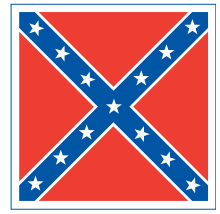


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Founded December 3, 1940



Volume LXXIII, Number 9

Chicago, Illinois

May 2013



721st REGULAR MEETING

Ethan Rafuse

on

“Lee and Gettysburg”

★★★★★

Friday, May 10

★★★★★

HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA

350 NORTH ORLEANS STREET

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$47 - Members/Non-members

Entrée: Chicken Casserole,

Orange Roughy,

Vegetarian Plate or

Fruit Plate

Please Note:

Make your reservations by Wednesday, May 8, by emailing dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org, or calling 630 460-1865 with the names of your party and choice of entrée.

If a cancellation becomes necessary after dinner reservations have been made, please email us at dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org and/or call us at 630-460-1865.

We are offering the option of choosing not to have dinner and coming only for the address at 7:15 p.m., for a charge of \$10 per person.

Parking at the Holiday Inn is \$12 with a validated parking sticker.

Ethan Rafuse on Lee and Gettysburg

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

When the Army of Northern Virginia crossed the Potomac River in June 1863, Robert E. Lee well understood he was running high risks and playing for high stakes. Indeed, after the war Lee was recorded as declaring he understood he was “playing a very bold game, but it was the only possible one.” Was this the case? This talk will consider this question as part of a broad examination of Lee’s generalship during the Gettysburg Campaign and the factors—above all the lessons of history—that shaped it. It will describe how the factors that shaped Lee’s general-

ship were not only evident in the course and outcome of the Gettysburg Campaign, but the war in the East as a whole.

Ethan S. Rafuse received his Ph.D. in history and political science at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, spent three summers working as a park ranger at Manassas Na-



Ethan Rafuse

tional Battlefield and the Harry S Truman National Historic Site, taught military history at the United States Military Academy at West Point in 2001–03, and since 2004 has been a member of the Department of Military History at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, where he is a professor of military history. In 2012, he was the scholar-in-residence at the George Tyler Moore Center for the Study of the

Civil War and delivered the inaugural lecture in the Department of Defense’s History Speaker Series. He is the author, editor, or co-editor of nine books, including Robert E. Lee and the Fall of the Confederacy, 1863–1865 (2008) and the forthcoming Army War College Guide to the Richmond and Petersburg Campaigns of 1864–65.



Battlefield Preservation

BY BRIAN SEITER

Preserving the Vicksburg Campaign

by Parker Hills
(April 2013 Civil War News)

Each year, millions of visitors trek to America's state and national military parks, and that is as it should be. But, contrary to what most learn when they visit these parks, it is the campaign, not the battle, which is the determinant of the course of military history.

The contradiction comes from the fact that military parks are established on battlefields, where the soldiers fought and died, and not on the maneuver routes, where the leaders planned and executed. And it is the battlefield that interests writers, filmmakers, and the public.

Therefore, it is only natural that so many gravitate to the fields where so many gave so much. And on those venerated fields, the question most often asked is, "What was the casualty rate?"

Why that question? The answer is probably because most have come to associate the importance of a battle with the amount of blood that was shed, not with the achievement of military and political objectives.

But, it was on the campaign trail where the battle was won. The victory was decided at decision points along the trail where the gray matter was burnt, not the gunpowder. The battle itself is too late to plan, for once the shooting starts the most careful plan degrades into a vulgar brawl. ...

This focus on the campaign is not meant to denigrate the hallowed grounds of the battlefields. In fact, as Lincoln said at Gettysburg, those fields are "far above our poor power to add or detract."

However, we need to know more than who shot whom on which piece of ground; we need to understand how and why one gathering of valiant soldiers prevailed over another. We need to look at the campaign.

In that light, the Vicksburg Campaign

has been described in a U.S. Army training manual as "the most brilliant campaign ever fought on American soil." It is hard to argue with that.

And the good news is that, due to the rural nature of the areas in which the campaign was executed, much of the Vicksburg Campaign trail has survived the ravages of time and the encroachment of civilization. ...

Militarily, the Vicksburg Campaign was a joint operation, so both the Army and the Navy get their due. All of this is to say, while preservation of the Vicksburg Campaign battlefields is necessary and is ongoing, the interpretation of the campaign trails is also a work in progress.

To help tell the story of the sailors, in 2008 a scenic interpretive trail was developed along the route of the Steele's Bayou Expedition. This expedition was one of the attempts which Ulysses Grant called "a series of experiments" to flank Vicksburg.

Even today this military operation remains as one of the boldest attempts to take an objective as can be imagined. Fittingly, the first marker is placed in front of the gunboat USS Cairo in Vicksburg National Military Park.

From there the trail of 11 stops and seven wayside panels leads northward for 30 miles into the beautiful Mississippi Delta. It takes the visitor along the meandering routes of Steele's Bayou, Black Bayou, and Deer Creek, following Adm. David Porter's gunboats and Gen. William Sherman's infantrymen in early 1863 as they sought a water route to get to the rear of Vicksburg. ...

Also in 2013 a series of 18 historical markers will interpret much of Grant's final offensive of the Vicksburg Campaign. These markers will begin at Grand Gulf on the Mississippi River and follow Grant's army for 50 miles along the Grand Gulf-Raymond Scenic Byway, a historic road which in 2004 was named as Mississippi's first state scenic byway.

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940
1039 Hinswood
Darien, Illinois 60561
Phone: 630-460-1865
www.chicagocwrt.org

The only requirement for membership in The Civil War Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Membership Committee, 1039 Hinswood, Darien, Illinois 60561, or editor@chicagocwrt.org.

Much of Grant's planning for the campaign took place at stops along this route. The terminus is at the Raymond battlefield.

The battlefields, too, are being preserved. At Port Gibson the historic Shaifer house has been restored and 622 acres have been permanently protected. At Champion Hill the Coker house has been restored and 403 acres are under permanent protection.

The Raymond battlefield has 135 acres under protection, and has an interpretive walking trail and 25 cannon on the field. The Chickasaw Bayou battlefield has 107 acres protected and Big Black River Bridge battlefield has 28 acres under protection.

Unfortunately, all but one acre of Jackson's battlefield has been lost due to urban growth. In 2012 Vicksburg National Military Park cleared new vistas, and restoration of the magnificent Iowa Memorial began, with a rededication scheduled for Memorial Day weekend. ...

Sesquicentennial events planned for 2013 will help increase public awareness of the Vicksburg Campaign, and the future does look very good for preservation efforts. To summarize, we've come a long way in recent years in preserving the Vicksburg Campaign, but there is still much left to do.

April Meeting

BY MARK MATRANGA

John Fitzpatrick addressed the 720th meeting of The Chicago Civil War Round Table on “There is no fail here: President Lincoln at Gettysburg.” A careworn Abraham Lincoln arrived at the Gettysburg train station on November 18, 1863. His wife, already bereft with grief over the loss of two sons, was unsettled with her husband leaving an ill son. Threats of an assassination plot were in the air. He had come to Gettysburg to participate in the commemoration of the cemetery where the union dead from 18 states already lay, albeit he had been asked only to provide ‘a few remarks’ by David Wills who extended the invitation.

Lincoln worked on his remarks on the train ride up to Gettysburg, although he likely did not write them on the back of an envelope as myth has it. The draft was written on Executive Mansion stationery and a piece of foolscap paper. Despite personal distractions, he focused on equality in his approach to his talk. He once wrote his friend Joshua Speed that if the Know Nothings were to come to power he would prefer to emigrate to a country where “they make no pretense of loving liberty...where despotism can be taken pure without the base element of hypocrisy.”

The country had rejoiced at the victory at Vicksburg and the repulse of Lee’s army at Gettysburg, but the rebels retreated across the Potomac at the same time drafts riots broke out in New York. These turned into race riots and extended across the north from Massachusetts to Ohio. Some of the very troops who fought at Gettysburg were compelled to quell these riots. Lincoln was concerned that the peace party would gain influence from this domestic unrest.

The President had to deal with an unruly cabinet, most prominently with Treasury Secretary Salmon Chase who coveted Lincoln’s job. The Committee on the Conduct of the War was another thorn in the President’s side: every military reverse required an investigation into the defeat. Lincoln built a formidable navy in the aftermath of the clash of ironclads in Hampton Roads in March 1862. Otherwise, the administration was beset with an autopsy after each campaign.

Lincoln also had to manage conflict with the courts over his suspension of the writ of habeas corpus and subjecting civilians to military courts. He oversaw an expansion of the role of government: passage of an income tax and the opening of government lands via the Home-

stead Act. He was distracted by the French intervention into Mexico and forced also to take an aggressive approach with Britain where confederate raiders were being built in British shipyards.

In his speech at Gettysburg, Lincoln committed to end slavery, although he did not mention the subject specifically. He used the Declaration of Independence, which was silent on slavery, as the source for the ‘proposition’ that all are created equal. Fitzpatrick maintains that the words “a new birth of freedom” referred directly to the slaves who needed to be free. He also takes the position that Lincoln thought the nation might not survive the war and that his remarks were directed to those foreign countries who might desire the failure of the United States.

The principal speaker at Gettysburg, Edward Everett, wrote Lincoln afterward, “I wish I had captured the central meaning of the moment in two hours as you were able to do, Mr. President, in two minutes.” The President, in reply, said ‘you could not have made a shorter speech and could not have made a longer one.’ His “appropriate remarks” have reverberated down to our time. We thank John Fitzpatrick for adding to our understanding of one of our greatest speeches.

GRAPESHOT



On May 18th, **The Chicago CWRT** will host a Sesquicentennial **Symposium** at the Lisle Hilton. The theme is “1863—Turning Points of the Civil War.” The great list of speakers includes Terry Winschel on Vicksburg, Jim Ogden on the Chattanooga Campaign, Gary Ecelbarger on Gettysburg, and Michael Burlingame on Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address. Cost is \$75 per person, and includes lunch. Contact Paula Walker at paulaw98@comcast.net for more information. Reservations are being taken by Randy Doler, (219) 926-3357 or rdoler@comcast.net.

On May 18th and 19th **Naper Settlement** will host its annual “Civil War Days.” Both days **Dave Corbett** and the “Battlefield Balladeers” will play period music. On May 19th, **Leslie Goddard** will present “Clara Barton” at 12:30 and 3.

May 10th at the Kenosha Civil War Museum **Rob Girardi** will present “The Union High Command at Chancellorsville”. The event starts at noon. Visit the museum’s website for more information.

Check the **Announcements** section of the CWRT’s website for additional coming events.

Know of any upcoming talks, events, or publications? All members are welcome to contribute items to the newsletter. Contact the editor at editor@chicagocwrt.org or (630) 297-8046.

SCHIMMELFENNIG BOUTIQUE

Sixty plus years of audio recordings of CWRT lectures by distinguished historians are available and can be purchased in CD format. For pricing and a lecture list, please contact Hal Ardell at hal229@ameritech.net or phone him at (773) 774-6781.

Each meeting features a book raffle, with proceeds going to battlefield preservation. There is also a silent auction for books donated by Ralph Newman and others, again with proceeds benefiting battlefield preservation.

More Upcoming Civil War Events

- May 1st, Lake County CWRT: Ty Rohrer on “Waukegan and the Underground Railroad”
- May 1st, Kankakee Valley CWRT: Phil Angelo on “The Battle of Shiloh”
- May 3rd, Northern Illinois CWRT: Harold Knudsen on “The Chattanooga Campaign of 1863”
- May 4th, Grayslake Heritage Center: Steve Cole portrays “Frederick Douglass”
- May 9th and 23rd, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Dr. Eric Pullen will lead a discussion of “What Caused This War?”
- May 9th, Milwaukee CWRT: Ethan Rafuse on “Lee and Gettysburg”
- May 14th, McHenry County CWRT: Mike Alft on “How the Civil War Transformed a Rural Town in Illinois”
- May 16th, Wheaton Public Library: Dr. David Maas on “How Wheaton Won the Civil War”
- May 17th, Grayslake Heritage Center: Lynn Rymarz performs “The Trials of Mary Lincoln”
- May 17th, Salt Creek CWRT: Don Sikorsky on “The Civil War Comes to Florida”
- May 21st, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Glenna Schroeder-Lein on “Lincoln and Medicine”
- May 22nd, Union League Club of Chicago: Allan Guelzo will talk on his new book, “Gettysburg: The Last Invasion.”
- May 23rd, South Suburban CWRT: Fred Johanson on “Fred’s Top Ten”
- 2013 Tour** — Antietam, May 1-5
CWRT Symposium — May 18

Bulletin Board



FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held at the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, 350 North Orleans Street, the second Friday of each month, *unless otherwise indicated.*

- June 14: Timothy B. Smith, “Corinth”
- Sept. 13: John Michael Priest, “South Mountain”
- Oct. 11: William Cooper, “We Have the War Upon Us”
- Nov. 8: Lawrence Hewitt, Nevins-Freeman Address
- Dec. 13: Kevin Weddle, “Lincoln’s Tragic Admiral”
- Jan. 20, 2014: Rob Girardi, “Civil War Logistics”
- Feb. 14: Harold Knudsen, “General Longstreet”

CWRT Elections

The annual CWRT election for officers will be at the May meeting. As in prior years, the nomination committee will present its selections, and members present at the meeting can make other nominations from the floor.

The LaSalle County Historical Society Museum is raising funds to restore the flag of the 53rd Illinois Infantry. Contact them at (815) 667-4861 for more information.



150 YEARS AGO – MAY 1863



- 1st–4th:** Battle of Chancellorsville. Stunning Union defeat. Losses are 17,000 Union, 13,000 Confederate. However, the Confederates sustain a major loss when General Stonewall Jackson is mortally wounded.
- 1st:** Battle of Port Gibson, MS. Grant's Union army advances from its beachhead on the east side of the Mississippi River and overwhelms a Confederate detachment.
- 4th:** Battle of Salem Church. Sedgwick's corps of Hooker's Army of the Potomac is attacked and withdraws across the Rappahannock River.
- 5th–6th:** Joe Hooker orders the remainder of the Army of the Potomac to withdraw across the Rappahannock River.
- 5th:** Confederate General Earl Van Dorn is killed by a jealous husband at Spring Hill, TN.
- 10th:** Stonewall Jackson dies at Guinea Station, VA.
- 12th:** Battle of Raymond, MS. Union forces under Gen. James B. McPherson defeat a small Confederate force.
- 14th:** Grant's Vicksburg campaign continues. Jackson, MS falls to Generals Sherman and McPherson.
- 15th:** Sherman destroyed manufacturing centers and railroads in and around Jackson so that when Union forces moved on, they could not be reused.
- 16th:** Grant's forces attacked and defeated Southern forces defending Vicksburg at Champion Hill.
- 17th:** At dawn Union forces attacked Confederate defenses at Big Black River, just outside of Vicksburg. The North captured 1,700 Confederate troops and 18 cannon and lost just 39 dead and 237 wounded.
- 18th:** Sherman's leading men reached the outskirts of Vicksburg.
- 19th:** General Grant ordered a hasty and not well-prepared attack on Vicksburg. The attack failed and the North lost 900 men.
- 22nd:** Grant's second attack on Vicksburg failed and the North lost 500 killed and 2,500 wounded. Grant withdrew his men and ordered Vicksburg to be besieged.
- 27th:** Union forces under General N. P. Banks attacked Port Hudson, LA. It was a failure as Confederate troops were well dug in. The North lost 293 dead and 1,545 wounded. As at Vicksburg, a decision was taken to besiege Port Hudson.

Historian Robert Remini Dies



The historian Robert V. Remini, noted for his extensive body of work devoted to the life and presidency of Andrew Jackson, and a former Historian of the U.S. House of Representatives, died on March 28, 2013, due to complications from a recently suffered stroke.

Born on July 17, 1921 in New York City, he was graduated from Fordham University; he served as a Lieutenant in the U.S Navy in the Atlantic during the Second World War. He returned to New York City and earned his

M.A. and Ph.D. in history from Columbia University. After teaching at Fordham for over a decade, he became the first Chair of the Department of History at the newly established University of Illinois-Chicago, where he later founded and chaired the UIC Institute for the Humanities. During this period he published his three-volume biography of Andrew Jackson: *Andrew Jackson: The Course of American Empire (1767-1821)* (1977). Remini also published acclaimed biographies of leading political figures of the Jackson era – including *Henry Clay: Statesman of the Union* (1993), *Daniel Webster: The Man and His Time* (1997), and many other books on the Jacksonian era. Professor Remini spoke to our CWRT some years ago.

Virtual Book Signing

The next virtual book signing will be May 21, 2013 at 6:00 pm at the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop. Allen Guelzo will talk about his new book, *Gettysburg: The Last Invasion*, and Linda Barnickel will talk about her new book, *Milliken's Bend: A Civil War Battle in History and Memory*. Visit the shop's website at <http://virtualbooksigning.net> for more information.

Civil War Play in Chicago

From April 19th to May 19th City Lit Theater, 1020 West Bryn Mawr Avenue in Chicago, will host a new play, "Comrades Mine," based on the true story of Emma Edmonds, who spent two years in the Union army disguised as a man, "Private Franklin Thompson." For more information, call 773-293-3682, or visit www.citylit.org.