court
Preliminaries: 6:00 p.m. Dinner: 7:00 p.m.

Special Notice: Ladies Night, originally scheduled for December 7, 1977, has been postponed due to inclement weather. Prof. Byrne, first scheduled for the postponed meeting, will speak on January 10th.

Professor Byrne is a member of the History Department at Kent State University. He received his Doctor of Philosophy degree at the University of Wisconsin.

Professor Byrne's contribution to Civil War scholarship include:

Books: ed., The View from Headquarters: Civil War Letters of Harvey Reid (1965).

co-ed., Haskell of Gettysburg: His Life and Civil War Papers (1970).

Articles: The section on "Prisons and Prisoners of War" in Nevins, Robertson and Wiley, Civil War Books: A Critical Bibliography, Vol. 1 (1967).

GOVERNMENT GOODIES

Member Jack Frost sends the following item:

Gift Ideas for American history buffs, from the Nat'l Archives: Set of 12 top-quality Mathew Brady photos...Lincoln, Grant, Lee, others. Send a check for \$7, payable to the "National Archives Trust Fund," to: Cashier (NEPS), National Archives and Records Service, Wash., D.C. 20408. Or send for a catalog of reproductions, "Documents from America's Past," posters, prints, jewelry, documents from the Presidential libraries. Free...Publication Branch, National Archives (NEPS), Wash., D.C. 20408.

WAS FRANKLIN THE GETTYSBURG OF THE WEST?

By fellow-member Ray Swanson

When Sherman had captured Atlanta, the decision had not yet been made to march through Georgia to the sea. Hood's Army, although it had been driven out of Atlanta was still a potent and menacing force to be reckoned with before any final decision could be made. Only by promising General Grant that he would detach elite units under General Thomas to go northward to protect Tennessee did Sherman gain permission for his planned march to the sea.

The Confederacy had been shocked by the fall of Atlanta and because of the storm of criticism, President Jefferson Davis hurried to meet with General Hood to examine personally the situation as to future moves. He arrived at Palmetto, the headquarters of Hood on September 25th where the matter was discussed for two days. Davis left with the firm understanding that if Sherman moved south or east of Atlanta, Hood was to follow and bring on an engagement.

On October 21st, in spite of this agreement, General P.T.G. Beauregard, the departmental commander, was shocked in a meeting with Hood to find that he intended to invade Tennessee. Beauregard, in spite of objections and misgivings acceded to the plan provided that Hood moved fast. Hood, however, took his time - he seemed to regard Beauregard as a mere figurehead.

After arriving at Courtland, Alabama on October 31st, Hood discovered that his army was in sad need of equipment, clothing and other supplies. Finally, the Army of Tennessee crossed the Tennessee River near Florence, Alabama on November 10th but again had to wait for ammunition and provisions which had been delayed by Union raiders on railroads. Now, torrential rains came down making the roads almost impassable for wagons. However, by November 21st, the army pressed northward in good spirits in spite of the rain. At this time, Hood's Army consisted of approximately 40,000 men with three Corps including 150 guns and two cavalry divisions under Major-General Nathan B. Forrest with 8,000 troopers.

Opposing the Southern forces was the Army of the Cumberland under General George H. Thomas who had 22,000 seasoned veterans under Stanley and Schofield. These troops marched to Pulaski, Tennessee, about 75 miles southwest of Nashville to confront Hood's forces.

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE OF CLEVELAND, OHIO

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NEWSLETTER

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: Neville Bayless, Ray Swanson
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44101

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After being driven back slowly through Columbia and Spring Hill by superior forces, General Schofield entrenched his army just south of the town of Franklin and set up strong defensive works covered by artillery and capability of cross-fire. A number of the Northern regiments were equipped with repeating rifles and this enhanced fire-power was to prove decisive in the terrible engagement ahead.

Hood, after surveying the Northern positions ordered a frontal attack. This order was bitterly opposed by General Forrest who contended that he could outflank the enemy from their works if he were given the addition of one strong infantry division. Generals Cheatham and Cleburne also expressed their opposition to the order. Hood was adamant and said, "We will fight here."

The result was a horrible slaughter for the Southern forces although due to their gallantry the battle was not decided until nightfall.

Artillery canister and flanking rifle cross-fire decimated many of the Southern regiments. General Jacob D. Cox, the Union commander in charge of the battle line, later wrote in his book, The Battle of Franklin: "Hood had more men killed at Franklin than died on one side in some of the greater conflicts of the war where three, four or even five times as many men were engaged. His killed were more than Grant's at Shiloh, McClellan's in the Seven Days battle, Burnside's at Fredericksburg, Rosecrans's at Stone's River or at Chickamauga, Hooker's at Chancellorsville, and almost as many as Grant's at Cold Harbor. This battle has been called the "Gettysburg of the West."

Although the Union forces evacuated Franklin the night of November 30th northward to Nashville, this merely gave General Thomas the chance to completely consolidate his forces and when he was ready on December 15th the Union Army advanced against Hood and the de-

struction of his army was completed. Afterward fragments of various Southern regiments drifted southward and were absorbed in other Southern armies but Hood's Army as such was completely destroyed and never again fought as an army.

(In preparing this article, Ray used as reference the 1976 book by Carey C. Jewell entitled "Harvest of Death.")

SASH, SASH, WHO'S GOT THE SASH?

By fellow-member Bernie Drews

During our field trip last fall, Mr. Semple handled the facts regarding General Braddocks sash rather loosely and indicated that it at one time had been in the Winchester Public Library and was later sold to some private individual in South Virginia. We took some issue and interest with that and decided to see what we could do about properly locating the whereabouts of General Braddock's sash.

I corresponded with a Mr. Lewis N. Barton of Winchester, Va. and he gave me information that enabled me to finally locate the sash. Mr. Barton indicated that the sash was in the possession of Zachary Taylor's daughter. This jibed with the information I had regarding the sash and seemed to confirm that fact. Zachary Taylor's daughter's second husband was a Dandridge and he lived near Winchester, Va. When he died she (Elizabeth) moved into Winchester and lived in a house on Braddock Street. I understand this house was razed about 1935. Mr. Barton mentions that he knew her by sight when he was a boy and recalls conversations about her. He indicated that the sash was given to Mount Vernon on her death and that it was there but unidentified.

I checked with Mount Vernon and determined they did indeed have General Braddock's sash and they were kind enough to forward a color slide of the sash which I now have and they have promised me a black and white glossy which should arrive in a few days. They also furnished some information regarding the sash and its early history. I think this might be quite interesting. General Braddock was carried from the field on this sash and the sash still bears bloodstains from his wounds. He gave the sash to George Washington just prior to his death and Washington retained it for some time. He gave it to his adopted daughter (Nellie Custis) and from her it descended to her daughter Eleanor Lewis Butler. The Butlers lived in New Orleans in 1846 or 1847 and Colonel Butler determined that the sash should be presented to the soldier who was most distinguished in the recent campaign on the Rio Grande. The sash was given to General Taylor after his victories at Buena Vista, Resaca de la Palma and Monterey. Mrs. Dandridge inherited the sash from her father, General Taylor, and took it with her when she moved to Winchester, Va. In 1918 money presented by Prince Yoshihisa Tokugawa of Japan purchased the sash as a Washington relic from a member of Mrs. Dandridge's family still living in Winchester and was presented to Mount Vernon where it is now cataloged and on display.

The official description of the sash is as follows: "Military sash woven of red silk in an open mesh incorporating the date 1709 at the ends. It is terminated with tassels and is bloodstained. Length, 12 feet; width 30 inches. The date 1709 is correct in that the sash was originally owned by General Braddock's father who fought with distinction under Marlborough.

The next time any of us are at Mount Vernon we should make it our business to view the sash.

(Bernie appends the following article from the Quarterly Historical Magazine of William and Mary College, Volume XVIII July, 1909, No. 1, pages 12-13. He points out there are two errors; the date on the sash is 1709 and General Braddock was defeated in 1755.)

It is interesting to note, that the sash worn by General Braddock and in which he was carried from the field, is still in existence, the history of which is thus graphically told by the late General William Price Graighill, U.S.A., in the West Virginia Historical Magazine, July 1902. "I saw this sash in Winchester, Virginia, several years ago, through the courtesy of Mrs. Betty Taylor Dandridge. She had received it from her father General Zachary Taylor, who died as President of the United States. The sash is very large and made of red silk. It has on it the date of 1707. The stains of blood on it are distinctly visible. The report of De Haas, (History of the early settlement and Indian Wars of Western Virginia) is that in 1846, 'a gentleman of New Orleans' had the sash. His wish was that it should be presented to the soldier who was most distinguished in the recent campaign on the Rio Grande. Thus it came into the possession of General Taylor after his victories at Buena Vista, Resaca de la Palma and Monterey. After prolonged and diligent search I ascertained that the sash passed into the hands of General Washington at the death of Braddock in 1755. From him Nellie Custis received it. She became Mrs. Lawrence Lewis, and one of her daughters (the eldest, Eleanor Park Lewis) married Colonel E.G.W. Butler of Louisiana, and he was 'the gentleman of New Orleans' who presented the sash to General Taylor."

This famous sash, now over two hundred years old, is preserved with jealous care. It is a singular coincidence that General Taylor died in 1850, on the anniversary of the defeat of General Braddock.

NEW ACCOUNT OF LINCOLN'S DEATH

(This issue of the Newsletter includes articles submitted by four different members. For each item, large or small, we are grateful. The following is from an Associated Press article sent in by fellow-member and co-founder, Jack Cullen.)

A faint, yellowed letter about the death of Abraham Lincoln, written by a man who carried the wounded president from Ford's Theater, has been found among a stack of documents donated to the Massachusetts Historical Society.

One historian says it's the most complete contemporary account of the assassination.

"It's a great thrill to go through a group of letters and find something like this among the mundane," said society Director Louis L. Tucker.

Also in the envelope was a fragment of linen, described in the letter as a towel soaked with Lincoln's blood.

On April 14, 1865, Augustus Clark was a War Department employee, living in a rooming house across the street from Ford's where the president was watching a performance of "Our American Cousin."

Clark heard the commotion when John Wilkes Booth shot Lincoln. Two days later, he wrote to his uncle, Stephen M. Allen of Woburn, Mass., that he rushed to the theater and "heard the awful words, 'Lincoln is shot.'"

Clark wrote that he had clambered into the president's box, "and there on the floor lay Abraham Lincoln dying, his wife shrieking and moaning."

He said he helped carry Lincoln to the rooming house.

"He was breathing very heavily, and his pulse fluctuated from 105 to 42 in about three hours," Clark wrote. "The blood soon began to settle under his left eye and blackened the whole side of his face."

He said grief-stricken senators and Cabinet members came to see the unconscious president, and Mary Todd Lincoln "came into the room seven times during the night and felt dreadful."

"She fainted twice and fell over onto the floor. I remained in the room all night and did all I could to help.

"The best surgeons were there, but no attempt was made to extricate the ball as he was pronounced fatally wounded at first examination."

Clark concluded: "I got a lock of his hair and a towel saturated with the blood of the best man that ever was president and a friend of the South."

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