



## News Letter

# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND-TABLE

CLEVELAND, OHIO

October 7, 1958

THE FIRST MEETING OF THE SEASON will be on Monday, October 13 at Kiefer's Restaurant. Dinner will be at 7:00 p.m. Please mail in your reservation card as soon as possible.

Our speaker will be Dr. Frederick Tilberg, Park Historian, Gettysburg National Military Park. The title of his lecture will be "Command Decisions - July 2 and 3," illustrated with maps and slides.

Dr. Tilberg has been historian at Gettysburg for more than twenty years. He is a skillful lecturer and a thorough scholar, with a Ph.D. degree from the University of Iowa. For years he has been assisting numerous writers, including Douglas Southall Freeman, to clear up and verify many doubtful points about this historic struggle. For those who want the facts, this meeting will be one of the high-lights of the year.

### FUTURE MEETINGS

November 11, Tuesday. It is planned to devote this meeting to a panel discussion on a controversial Civil War issue, the topic to be announced later. The panel will be made up of members of the Round Table.

December 3, Wednesday. General Ulysses S. Grant III will speak on "Ohio in the War." This will be a joint meeting with the Western Reserve Historical Society. The Round Table will gather for dinner at 7:00 p.m. in the Red Room of the Western Reserve University cafeteria, and afterward will walk to the Historical Society building at 10825 East Boulevard, a short distance from the University campus.

The next day (Thursday, December 4) General Grant will be the guest of the Cleveland Civil War Round Table at a luncheon, probably at the University Club. He will report on the program of the Civil War Centennial Commission of which he is Chairman.

Historical Society News. Through the courtesy of the Western Reserve Historical Society, we have been able to furnish each of our members with a copy of the September issue of the Society's monthly publication. Contained in it is a complete description of the valuable William P. Palmer Civil War Collection. The frontispiece will be of interest especially to those who were on the trip to Johnson's Island.

NEW MEMBERS. Be sure to meet our new members at the next meeting. They are:

Thomas W. Hamlin

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Executive Vice President  
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CLEVELAND C.W.R.T. ON THE BATTLEFIELDS OF FREDERICKSBURG - SEPTEMBER 12-14, 1958 - FOUR BATTLES IN TWO DAYS. Their coming having been heralded in the Free Lance Star, Fredericksburg newspaper, the Cleveland C.W.R.T. expeditionary forces converged at Fredericksburg late in the afternoon of Friday, September 12. Some had come by plane; others arrived in automobiles. Thirteen members and two guests took part in this two-day campaign over the Fredericksburg-Spotsylvania battle area, where four significant Civil War battles were fought - Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, the Wilderness and Spotsylvania.

Members who reported for duty were: Jack AuWerter, Neville Bayless, Rex Corfield, Ned Downer, Art Hecker, Dave Humphrey, Tom Knickerbocker, Dave Wood, Carroll Prosser, Bill Schlessinger, Nick Stuffer, Al Taylor and Ray Van Ommen.

The campaign opened with a fine seafood dinner at the George Washington Inn after which Park Historian Albert Dillahuntz briefed the party on the battles of Fredericksburg (December 13, 1862) and Chancellorsville (May 1-5, 1863). The next morning, under Dillahuntz's guidance, the group drove over the scenes of the battle of Fredericksburg. They viewed the terrain from Stafford Heights and from the Confederate position on the hills south of the Rappahannock river. They visited the location of Burnside's pontoon bridges, the site of Meade's partial penetration of the Confederate line, the position of John Pelham's horse artillery, Confederate trenches and gun emplacements, the National Cemetery, Marye's Heights and the Sunken Road.

In the afternoon they covered the Chancellorsville fields, riding along Jackson's route to turn Hooker's right flank. Stops were made at points of special interest, such as Hazel Grove, Fairview, the Chancellorhouse ruins, Bank's ford and Salem Church.

On Saturday evening they listened with rapt attention while Park Historian Ralph Happel outlined and described the events in the Wilderness (May 5-7, 1864) and at Spotsylvania (May 8-19, 1864). Sunday morning, starting at Germanna ford where Grant crossed the Rapidan they followed along the lines of both armies in the battle of the Wilderness.

While en route they visited the Lacy farm on which stood Grant and Meade's headquarters. Also on this farm Jackson's left arm was buried after the amputation, the spot being indicated by a stone marker. The present owners of the property, Mr. and Mrs. Jones, graciously welcomed the group to the plantation house, showing them through this fine pre-Revolutionary house and describing its eventful history. It was in front of this house that Grant smoked and whittled during the battle of the Wilderness.

They also stopped at the Widow Tapp's farm where Lee was restrained from leading Longstreet's troops in person, and at Hancock's trenches on the Brock road where the final Confederate charge was repelled.

After all had enjoyed a box lunch on the battlefield, Park Historian Happel led the caravan to Spotsylvania, pointing out significant points on the way. Stops were also made at the monument marking the spot where John Sedgwick was killed, at "Bloody Angle" where the ghastly twenty-hour struggle over the trenches took place, at the ruins of the McCool house, and finally at the Spotsylvania Courthouse.

Having re-lived many stirring events of long ago, the party disbanded. Recorded on the minds of all were mental pictures of the places visited with which to enrich



their future reading and study.

The expert guidance, instruction and patient answers to many questions supplied by Park Historians Dillahunty and Happel were excellent and greatly appreciated. Because of the wonderful hospitality of the Fredericksburg C.W.R.T., particularly the generous assistance extended by its former President, Spencer Berry, this visit to Fredericksburg will ever remain a happy memory. And finally, the thanks of all go to Neville Bayless who piloted the entire trip with consummate skill and efficiency.

**JOHNSON'S ISLAND EXPEDITION - SEPTEMBER 6, 1958.** On a sunny Saturday morning, sixteen members and one guest assembled at 3121 Euclid Avenue prepared to explore the site of the famous Johnson's Island Civil War prison in which about 10,000 Confederate soldiers, mostly officers, were held during the war. With cameras, instead of haversacks, strung over their shoulders, these 1958 visitors to the prison climbed aboard a chartered Greyhound bus bound for Sandusky.

The ride, both to and from, gave every one an opportunity to match his Civil War knowledge with that of his bus-mates. Arriving at the Rieger Hotel in Sandusky, we were met by Arthur and Mrs. Hecker waiting to join the party.

At the hotel a fine chicken dinner was served and eagerly consumed, after which our information about Johnson's Island was refreshed and expanded. Jack Cullen gave us the highlights on the history of the prison and told us about the restoration of the cemetery. Ned Downer talked about life among the prisoners as reported in their diaries and writings. Guy di Carlo described the abortive expedition of Confederate sympathizers to attack the prison and release the prisoners.

Equipped with this background material, and provided with a sketch map of the prison (a photograph from the official atlas), thanks to the kindness of Frank Gillen, we boarded the good ship "Lone Ranger" and successfully negotiated the passage across Sandusky bay, landing near the location of the old prison wharf.

We walked across the prison site, but found little trace of the buildings, stockade or blockhouses. Time has practically obliterated this scene of suffering and privation of nearly one hundred years ago. A few of our bolder explorers, who thought they were immune to jiggers, kicked about among the weeds and brambles and reported that they had uncovered what seemed to be trenches and part of the remains of a stone structure which could have been a powder magazine. Bill Ralls picked up some rusty and what appeared to be hand-wrought spikes which might have been used in the construction of the frame barracks of the prison.

After a trek of a quarter of a mile we came upon a well-kept grassy plot of from one to two acres near the shore, surrounded by an iron fence with shade trees on two sides. Here was the last resting place of 206 Southern men and boys who had died far from home while prisoners of war. Each grave has been given a headstone of Georgian marble on which has been carved the soldier's name and regiment. Some bear the inscription "Unknown".

At the entrance to the cemetery and near the shore, standing on a marble base is the bronze figure of a Confederate soldier looking hopefully out over the water. Neville Bayless informed us that the statue, named "The Outlook", was the creation of Sir Moses Ezekial, born and bred in Richmond, Virginia, later to become a sculptor of world renown, knighted by the Emperors of both Germany and Italy. He had

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been a cadet at V.M.I. and as such had charged with the cadets at the battle of New Market in the Shenandoah Valley on May 15, 1864. He was buried with honors in Arlington Cemetery, but despite his fame as a sculptor, his tombstone carries the following modest words: "Moses J. Ezekial, Sergeant of Company C, Battalion of Cadets of Virginia Military Institute."

When we disbanded we all felt that besides enriching our knowledge of the Civil War we had become better acquainted with some fine kindred spirits. We are deeply grateful to Guy di Carlo who so ably served as our tour conductor. Many thanks, Guy.

*Reservation Secretary*  
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