

# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume LVIII, Number 2

Chicago, Illinois

October 1997

## Chris E. Fonvielle, Jr., on "The Wilmington Campaign"

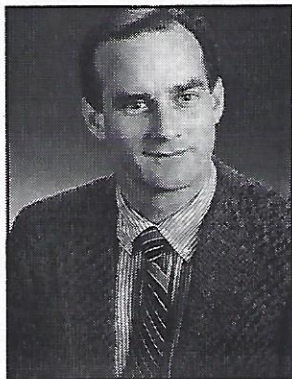
by Barbara Hughett

BY LATE 1864, Wilmington, North Carolina, was one of the few remaining blockade-running ports in the Confederacy. As such, it was a vital logistical strong point and was rapidly becoming the mainstay of Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. As southern ports fell, one-by-one, with the advance of the Union armies, Wilmington's importance increased dramatically.

The port city did not escape the notice of the federal authorities. A massive campaign was designed to overthrow the heavily-defended city and its approaches. A joint army-navy task force set forth to reduce the city's key point of defense—Fort Fisher, which guarded the approaches to Wilmington. This ambitious scheme depended heavily on cooperation between the assaulting forces and the timely explosion of a power-laden ship.

Chris E. Fonvielle, Jr., will address The Round Table on October 17; his topic will be "The Wilmington Campaign." The story of that doomed campaign, and the follow-up campaign, which ultimately succeeded in securing Fort Fisher, Fort Anderson, and the port of Wilmington for the Union, and a detailed analysis of the events and personalities in the campaign will be the focus of Dr. Fonvielle's presentation.

Chris Fonvielle is a visiting professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, as well as the owner of his own business, C.E. Fonvielle Co., which provides consulting, research, archaeological surveys, and historical tours. He previously served on the faculties at East Carolina University at Greenville, North Carolina, and the University of South Carolina at Columbia. He received a B.A. in anthropology, with additional emphasis on American history, at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington; his M.A. in American history at East Carolina University; and his Ph.D. in American history, with emphasis on the American Civil War, at the University of South Carolina at Columbia.



Chris E. Fonvielle, Jr.

Fonvielle is the author of *The Wilmington Campaign: Last Rays of Departing Hope* (1997), and a number of ar-

(continued on page 3)



### 564th Regular Meeting

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Chris E. Fonvielle, Jr., on "The Wilmington Campaign"

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Friday, October 17

Note: this is the **THIRD** Friday of the month

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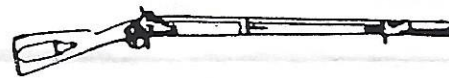
Union League Club  
65 West Jackson Boulevard

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$25 - The Civil War Round Table of Chicago members

\$30 - Nonmembers

Entree: Grilled Minute Steak or  
Catch of the Day



### Please Note

Make your reservation by Wednesday, October 15, by calling Registrar Carole Le Claire at 847-698-1438. People who attend without having made a reservation will pay a \$5 walk-in charge. If you make a reservation and then find you cannot attend, please call to cancel or you will be billed for a dinner. **No last-minute orders for the Catch of the Day can be honored. The chef must have at least twenty-four hours notice.**

The Union League Club is located at the corner of Jackson Boulevard and Federal Street. Federal Street runs north and south between Dearborn and Clark Streets.

**NEW PARKING POLICY:** Effective immediately, the new parking rate is \$8.00 if you park between the hours of 4:30–10:30 p.m. in the lot adjacent to the Union League Club. If you do not get your ticket validated or park beyond the hours listed, you **MUST** pay the full amount.

# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



**Founded December 3, 1940**  
601 South La Salle Building, Suite C-817  
Chicago Illinois 60605  
Phone: 847-698-1438

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The only requirement for membership in The Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Membership Committee, 601 South La Salle Building, Suite C-817, Chicago, Illinois 60605.

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• **Registrar Carole LeClaire reminds us that 1997-98 membership dues were to be sent in by August 31, 1997. If you have not sent yours in yet, please do so. Only current members will receive future Newsletters, beginning in October 1997.**

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## BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION

### ☆ REPORT ☆

by Mary Munsell Abroe

Congress's reluctance to directly fund the purchase of battlefield land is no secret, but one important legislative development of the mid-sixties that might pay dividends in the foreseeable future is the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1964. The measure provided that entrance and user fees from national recreation areas, as well as funds received from the sale of surplus federal properties, could be used (by the National Park Service and other government agencies) for land acquisition. Last month saw the intensification of a lobbying effort to procure monies from the LWCF for battlefield preservation—an effort organized in January by Senator Jim Jeffords (R-VT), a longstanding preservation advocate. This undertaking has been spearheaded by Senators Jeffords and Robert Torricelli (D-NJ) with the involvement of the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites (APCWS), and it has generated the interest of Senator Slade Gorton (R-WA), chairman of the Senate Interior Appropriations Committee.

Late September witnessed the adoption of a "sense of the Senate" in which that chamber agreed to designate funds in the LWCF for battlefield preservation. As this Newsletter goes to press, the Senate and the House, in committee conference, are deciding where and how much will be spent. Those who know indicate that twenty-five to thirty phone calls on an issue constitute an "avalanche" in a senator's/congressman's office. With that in mind, please contact Senator Gorton's office (PHONE: 202-224-3441; FAX: 202-224-9393) and request that: (1) the Interior Appropriations conference assign \$25 million for battlefield acquisition outside NPS boundaries; and (2) the \$25 million be granted to individual states and designated for specific battlefields within those states. Illinoisans also can reach Representative Sidney Yates, ranking minority member of the House Interior Appropriations Committee, to request the same, at 202-225-2111. For additional information please contact Mary Abroe at 847-251-4745 (FAX: 847-251-9380).

### Schimmelfennig Boutique

The history of The Round Table, *The Civil War Round Table: Fifty Years of Scholarship and Fellowship*, by Barbara Hughett, is available for \$30 per copy. You may purchase the book at the monthly meeting or order it from Morningside Bookshop, 260 Oak Street, Dayton, Ohio 45401 (1-800-648-9710). Add \$2.50 for postage and handling.

In addition to The Round Table history and *The Continuing Civil War*, the essays from the Fiftieth Anniversary Proceedings, the following items are available at each monthly meeting: Lapel pins, Mugs, Meeting Tapes, Civil War Buff posters and T-Shirts, CWRT T-shirts, polos, and sweatshirts.

Proceeds from the sale of these items go to support the programs of The Civil War Round Table.

☞ SEPTEMBER MEETING ☞

by Larry Gibbs

On September 12, at the 563rd regular meeting of The Civil War Round Table, 122 members and guests heard Wiley Sword's interesting and engaging speech, entitled "Southern Invincibility: The Civil War's Mental Confrontation." Mr. Sword was the twenty-fourth recipient of the prestigious annual Nevins-Freeman Award, this organization's highest honor.

Sword, a businessman and historian from the Detroit area, is the author of several books, including *Shiloh: Bloody April* (1974), *Embrace The Angry Wind: The Confederacy's Last Hurrah* (1992), and *Touched With Fire: Chattanooga Besieged, 1863* (1995). Sword's presentation, based on research for a future book, concentrated on the mental states of rebel soldiers through the various changes during the Civil War.

"The Civil War looms as the greatest defining moment in the history of the South and possibly of the entire nation," Sword asserted. "To live and die in Dixie" was a sentiment shared by most southerners. Among southerners, a superior attitude exuded, which indicated a mental excellence and a pride in southern prosperity and success. "To southerners, the South seemed better in personal fighting capacity and seemed a better place to live than the North," declared Sword. "These attitudes have latent importance, even to this day; symbolic of this feeling is the present controversy over the Confederate flag."

In 1861, the South was committed to victory in the Civil War. The concept of "mind over matter" was as important to the Confederate mindset as the military considerations. Sword stated, "The determination and commitment of the southern people to succeed would prevail against a stronger opponent. The Revolutionary War would be an example for the South to emulate." The nebulous but critical viewpoint that the Confederate willpower would prevail and persevere were primary considerations for the southern people.

In the summer of 1861, the rebel soldiers thought that the conflict would be of short duration. Early Confederate victories electrified the Confederacy, giving credence to what was known as the "Virginia Mystique." This concept was a psychological intimidation by the rebels that derived from the Cavalier heritage of Norman aristocracy. Based on refined manners, an honor system, and superior riding skills, the Virginians believed that they were invincible—that southern dash and expertise would overcome northern superiority in men and supplies.

Sword proclaimed, "This spirit of Confederate invincibility was a tragic mistake because it consumed a virtual generation of southern youth." The Union used sophisticated strategy, improved technology, and absolute resolve to achieve ultimate victory. To southerners, the reality that combat became an unspeakable horror caused them to finally consider defeat as a likely possibility.

Sword stated, "After July 1863, the Confederates saw the prospect of defeat; gradually, more rebels thought of survival rather than victory." With the specter of defeat hovering near, the Confederate Congress considered the use of black troops for their cause. A South Carolina soldier wrote, "Southern soldiers are against

the use of black troops and one-half say that they will not fight if black troops are part of the Rebel army." The unthinkable—a Confederate defeat—became a reality in 1865; many rebels were so demoralized that desertion was not considered a dishonorable crime anymore.

With the false premise of southern invincibility, the ashes of Confederate defeat affected the southern soldiers in different ways. Some wanted to continue fighting in a guerrilla fashion; some went to France or England; and many vowed never to submit to Yankee rule. Sword claimed, "After the Civil War, the South had to prepare for a new warfare in the political arena. To southerners, no written history could do justice to the late war. They felt that the Union soldiers would unite with the South to honor all the victims of the war. The "Lost Cause" concept—the image of southern victory in defeat—became a religion in the postwar South.

Sword indicated that the modern South is imbued with the image of the "Lost Cause." The southern spirit of sectional superiority and invincibility that had created the "Virginia Mystique" continued with the "Lost Cause" after the Civil War. The "Lost Cause" was based on the idea that brave rebels fought for God, country, and cause. "The 'Lost Cause' was a face-saving device to glorify the Confederate soldiers and leaders," continued Sword. "Using the fierce Confederate pride as a basis for the spirit of the 'New South,' the southerners healed the open wounds of Southern consciousness with their actions and thoughts after the Civil War was over."

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**CHRIS E. FONVIELLE, JR.** (continued from page 1) ticles for historical journals and magazines. He is a coauthor of *The Best Ever Occupied: Archaeological Investigations of a Civil War Encampment, Folly Island, South Carolina*, published by the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, in 1989. He was honored with the Clarendon Cup of the Lower Cape Fear Historical Society for his masters thesis, "To Forge a Thunderbolt: The Wilmington Campaign, February 1865."

Chris Fonvielle will serve as a tour guide and speaker for The Round Table's upcoming (April 29-May 3, 1998) battlefield tour to North Carolina.

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**The Twelfth Annual Lincoln Colloquium** will be held on Saturday, October 25, at the University of Illinois at Springfield. Speakers include Frank J. Williams, Harold Holzer, Philip Shaw Paludan, Douglas L. Wilson, Rodney O. Davis, and Dwight T. Pitcaithley. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. (at which time an exhibit area will also be opened), the program at 10:30 a.m. A luncheon will be served, and the program will continue until 4:30 p.m. Registration fee is \$35 per person (including lunch), or \$40 if you wish to have the printed papers from the Colloquium sent to you upon their publication.

To register, send a check, made out to the Eastern National Park and Monument Association, with "Colloquium" written on the memo line of the check, to: Lincoln Colloquium, Lincoln Home National Historic Site, 413 South Eighth Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701-1905. For additional information, contact Tim Townsend at 217-492-4241, or via email at [liho\\_colloquium@nps.gov](mailto:liho_colloquium@nps.gov).

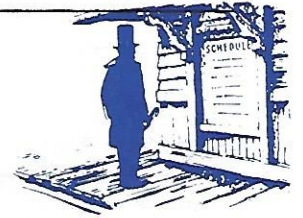
## The New Books

Compiled by C. Robert Douglas



- Booth, Benjamin and Steve Meyer. *Dark Days of the Rebellion: Life in Southern Military Prisons*. Meyer Publ. Co., Box 247, Garrison, IA 52229. 1996. \$24.95.
- Boyle, Frank A. *A Part of Mad Fellows: The Story of the Irish Regiments in the Army of the Potomac*. Morningside Bookshop. 1996. \$29.95.
- Brenner, James T., ed. *Friend Alice: the Civil War Letters of Capt. David D. Bard (7th and 104th O.V.I.)*. Scholar of Fortune Publications. 1996. Pbk. \$7.95.
- Davis, William C. *The Battlefields of the Civil War*. U. of Oklahoma Press. 1996. Pbk. \$19.95.
- Dawes, Rufus R. *Service With the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteers*. Morningside Bookshop. 1996. \$35. Original of 1890.
- Fishel, Edwin C. *The Secret War for the Union: The Untold Story of Military Intelligence in the Civil War*. Houghton Mifflin. 1996. \$35.
- Frazier, Donald S. *Cottonclads: The Battle of Galveston and the Defense of the Texas Coast*. Ryan Place Publishers. 1996. Pbk., \$11.95.
- Furgurson, Ernest B. *Ashes of Glory: Richmond at War*. Alfred A. Knopf. 1996. \$30.
- Gallagher, Gary W., ed. *Chancellorsville: The Battle and Its Aftermath*. U. of N. Carolina Press. 1996. \$29.95.
- Gambone, A.M. "If Tomorrow Night Finds Me Dead"...*The Life of General Samuel K. Zook—Another Forgotten Union Hero*. Butternut and Blue. 1996. \$30.
- Gracey, Chaplain Samuel L. *Annals of the Sixth Pennsylvania Cavalry*. Van Berg Publ. Inc. 1996. \$24.95. Original of 1868.
- Harlowe, Jerry L., ed. *Monocacy by Alfred S. Roe*. Toomey's Bookshop. 1996. Pbk. \$10.50.
- Hartley, Chris J. *Stuart's Tarheels—James B. Gordon and His North Carolina Cavalry*. Butternut and Blue. 1996. \$35.
- Hearn, Chester G. *Gray Raiders of the Sea—How Eight Confederate Warships Destroyed the Union's High Seas Commerce*. LSU Press. 1996. Pbk. \$16.95.
- Hughes, Nathaniel C., Jr. *Bentonville—The Final Battle of Sherman and Johnston*. U. of N. Carolina Press. 1996. \$37.50.
- Johnson, Clint. *Touring the Carolinas' Civil War Sites*. John F Blair, Publisher. 1996. Pbk. \$19.95.
- Johnston, William P. *The Life of Albert Sidney Johnston: Embracing His Services in the Armies of the United States, The Republic of Texas and The Confederate States*. State House Press. 1996. \$45. Original of 1878.
- Kauffman, Michael W., ed. *Memoirs of a Lincoln Conspirator (Samuel B. Arnold)*. Heritage Press. 1996. \$21.
- Kegel, James A. *North With Lee and Jackson—The Lost Story of Gettysburg*. Stackpole Books. 1996. \$34.95.
- Longacre, Edward G. *Grants Cavalryman—The Life and Wars of General James H. Wilson*. Stackpole Books. 1996. \$24.95.

## BULLETIN BOARD



### FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held at the Union League Club, 65 West Jackson Boulevard, the second Friday in each month, except as noted.

*October 17:* Chris E. Fonvielle, Jr., on "The Wilmington Campaign" (**This is the THIRD Friday**)

*November 14:* Ted Karamanski on "Chicago Civil War Monuments"

*December 12:* Tom Sweeney on "General 'Fightin' Tom' Sweeney"

*January 9:* Dan McCarthy on "The 83rd Illinois Volunteer Infantry"

*February 13:* Scott Hartwig, topic to be announced.

*March 13:* Mark Bradley on "Bentonville"

*April 17:* Keith Rocco on "Civil War Art" (**This is the THIRD Friday**)

*April 29-May 3:* Annual Battlefield Tour, "Western Armies on the Carolina Campaign"

*May 8:* Nathaniel Cheairs Hughes on "Writing Civil War History"

*June 12:* John Michael Priest on "Pickett's Charge"

### NEW MEMBERS

Susan Anthony, 2362 N. Oakland Street, Arlington, VA 22207, 703-841-0651

Jackie Carlson, 64 Rose Place, Clarendon Hills, IL 60514, 630-654-3451

Norman D. Hellmers, Superintendent, Lincoln Home National Historic Site, 413 South 8th Street, Springfield, IL 62701-1905

Laura Hovis, 6 S 082 Park Meadow Drive, #814, Naperville, IL 60540, 630-527-1520

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Maria Rogers, 1000 Lake Shore Plaza, #40C, Chicago, IL 60611

"Ted" Michael Williams, 5049 West Winona, Chicago, IL 60630, 773-481-0732

### CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Gene Holland, 2112 West Galena Blvd., Suite 8-519, Aurora, IL 60506, 630-801-4160

Richard G. Walker, 3543 Scottsdale Circle, Naperville, IL 60564-4631