

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XLVIII, Number 8

Chicago, Illinois

April, 1988

Michael T. Snyder on The Battle of Seven Pines

by C. Robert Douglas

In a letter to his sister Adelaide from "camp near White Oak Swamp" dated June 8, 1862, Corporal William E. Dunn of the 85th New York Infantry wrote: "You have no doubt h(e)ard of the great battle in front of Richmond of last Saturday (Seven Pines) and you know that as we were in (Gen'l. Silas) Casey's division, that we were in the front of the battle, and had to bear the burnt (brunt) for three long hours against three times our number, but we could not stand sucessfully againt(t) their imense number. Our Regt. held the rifle pits...directly in front of our camp.... They may attempt to say that the rebels will not fight but I am fully convinced that such is not the fact. No men could stand before such fire.... The enemy with his emense fource roled on and turned both our flanks and we had to retreat or be taken prisoner.... The fact is that we were outgeneraled and McClellan, to escape the blame himself, throes it on Casey."



Michael T. Snyder

Corporal Dunn's assessment of his commander's performance was correct, and McClellan, in a dispatch to Secretary of War Stanton, praised the efforts of all his troops in the battle of Seven Pines with the exception of Casey's division. On April 8, 1988, Michael T. Snyder, instructor of instrumental music in Pottstown, Pennsylvania and president-elect of the Civil War Round Table of Eastern Pennsylvania, will discuss this early battle of the Peninsular campaign in the late spring of 1862.

As McClellan's Army of the Potomac moved slowly toward the outskirts of the Confederate capital, "little Mac" had split his large army, placing three corps on the northeast side of the Chickahominy River, supposedly enabling him to hook up with McDowell's troops presently in the Shenandoah Valley area. During the past month, rains had swollen the Chickahominy and this situation emboldened the Confederate commander, Joseph E. Johnston, to plan a complicated attack on the two corps on the south side of the river, Keyes (IV) and Heintzelman (III). A. P. Hill and Magruder's troops were to contain Union forces north of the river. Longstreet, commander of the main attack, was to strike Keyes' corps from three directions, utilizing his own division, as well as those of Huger and D. H. Hill. Longstreet took the wrong road and delayed the advance of both Harvey Hill and Huger to the extent that no attack



470th Regular Meeting

Michael T. Snyder
on
The Battle of Seven Pines

Friday, April 8, 1988

Quality Inn
Halsted and Madison
Cocktails at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.
\$15.00 per person
Entree: Pork Chops, Fish, or Fruit Plate



could be launched until 1:00 p.m. D. H. Hill attacked alone over swampy, wooded terrain, driving back Casey's and Couch's divisions of Keyes' corps, while taking heavy casualties. Keyes' subordinates shifted troops and Heintzelman sent up reinforcements. However, the rebels kept pressing forward and the timely arrival of elements of Sumner's II corps from the north side of the river blunted the force of the Confederate attack, with fighting concluded at 6:00 p.m. In the twilight, 'Joe' Johnston was severely wounded and for a few hours was succeeded by G. W. Smith. However, President Davis, on the battleground with his military advisor, Robert E. Lee, sensed Smith's inability to cope with the increased responsibility now placed upon him, and on June 1 appointed Lee to command.

Smith ordered a renewal of the attacks at dawn. However, Longstreet attacked tentatively with only two brigades, in the belief that the Federal troops were about to attack him. The feeble Confederate charge was easily repulsed by the reinforced Union troops, and Lee ordered a withdrawal to the original positions. Now for the first time Lee took over a major army that he would soon make famous as the Army of Northern Virginia.

A native of Sunbury, Pennsylvania, Mr. Snyder secured
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THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

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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 John Peterson, 18 E. Chestnut St., Chicago, Illinois 60611.



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his Bachelor's degree from Susquehanna University and his Master's in music from the University of Michigan. He has had a lifelong interest in American history and genealogy, and has conducted genealogical seminars for his church and Ursinus College, Collegeville, Pennsylvania. He is currently program chairman and designated as president-elect of the Civil War Round Table of Eastern Pennsylvania, a 200-member group in the Allentown area.

Battlefield Preservation Report

by Daniel J. Josephs

In November of 1986, an application to rezone a parcel of land, 652 acres in size, near the Manassas Battlefield in Virginia, was being considered by the Prince William County Board of Supervisors. A real estate developer, Hazel-Peterson Co., had recently bought this land, known as the William Center site, which was the location of a command post established by General Robert E. Lee, during the Battle of Second Manassas. The land is directly southwest of the Manassas National Battlefield Park and is bordered by Interstate I-66 and local Routes 234 and 29.

According to Vicki Heilig of the Montgomery County Civil War Round Table, the National Park Service, the citizens of Prince William County, Virginia, and the Hazel-Peterson Company reached a gentleman's agreement in November, 1986 concerning the development of the area. In this agreement there would be buffer zones around the project, consisting of mounds of earth and trees to shield the battlefield. The development would consist of a corporate office complex, residential homes, and a local shopping center of 120,000 square feet. Due to this agreement, the rezoning was not opposed by the Park Service.

Unfortunately, Hazel-Peterson Co. has since changed the project. According to an article in the *Washington Post* (Feb. 14, 1988), the Hazel-Peterson Co. announced it, along with the Edward J. DeBartolo Corporation, was going to develop a 1.2 million square foot shopping mall on the William Center land. Apparently the developer had trouble attracting tenants to the office project.

The Board of County Supervisors has been very supportive of the shopping mall project due to the increased revenue for the county, according to the *Washington Post* article. Opponents of the shopping mall project include the National Park Service, which feels the prior gentleman's agreement has been violated. Well-known attorney and environmental proponent, Annie Snyder, has helped organize a group to oppose the project, perhaps involving court litigation. According to Ms. Heilig, the mall will be challenged on three bases: 1) the county citizens were denied due process since there will be no further hearing before the board; 2) the historical impact on the battlefield caused by the project is being disregarded; and 3) a public referendum is still needed to approve local funding of the proposed interchange off I-66 which is desired by the developer to service the mall.

The ill effects of the proposed mall on the battlefield are many, according to Ms. Heilig. Without a new interchange off I-66, the terrible traffic problem will be increased, causing more congestion and air and noise pollution along Routes 234 and 29 which run through the battlefield right past the Stone House. The buffer zones around the project have been reduced from hundreds of feet to 50 feet, which is not enough area to build the planned earth mounds and trees. As a result, the battlefield will probably not be shielded from the mall which will be visible from the battlefield, thereby reducing the historical sanctity of the park. Ms. Heilig also fears the mall will bring more people seeking recreation, picnics, ballgames, etc. in the battlefield park.

Ms. Heilig requests that each member of our Round Table contribute \$5.00 for the litigation costs to oppose the mall project, and send the money to: Save The Battlefield Committee, P.O. Box 110, Catharpin, Virginia 22018.

March Meeting

by Barbara Hughett

The Confederate Image: Prints Of The Lost Cause is the title of both a national traveling exhibition of 60 original prints and a book written by three of the nation's leading Lincoln and Civil War scholars, Mark E. Neely, Jr., Harold Holzer and Gabor S. Boritt. On March 11th, 111 members and guests gathered for the 469th regular meeting of The Civil War Round Table to hear two of the authors, Mark Neely and Harold Holzer, share some of the knowledge they acquired in the research and writing of this work.

Very few lithographs or engravings depicting the Confederacy were produced by the South during the war years, 1861-65. This did not indicate a lack of yearning or appreciation for such art, but was caused by a scarcity of graphic talent in the South. According to Dr. Neely, this scarcity existed for six reasons: 1) The extreme Confederate mobilization for war. A much larger percentage of the Southern male population fought in the war. This was necessary because of a smaller population in the South, as compared to the North, and was possible because their labor force was enslaved. An able bodied artist was valued a lot more for carrying muskets than for carrying pencils and brushes. 2) The peculiar political system of the Confederacy, wherein Jefferson Davis was serving a 6-year term (in a country which lasted only 4 years) and no political parties existed, generated no political art. 3) The Northern blockade cut off sources of potential supply from abroad. 4) Printmakers of the North felt strongly enough about their cause to not produce art for the South. In their extensive research, Dr. Neely said that not one single instance of this was found. 5) What riches of graphic skills the South did possess were centered in Baltimore and New Orleans. Maryland never seceded and, although New Orleans did produce some early Confederate images, all this ended in April of 1862, when Admiral Farragut's fleet steamed into the city. 6) There was a severe shortage of all art supplies in the South.

Viewing the few prints from the Confederacy that did survive, Dr. Neely gets the impression that the Southern graphics industry, had it been able to develop without the stress of war, would have been able to parallel that of the North. While showing a slide of a print depicting General Stonewall Jackson, he noted that Jackson had a unique appeal to Northerners as an "anti-Cavalier, rounded-headed Puritan," who prayed before battles and loved his wife and child. After his death, a Northern newspaper published what Dr. Neely referred to as a "relieved eulogy" to a "good man devoted to the wrong cause." The editor of the newspaper received a letter stating that, "I wish to waste no time in thanking you for the excellent and manly article in the *Chronicle* on Stonewall Jackson." That letter was written by Abraham Lincoln. "And Jackson," Dr. Neely added, "was the only Confederate leader about whom Lincoln ever wrote anything kind."

The icons of the Confederacy did appear, but not until after the war and then, ironically, from Yankee publishers. The prints of Appomattox, designed to depict the winners winning, also showed the losers losing, and as Mr. Holzer noted, "Robert E. Lee had done so with such dignity that he helped make the Confederate image safe in the North." "Lee's inclusion in the Appomattox prints," he added, "put him on an even footing with his conquerer Grant, even if it was only because there could be little glory for Grant if it could not be shown that he defeated a worthy foe.

Appomattox prints, thus, were really Grant prints, but they helped Lee's image." Though neither general approved of them and many were quite inaccurate, the prints became very popular after the war. These inaccuracies occurred because, since no artist was present at the event, printmakers made up their own versions. "What's important in terms of the Confederate image," Mr. Holzer said, "is that Appomattox heralded a new era for that image in which, ironically, now that the Confederacy was dead, its visual image would come alive" from prints coming off of Northern presses. One of the most famous prints, *The Lost Cause*, depicts an anonymous Confederate veteran coming home to find his home in ruins and his family dead and buried. Prints such as these graced the parlors of Southern homes after the war.

Positive images were produced of heroes such as Jackson and Lee, who got as much honor as a losing general ever got. Shortly after the war, Jefferson Davis' ridiculous escape attempt in his wife's overcoat generated many comical caricatures and served to evoke some much needed laughter. But, once he was imprisoned in Fortress Monroe, his image changed and he became a martyr of The Lost Cause. In closing, Mr. Holzer told about Davis' last glorious tour of the old Confederacy in 1886, when he was greeted by unprecedented crowds, displays of prints, and wild ovations from his admirers. "People who saw Davis on that last tour," he noted, "saw a very old man filled with stubborn love for things lost, insisting, as he said in his last speech, that 'Truth crushed to earth will rise again. Is it a Lost Cause now? Never.' "

Richard B. Harwell (1915-1988)

Richard Barksdale Harwell, historian, bibliographer, biographer, writer, editor, rare book librarian and Life Member of The Civil War Round Table, died on March 3. Rick, as he was affectionately known to his friends in Chicago, received our Nevins-Freeman Award in 1984 for his significant contributions to our knowledge of the history and heritage of the past, and particularly the events of 1861-65.

Rick was born in Georgia and educated at Emory University. During his career he served as librarian at Bowdoin College and Smith College, director of libraries at Georgia Southern College and curator of rare books and manuscripts at the University of Georgia Library. The works that he wrote or edited are too numerous to list in full, but among them are some of the classics of Civil War literature, such as *The Confederate Reader* (1957), *The Union Reader* (1958), *The Confederate Hundred* (1964), *Hardtack and Coffee* (John D. Billings, 1960) and one volume abridgements of Douglas Southall Freeman's biographies of George Washington and Robert E. Lee. He was one of the foremost authorities on *Gone With The Wind*, and in fact helped Margeret Mitchell with her research.

In a brief eulogy delivered at the March meeting, Round Table founder Ralph Newman called Rick Harwell "one of that group of gentle scholars that has enobled the Civil War field" and "a completely delightful gentleman."

We report with sadness the death, in early March, of long time member and Battlefield Tour companion, Judge James L. Henry. Although he had not attended meetings since moving to the South several years ago, he will be missed by his many friends in Chicago. Our sincere condolences are extended to his family.

The New Books

compiled by Dick Clark



Barney, William L. *The Passage of the Republic: An Interdisciplinary History of Nineteenth-century America*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1987. Pbk.

Browder, George Richard, *The Heavens are Weeping: The Civil War Diaries of George Richard Browder*. Edited by Richard L. Troutman. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987. Non-combatant.

Burton, William L. *Melting Pot Soldiers: The Union's Ethnic Regiments*. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1987. \$29.95.

The Civil War: A Master Index. An Illustrated Guide. By the editors of Time-Life Books. Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books, 1987. For use with their series on The Civil War.

Cooling, Benjamin Franklin. *Forts Henry and Donelson: The Key to the Confederate Heartland*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987. \$24.95.

Crawford, J. Marshall. *Mosby and His Men*. Gaithersburg, MD: Olde Soldier Books, 1987. \$30.00. Original of 1867.

Doubleday, Abner. *Gettysburg Made Plain*. Gaithersburg, MD: Olde Soldier Books, 1987. \$10.00. Original of 1909.

Ellington, Charles G. *The Trial of U.S. Grant: The Pacific Coast Years, 1852-1854*. With a foreword by John Y. Simon. Glendale, CA: A.H. Clark Co., 1987. \$27.50.

Evans, Eli N. *Judah P. Benjamin. The Jewish Confederate*. New York: The Free Press, 1987. 469 p. \$24.95.

Foster, Gaines M. *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987. 306 p., ill. bibliog., index. \$29.95.

Haygood, Tamara Miner. *Henry William Ravenel, 1814-1887: South Carolina Scientist in the Civil War Era*. University, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1987. \$22.95.

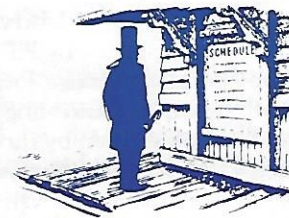
Hewitt, Lawrence L. *Port Hudson, Confederate Bastion on the Mississippi*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1987. \$19.95.

The Harp, a new quarterly paper dedicated to spreading the word of Irish deeds in the Civil War, began publication in September. Subscriptions are \$3.75 per year and may be obtained by writing Kevin Griffin, P.O. Box 40895, Indianapolis, IN 46240.

Stonewall Jackson: A Symposium, will be held April 15-17 in Lexington, Virginia. Among the speakers will be Frank E. Vandiver, William C. Davis, Robert K. Krick, and James I. Robertson. The \$100 registration fee includes lectures and most meals, but not accommodations. For more information, call the Stonewall Jackson House (703) 463-2552.

The Ninth Annual Confederate History Symposium will be held April 9 at Hill College in Hillsboro, Texas. The theme this year is "The Atlanta Campaign, May 1-September 8, 1864." For further information, write Confederate Research Center, P.O. Box 619, Hillsboro, TX 76645.

BULLETIN BOARD



Future meetings

Regular meetings are held at the Quality Inn, Halsted and Madison, the second Friday in each month, except as noted.

April 8: Michael Snyder on "The Battle of Seven Pines."

April 28-May 1: Annual Battlefield Tour: Chancellorsville.

May 13: Gerald F. Linderman on "The Experience of Combat in the Civil War."

June 10: Edward Longacre on "The Army of the James."

New members

Greg Abbott, 1646 Waukegan Rd., #10, Glenview, IL 60025 (312) 998-6057.

Richard T. Crowe, 5613 S. Keeler Ave., Chicago, IL 60629 (312) 735-2530.

Jack Fitzgerald, Box 454, Joliet, IL 60434 (815) 722-6138.

Mitchell L. Kuhn, 3952 N. Southport, Chicago, IL 60613 (312) 975-6127.

John Malloy, 1524 Melbrook, Munster, IN 46321 (219) 838-8659.

Steven Thompson, 1860 15th Ave. NW, New Brighton, MN 55112 (612) 633-5237.

The Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites, Inc. was formed in June, 1987, for the purpose of acquiring control, by donation or purchase, of land on Civil War battlefields and sites in the Virginia-Maryland-Pennsylvania theater that otherwise would be sacrificed to development. They will focus on locations not already protected in part by the National Park Service or other conservation agencies. Among the leaders of the Association are Gary Gallagher, Robert Krick, Brian Pohanka and Merlin Sumner.

There are four categories of membership: Student, \$10; Member, \$20; Associate, \$50; Patron, \$100. All members will receive the APCWS newsletter. Become a member by sending your check to APCWS, P.O. Box 23, Arlington, VA 22110.

A special photographic exhibit, "Lincoln the President—Booth the Actor/Assassin," will be on display at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in Lincoln City, Indiana from April 1-30. The memorial is open 8 to 5 daily. For information, call (812) 937-4541.

The Second Annual Symposium on the Civil War in Washington, DC and Northern Virginia will be held May 20-21 in Alexandria, Virginia. Dr. James I. Robertson will be the keynote speaker. Also speaking will be Elden E. (Josh) Billings, Dr. B. F. Cooling, and Kim B. Holien. The \$30 registration fee includes all lectures, reception, lunch and a bus tour of Civil War Alexandria. For information, write Civil War Symposium, Fort Ward Museum, 4301 W. Braddock Rd., Alexandria, VA 22304-1008.