

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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Chicago, Illinois

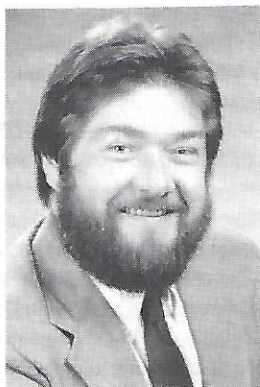
May 1992

Lawrence Hewitt on "Port Hudson: The Best Photographed Civil War Battlefield"

by Barbara Hughett

Control of the Mississippi River was a key objective of Union strategists since the beginning of the Civil War. In August 1862, Confederate forces under General John Breckenridge occupied Port Hudson, Louisiana, and began constructing a bastion as formidable as that at Vicksburg.

In mid-May 1863, Union General Nathaniel P. Banks moved down the Red River to attack Port Hudson from the north. Additional Union columns marched north from Baton Rouge and New Orleans to attack from the south and east. When Banks closed the noose on Port Hudson on May 22, his 30,000 soldiers, supported by U.S. Navy vessels, faced 7500 Confederates behind four and one-half miles of earthworks.



Lawrence Hewitt

Thus began the siege of Port Hudson, which became the longest true siege in American military history. It did not end until the Confederate garrison grounded arms on July 9. About 7500 Confederates had tied up more than 40,000 Union soldiers for nearly two months.

"Port Hudson: The Best Photographed Civil War Battlefield" will be the topic of Lawrence L. Hewitt's address to The Civil War Round Table on May 8. The claim made in the title of his presentation is based on the more than 200 Civil War-era photographs of the Port Hudson battlefield that he has uncovered since he began his search in 1978. In comparison, less than 100 images taken at Gettysburg and less than 70 taken at Antietam are known to have survived—and these photographs were taken after the fighting had ended at those sites.

Hewitt's address will be enhanced by the presentation of approximately seventy-five slides to augment the accompanying oral history of the Port Hudson campaign. Included among the images shown will be the only known photograph of Confederate soldiers during a surrender ceremony and the only Civil War photograph that can be documented as having been taken during combat.

A native of Louisville, Kentucky, Lawrence Hewitt received his B.A. degree from the University of Kentucky, and his M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from Louisiana State University. He completed his graduate studies under the



511th Regular Meeting

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Lawrence Hewitt on "Port Hudson: The Best Photographed Civil War Battlefield"

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Friday, May 8, 1992

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Holiday Inn Mart Plaza
350 North Orleans Street
Buttons—15th floor

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

\$17.50 per person

Entree: Baked Chicken Vesuvio,
Orange Roughy, or Fruit Plate



A Reminder

Please make your reservation by Wednesday, May 6. Mail the enclosed postcard or call the book shop at (312) 944-3085.

If you are driving and coming from the south, turn left into the Mart Plaza lot just after crossing the river on Orleans. From the north, turn right from Orleans on Hubbard, left on Kingsbury, right on Kinzie, and left into the Mart Plaza lot. Parking is free.

As of press time, due to the Chicago flood, the only entrance to the parking garage is from Orleans.

guidance of the late T. Harry Williams. From 1978-1986, Hewitt was historic site manager of the Port Hudson and Camp Moore State Commemorative Areas. Currently associate professor of history and government at Southeastern Louisiana University, he serves as coordinator of the annual Deep Delta Civil War Symposium and is the co-book review editor of *The Confederate Journal of History*.

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THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940
357 West Chicago Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60610
Phone: (312) 944-3085

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House	Robert Dawson, James Nethery
Picnic	Paul Kleckner

The only requirement for membership in The Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Dan Weinberg, 357 W. Chicago Ave., Chicago, IL 60610.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

President Joseph L. Wisheart has announced there will be an Executive Committee meeting at 5:30 p.m. prior to the May 8 meeting. The main item on the agenda is the 1993 battlefield tour site. All officers, committee chairpersons, and past presidents are urged to attend.

BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION

☆ UPDATE ☆

by David Richert

The 100-foot Soch's Mill Bridge, which spans Marsh Creek behind the Confederate line on Seminary Ridge at Gettysburg, is the focus of a new preservation effort by the Gettysburg Battlefield Preservation Association (GBPA). The covered bridge, built in 1852, served as the main escape route for Lee's army after the battle. It was also in constant use during the battle because a field hospital was set up at the nearby mill.

According to the GBPA, which acquired the historic structure in 1984, substantial repairs are needed for the landmark. The GBPA has begun approaching Adams County officials and officials from the two townships on either side of Marsh Creek to support the estimated \$100,000 repair project. The bridge is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation recently contracted to purchase fifteen acres of Camp Garnett, a Confederate camp in West Virginia. The camp site, at the western base of Rich Mountain, contains well-preserved trenches as well as the remains of soldiers' huts. The Rich Mountain battlefield itself, where Union General W.S. Rosecrans defeated a Confederate force under Colonel John Pegram in July 1861, exhibits cannon emplacements, bullet-scarred rocks, and the foundations of the period Hart farm structures mentioned in battle accounts. The cost of the property was \$26,000. The group has a one-year option to purchase another fifty critical acres at the bargain price of about \$65,000.

According to the chairman of the Foundation, the group hopes to see archaeological work done at the site and perhaps see it set up as a historical park in the future. The Foundation would be willing to turn over land acquired to local, state, or federal authorities to insure the battlefield's future. Donations may be sent to the non-profit Rich Mountain Battlefield Foundation at Rt. 2, Box 114, Bowden, West Virginia 26254.

The Conservation Fund recently purchased a half-acre site on a ridge overlooking the Prairie Grove Battlefield, which will be used as a scenic overlook and interpretive area. The state of Arkansas will reimburse the Fund its \$17,000 purchase price and the land will be added to the Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park. The site was going to be used for construction of a home; the Fund was able to move more quickly than the state in making the purchase.

Four monument cannon were recently installed at the Perryville Battlefield in Kentucky. Purchase of the cannon was made possible by the Perryville Battlefield Preservation Association, which was founded only about a year ago. About half of the \$24,000 cost of the reproduction twelve-pound Napoleons was donated by Alan Hoeweler of Cincinnati.

Although Perryville is in no immediate danger, it was placed on the "25 most endangered list" of the National Park Service because there is little protection from potential threats. The Preservation Association was established to help insure the park, which appears today basically as it did in 1862, remains that way.

☪ APRIL MEETING ☪

by Barbara Hughett

Lieutenant Colonel John Singleton Mosby, leader of an irregular group of partisans who were assisted by sympathetic Southern civilians, became the most celebrated guerrilla in the Confederacy. His adventures were heralded in the press. How much of the Gray Ghost's reputation was valid and how much was sheer exaggeration? "Mosby vs. Sheridan in the Shenandoah" was historian Dennis E. Frye's topic on April 10, when he spoke before 120 members and guests at the 510th regular meeting of The Civil War Round Table.

It is beyond dispute that Mosby was a hero in the South and a celebrity in the North when Union General Philip H. Sheridan arrived to take command in the Shenandoah Valley in August 1864. Newspapers had been featuring thrilling front-page stories about daring exploits by Mosby's men for the past eighteen months. "The beings painted by war correspondents as Mosby's men were purely ideal creations as Blue-Beard and Jack-the-Giant-Killer," Mosby *himself* later wrote. "Yet the tales told by them made a lasting impression just as the kissing of pilgrims has worn away stones," he added.

Frye contended that Mosby's feats have been considerably embellished. He noted that, despite Mosby's "strategy of harassment" and his "well-publicized success with its execution, Ulysses S. Grant made no mention of Mosby in his first instruction to new Valley commander Philip H. Sheridan ... Although Mosby had exhibited expertise in preying on the lines of an enemy moving south, Grant apparently discounted the Rebel raider as a trivial menace or irrelevant sideshow."

Citing discrepancies in numbers in several accounts of the Berryville wagon train raid, Frye said that such accounts tend to "examine the situation through a myopic Confederate lens." Nearly ninety percent of Sheridan's train had passed to the front before Mosby's attack. Sheridan did not, as some of Mosby's biographers have suggested, panic and scamper north without supplies.

The famous Greenback Raid is given as an example of the Gray Ghost's achievements. At 2:30 a.m. on October 14, 1864, Mosby and one hundred men derailed an unguarded westbound passenger train on the B&O Railroad about eight miles northwest of Harpers Ferry. They seized \$175,000 in greenbacks, burned the train, and quickly disappeared. But by 5:00 a.m., a railroad construction crew had been dispatched to the scene, and by the next day the B&O had reopened. While the incident was annoying and embarrassing for the North, it did not influence Sheridan's campaign in any significant way.

Counterintelligence measures instituted by Sheridan, both military and civilian, impaired Mosby's ability to prey on Yankee supplies. Federal escorts further inhibited Mosby's strikes. To ensure adequate protection for his wagon trains in the wake of the Berryville raid, Sheridan insisted on deploying tested veterans for this duty.

Despite Mosby's failure to disrupt the supply lines and strategy of Sheridan in the Valley, his partisans did constitute an irritation to the Union invaders. However, while Mosby's activities sometimes drew blood, they never inflicted a major wound.

To Mosby's credit, Ulysses S. Grant acknowledged that "few men in the South could have commanded successfully

a separate detachment, in the rear of an opposing army and so near the border of hostilities, as long as [Mosby] did without losing his entire command." "Grant's postwar accolade," Frye observed, "aptly summarizes Mosby's most significant achievement against Sheridan; against odds stacked heavily against him, Mosby depended upon his personal skill, daring, and bravery to survive in the uneven match. 'There was a great stake to be won,' the Gray Ghost concluded, 'and I resolved to play a bold game to win it.' Mosby did indeed play boldly in the Shenandoah against Sheridan—and lost."

Nominating Committee Report

David Richert, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, has announced the following proposed slate of officers for the 1992-93 year:

President	Mary Munsell Abroe
Senior Vice President	Kurt Carlson
Vice President	John M. Coverick, Sr.
Vice President	Barbara Hughett
Secretary	Ted Birndorf
Treasurer	Carole Cierniak
Assistant Secretary	Joyce Warshaw
Assistant Treasurer	Steven Horton
Trustee	Charles Bednar
Trustee	Robert Dawson
Trustee	Adrienne Hanrahan
Trustee	James Nethery
Trustee (to fill the unexpired term of Ronald Johnson)	Robert Girardi

The election will be held during the May meeting, at which time additional nominations for any of the above offices may be made from the floor. Three current trustees, Michael Mariantal, Norman Poteshman, and Dale Weitman, will remain in office as they complete their two year terms.

(continued from page 1)

Among the dozen books he has written is *Port Hudson: Confederate Bastion on the Mississippi* (1987). Honors he has received include SLU's 1991 President's Award for Excellence in Research and the New Orleans Civil War Round Table's 1991 Charles L. Dufour Award. Hewitt is currently working on a biography of Admiral David Glasgow Farragut, the best-remembered of the combatants at Port Hudson.

The Sixth Annual Deep Delta Civil War Symposium will be held on June 12-14 at Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, Louisiana. The theme this year is "Fighting Southerners: Papers in Honor of the late T. Harry Williams." Speakers will include Edwin C. Bearss, Terrence J. Winschel, Richard N. Current, Anne Bailey, and Grady McWhiney. For additional information, call (504) 549-9425.

The Lincoln Group of Illinois has scheduled its annual meeting for Saturday, June 13, at Illinois Benedictine College in Lisle. Registration begins at 11:30 a.m. Wayne C. Temple, chief deputy state archivist, will speak on "Lincoln's Religion." For information, call Philip Bean at (708)960-1500.

The New Books

Compiled by C. Robert Douglas



- Ambrosius, Lloyd E. *A Crisis of Republicanism: American Politics During the Civil War*. University of Nebraska Press. 1990. \$23.50.
- Basler, Roy P. and Christian O. Basler, eds. *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, 1848-1865* (Volume II), Second Supplement. Rutgers University Press. 1990. \$40.00.
- Boritt, Gabor S., ed. *Why the Confederacy Lost*. Oxford University Press. 1992. \$19.95.
- Bragg, Charles, ed. *Cogley's Seventh Indiana Cavalry*. Morningside Bookshop. 1992. \$24.95. Original of 1876.
- Castel, Albert. *A Frontier State at War: Kansas 1861-1865*. Kansas Heritage Press. 1991. Pbk. \$15.95. Original of 1958.
- Cisco, Walter B. *States Rights Gist: A South Carolina General of the Civil War*. White Mane Publ. Co. 1991. \$27.95.

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.

Muriel Underwood, graphic designer/typographer of this newsletter, the volume of The Round Table history, the 50th Anniversary Muster Roll, and numerous other Round Table printed materials, was honored with a Distinguished Service Award at the April meeting. In presenting the award, former President David R. Richert said, "She does all of this, and does it so well, not just because it is her business, but because she cares about history and what an organization like The Civil War Round Table is all about."

William Forrest Mallory 1919-1992

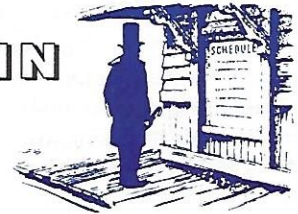
by Merlin E. Sumner

Honorary Life member William Forrest Mallory died on March 28 at his home in Richmond, Virginia. He was a Charter Member of the Richmond Civil War Round Table and a former commander of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, James Longstreet Camp. Bill is remembered for his exceptional knowledge about Civil War-era roads around Richmond, the Seven Days battles, for being a staunch supporting war-horse for Longstreet, and an ability to speak Confederate-ese in a comprehending way to Yankees. With a Virginia gentleman's charm, he touched everyone with a sense of respect.

A frequent battlefield tour participant, Bill served as one of the guides for the 1975 Richmond-Petersburg tour. He spoke to The Round Table in September 1979 on "Actions North of the James River, September 29 and 30, 1864."

Surely, when Bill's time came to enter the pearly gates, he was met by an honor guard from Longstreet's Corps and he is busier than ever tracing out the Angel road to see where it leads.

BULLETIN BOARD



FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held at the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, 350 N. Orleans (Buttons, 15th Floor), the second Friday in each month, except as noted.

- May 8:* Lawrence Hewitt on "Port Hudson: The Best Photographed Civil War Battlefield."
- June 12:* Steven Newton on "Joseph E. Johnston: Rationalizations, Ego, and Politics After the Battle of Seven Pines."
- September 11:* Wiley Sword on "Who Speaks for the Dead? A Perspective on Franklin and Nashville."
- October 9:* Shelby Foote, Nevins-Freeman Address.
- November 13:* John Hennessy on "Second Manassas: Fresh Perspectives."
- December 11:* Peter Cozzens on "The Real Rock of Chickamauga: The Twenty-first Ohio on Horseshoe Ridge."
- January 8:* Brooks Davis on "Jefferson Davis and Abraham Lincoln as Commanders in Chief."
- February 12:* Brian Pohanka, topic to be announced.
- March 12:* Frank Byrne on "Civil War Prisons: Myths and Realities."
- April 9:* Frances Kennedy, topic to be announced.
- May 7:* William Piston on "General James Longstreet."
- June 11:* Carol Reardon on "The Image of Pickett's Charge in American History."

New Members

- John C. Blew, 10457 S. Seeley, Chicago, IL 60643 (312) 238-1066
- Sue Kerekgyarto, 1460 W. Grace #2-W, Chicago, IL 60613 (312) 975-7683
- Jerry Long, 8971 E. Delaware Parkway, Munster, IN 46321 (219) 923-3902
- Lester Scates, 7327 S. Paxton, Chicago, IL 60649 (312) 375-5181

Change of Address

- Richard Walker, 403 Cherry Avenue, Lakeside, Ohio 43446 (419) 798-5192

The Stephen A. Douglas Association will hold its annual luncheon on Saturday, June 6, in the Burnham Room of the Prairie Restaurant at the Hyatt Hotel on Printers Row. Ernest A. Griffin, vice president of the Douglas Association and Honorary Life Member of The Civil War Round Table, will deliver an address on "The History of Camp Douglas." Also featured will be a reenactment of a Lincoln-Douglas debate. The 12:30 p.m. luncheon will be preceded by a program at the Douglas Tomb, 636 East 35th Street, beginning at 11:00 a.m. The cost of the luncheon is \$27.50 per person. For further information or to make reservations, call (312) 787-1860.

Mark E. Neely, Jr., 1989 Nevins-Freeman Award recipient, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in history on April 7 for his *The Fate of Liberty: Abraham Lincoln and Civil Liberties* (1991).