



# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

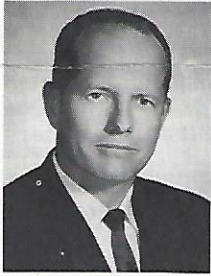
Volume XXVII, Number 8

Chicago, Illinois

April, 1967

## Fred Benton - 'Battle and Siege of Port Hudson' - Wed., April 26

Fred G. Benton, Jr., of Baton Rouge, La., known to many of us as our chief guide and lecturer at Port Hudson on our Battlefield Tour to Louisiana in 1964, will be speaker on "The Battle and Siege of Port Hudson" at our meeting Wednesday, April 26, at the Furniture Club in the Furniture Mart.



Fred G. Benton Jr.

The evening will be a triple header. Vernon Sternberg, director of Southern Illinois University Press will be host at a cocktail party introducing "The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant, Vol. 1, 1837-1861." (see story in next column). Ladies are

invited to the cocktail party and then the Camp Followers will hold a dinner and meeting in the Mahogany room (see page three).

Benton is president of the Committee for Preservation of Port Hudson Battlefield and says the Chicago CWRT visit "marked a turning point in our efforts there and might be listed among the really significant factors leading to the present state park."

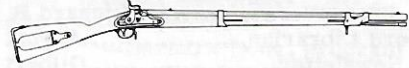
The subject is one that Benton has virtually lived with and he will illustrate his talk with slide projections. He commented: "You will recall that Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks had presidential ambitions and was well aware of the importance of public relations. For this reason, plus the fact that the action at Port Hudson lasted so long, we have a wealth of photographs and Harper's and Leslie's prints. Banks' campaign against Port Hudson was accompanied by an entourage of artists and later photographers who left for us a remarkable pictorial record."

Regarding the 1863 campaign, Benton says: "Banks initiated efforts to by-pass Port Hudson through the Teche country and a few days later Gen. U. S. Grant sent the first of his corps through Louisiana. Then followed a most amazing sequence of letters in which Banks was promised 20,000 men to help in the reduction of Port Hudson.

"Misunderstanding and confusion developed between Grant and Banks as to the meaning and timing and Banks almost decided to forget Port Hudson and strike out up the Red River after the Louisiana legislature. He changed his mind at the last minute and decided to join Grant near Port Gibson. Again changing his mind, Banks finally struck at Port Hudson.

"My slide presentation will attempt to convey some part of the scene as many patriotic Americans from New York, Vermont, Connecticut, as well as Mississippi, saw it then."

Benton is an attorney at Baton Rouge, La., and with our Robert Reilly, who emigrated from Chicago to Baton Rouge, and T. Harry Williams organized the highly successful Civil War Round Table at Baton Rouge. Benton



260th REGULAR MEETING

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Fred G. Benton, Jr.

on

"The Battle and Siege of Port Hudson"

\* \* \* \* \*

Cocktail Party, 5 to 6:30 p.m., Introducing  
"The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant, Vol. 1, 1837-1861"

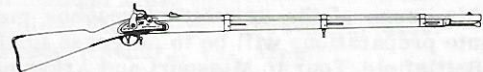
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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 1967

Furniture Club in  
Furniture Mart

Dinner at  
6:30 p.m.

666 North Lake Shore Drive In Library dining room  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (Trustees, Officers, Past  
Presidents) meets at 4:45 p.m. in Furniture Club.



## First Volume of U. S. Grant Papers

"The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant, Vol. 1, 1837-1861" will be introduced at a cocktail party in the main lounge of the Furniture Club preceding our April 26 meeting. John Y. Simon, editor of the papers, and Vernon Sternberg, director of Southern Illinois University Press, the publisher, will be present as hosts. Grant was born April 27, 1822.

The volume represents the first time that extensive treatment has been given to Grant's early years. About 80 per cent of the material is letters that have never been published, including letters to Julia Dent in courting days. The early material includes much made available by Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant III, a grandson. The book has introductions by Allan Nevins, Bruce Catton, and Ralph Newman.

Members of the Round Table, ladies, and all persons interested in the Grant series are invited to attend the party on the 17th floor of the Furniture Mart. Afterward, members of the Round Table will have their dinner and meeting in the Library dining room. Women of the Camp Followers group will have their dinner and meeting in the Mahogany room. Ladies who have not attended previous Camp Followers meetings also are welcome.

was presented our Distinguished Service Award on our visit to Louisiana.

Benton is a graduate of Louisiana State University; a member of the American, Louisiana, and Baton Rouge bar associations; a veteran of World War II with expe-

(continued on page 2, col. 1)



# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



FOUNDED DECEMBER 3, 1940

18 East Chestnut Street,  
Chicago 11, Illinois  
Phone: Whitehall 4-3085

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## BATTLEFIELD TOUR NEARS

As this issue of the newsletter reaches members, last minute preparations will be in progress for the 17th Annual Battlefield Tour to Missouri and Arkansas. The tour will be in Springfield, Mo., April 20 for lunch and dinner. The CWRT of the Ozarks there will join us and has designated the dinner as its official meeting for April.

A sad note is that Dr. C. Benton Manley, who had accepted an invitation to be one of our Wilson's Creek guides, died of a heart attack on February 12. He was born on a farm within the battlefield. He was a professor of history at Evangel college. Other Springfield members will guide us.

"Pete" Long and Ralph Newman have had personal contacts with members of the Kansas City CWRT who will join in and guide our activities there. Pete and his wife Barbara, a skilled mapmaker, have prepared texts and maps for our tour packets. There are articles by Dr. H. Lee Hoover of Springfield and Howard N. Monnett of Kansas City.

The early list of reservations showed a wide distribution of members who will be on the tour - they come from Arizona, Texas, Oklahoma, New York, Virginia, Washington, D.C., Kansas, Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin.

There still is time for late entrants. Phone Registrar Margaret April, (312) 944-3085.

FRED BENTON (continued from page 1)

rience as a range finder operator aboard the USS Black DD 666, and toward the latter part of the war as a naval aviation cadet. He and Mrs. Benton have six children.

Benton is a former president of the Baton Rouge Arts and Science Center now completing a 60-foot Zeiss planetarium and is chairman of the annual air show.

*from the  
Editor's pen*



The sixty members and guests present at the March 20 meeting felt that Col. Harold B. Simpson long had been a kindred spirit when he recalled his days in Illinois. He noted that he was graduated from Oak Park High school in the same class with Betsy Ross, now the wife of Brooks Davis, and Louise Williams, now the wife of Elmer Pendarvis. Simpson said he is a southerner "by osmosis" and when he speaks in Texas he is introduced as a "good Yankee."

Simpson caught the Civil War Round Table "bug" when he attended his first meeting in Washington, D.C., in 1951. He sat next to Bruce Catton as they listened to Robert Selph Henry speak on "The Mexican War as a Training Ground for Civil War Generals."

Simpson's interest in the camel corps, the subject of his talk, goes back to Wiesbaden, Germany, where he was stationed and formed a Civil War Round Table of air force personnel and Germans. The Germans asked him to speak on Jefferson Davis and camels in the United States army. He studied the camels in the Frankfurt zoo and learned about all of the types and their characteristics.

Davis was in the army on the western frontier until 1835. While a senator in 1851 he became interested in camels and sponsored a bill to introduce them into the army. In 1853 he became secretary of war under President Pierce and set up a camel commission which went to North Africa to buy the animals. The USS Supply, a store ship, was refitted with stalls below decks and a loading platform. Eventually, 13 drivers and 74 camels were brought back in two voyages.

Simpson said the camels proved good in mud, crossed rivers and mountains well, were immune to rattlesnake bite, didn't stampede, saddle sores healed quickly, they were fearless, and lived twice as long as a horse or mule. The transcontinental railroad ended the need for camels. All 13 camel drivers remained in the United States. One migrated to Mexico and his son became president there in 1924-28.

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Your editor is indebted to Bob Douglas for the report of the meeting.

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Dan Lapinski announced that our honorary life member, J. Ambler Johnston, of Richmond, Va., will speak on Douglas Southall Freeman to the Salt Creek CWRT in Glen Ellyn Public library and that our members are invited to the meeting, the evening of April 19.

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At the board of trustees meeting, President Mike Lerner announced that the Round Table will be represented with a wreath at the Abraham Lincoln tomb in Springfield on April 15 for the Sons of Union Veterans ceremonies there. Reports were given on the Graduate Fellowship Award fund and the battlefield tour preparations. C. Robert Douglas was named chairman of the nominating committee.

HENRY BASS, our member from Enid, Okla., invited Gen. Robert E. Wood, retired chairman of Sears Roebuck & Co., to join our battlefield tour and received this reply:

"Thank you for sending me the article about the battle of Prairie Grove. My father was in the fight as an officer in the 10th Kansas Infantry. There is nothing I would like better than to take a trip to the battlefield, but I am afraid, because of my age, I will not be able to do so."



# Battle of Prairie Grove

BY EDWIN C. BEARSS

Union General John Schofield in October, 1862, invaded northwestern Arkansas and compelled Confederate General Thomas Hindman and his troops to retire across the Boston mountains. During this campaign, one of Schofield's divisions, led by Gen. James Blunt, mauled Douglas Cooper's Indian brigade at Fort Wayne. Schofield, satisfied that it would be difficult to supply his army in the area north of the Bostons, started back up the Telegraph road with two of his divisions. Blunt's division was left to hold northwest Arkansas, guard the passes through the Bostons, and watch the Indian Territory Confederates. Not feeling well, Schofield reported himself ill and placed Gen. Francis J. Herron in charge of the two divisions posted south of Springfield, Mo.

By the end of November, the aggressive Hindman was ready to strike back at the widely separated wings of Schofield's army. It took Hindman's corps two days (Nov. 29 and 30) to recross the Arkansas. After ferrying the river, the Rebels camped in the hills overlooking Van Buren. Gen. Hindman on Dec. 3 put his columns (9,000 infantry, 2000 cavalry, and 22 pieces of artillery) in motion. The Confederates intended to fall upon Blunt's division at Cane hill and destroy it before it could be reinforced. It was 45 miles by road from Van Buren to Cane hill. Gen. John S. Marmaduke's cavalry division which had been posted at Dripping Springs screened the Confederate march up the Telegraph road.

Information had reached Gen. Blunt's Cane Hill headquarters on Dec. 2 that Hindman's foot soldiers and artillery had crossed the Arkansas. At 9 a.m. Blunt telegraphed this news to Springfield. Blunt's dispatch was in Herron's hands at 8 a.m. on the 3rd and he promptly put his two divisions in motion. One of the most amazing marches of the Civil War ensued. Herron's columns marched 100 miles in 80 hours, the last 57 miles in 31 hours.

Hindman's movements were lethargic. Nightfall on the 6th found the Rebel artillery and infantry at Morrow's. Marmaduke's troopers during the day had driven in Blunt's outposts. While he was making plans to assail Blunt's bluecoats, Hindman was notified by his scouts of the approach of Herron's divisions. As his corps lay between Herron and Blunt, Hindman determined to defeat the Federals in detail. He would strike Herron first, then fall on Blunt.

On Dec. 7 Hindman turned his troops out long before daybreak. To mask his movements, Hindman had one of his cavalry brigades feign an attack on Blunt's division, while Hindman advanced against Herron with the rest of his corps.

Marmaduke's cavalry encountered Herron's horse soldiers and drove them back toward Fayetteville. Herron called up his infantry and artillery, forded Illinois Creek, and checked Marmaduke. Hindman thereupon committed his infantry, but instead of attacking as he should, he posted his men in a strong position overlooking Crawford's Prairie, thus allowing Herron to retain the initiative. Herron attacked at noon. When he heard the roar of artillery, Blunt marched to Herron's assistance. Hindman was now called upon to confront a reunited Army of the Frontier, which was stronger numerically and in organization than his.

Darkness ended the battle of Prairie Grove, and Hindman withdrew his corps, retreating back across the Boston mountains. The Federals failed to launch an effective pursuit, and the Confederates retired south of the Arkansas. Confederate losses in the battle were 1,317, while the Federals reported their casualties as 1251 killed, wounded and missing.

TO THE LADIES —

Betsy (Mrs. Brooks) Davis will give us the benefit of her research into the life of "The Other First Lady - Varina Davis" when the Camp Followers meet on April 26. Women are invited to the cocktail party (5 to 6:30 p.m.) in the main lounge of the Furniture Club introducing the first volume of the U. S. Grant series. Then they will hold their dinner and meeting in the Mahogany room. Betsy will outline, and illustrate with slides depicting Varina's background, the life of this remarkable woman who was a source of strength to her Confederate president husband. Betsy brings life and sparkle to any subject, as those who heard her absorbing resume last year of the Mary Chesnut Diary know. For reservations call Betty (Mrs. Robert G.) Walter, 681-0588. All Round Table ladies are warmly welcome.

—Barbara Long, program chairman

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Eleanor (Mrs. Wilson) Smith gave the Camp Followers a rough and ready taste of the Civil War through letters written to her great-grandmother, "Dear Adeline," by her soldier husband, Samuel Lloyd of the 2nd Kansas and 15th Iowa. Eleanor's expressive reading of the quaintly spelled missives brought alive some of the horror and humor of the war. She made the people mentioned seem even more real by bringing tintypes of nearly all of them as well as some of the actual letters.

PREVIOUS Chicago CWRT Battlefield Tours have been to:

- 1951—Nashville, Chattanooga, and Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tenn.
- 1952—Harpers Ferry, Antietam, and Gettysburg.
- 1953—Richmond area.
- 1954—Shiloh, Vicksburg, and Jackson, Miss.
- 1955—Fredericksburg, Va., area.
- 1956—Chattanooga and Atlanta.
- 1957—Lexington, Va., Shenandoah Valley, and Washington, D.C.
- 1958—Murfreesboro, Franklin, and Nashville, Tenn.
- 1959—Charleston, S.C., and Savannah, Ga.
- 1960—Richmond, Petersburg, Appomattox, and Charlottesville, Va., and Washington, D.C.
- 1961—Vicksburg, Grand Gulf, Port Gibson, Jackson.
- 1962—Gettysburg area.
- 1963—Richmond, Seven Days Battles and Grant's 1864 campaign.
- 1964—Port Hudson, Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Head of Passes, Forts Jackson and St. Philip.
- 1965—Chattanooga, Kennesaw Mountain, Atlanta, Stone Mountain.
- 1966—Leesburg, Va., Ball's Bluff, Chantilly, Washington, D.C., White House, Library of Congress, Navy Yard, Fort McNair, Booth Escape Route, Fredericksburg, Fort Stevens, Arlington cemetery.

THE 101st ANNIVERSARY of the founding of the Grand Army of the Republic (April 6, 1866) was commemorated with a reception and luncheon at the Sheraton-Blackstone hotel on Saturday, April 8. The annual ceremony honoring Gen. John A. Logan, who issued the original Memorial day orders, was held at his monument at 9th and Michigan avenues.

OPERATION C.S.A. (Centennial Survivors Assembly), sponsored by the Monmouth County (N.J.) Civil War Round Table, will tour the Gettysburg battlefield April 21-23. Headquarters will be at the Peace Light Inn and the tour is open to all comers on a Dutch Treat basis.



## THE NEW BOOKS



THE PAPERS OF ULYSSES S. GRANT, Vol. 1, 1837-1861, edited by John Y. Simon; intros. by Allan Nevins, Bruce Catton, and Ralph Newman (Southern Illinois University Press, 428pp and index, \$15).

DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF RECONSTRUCTION: Political, Military, Social, Religious, Educational and Industrial, 1865 to 1906, by Walter L. Fleming, intro. by David Donald (McGraw, 2 vols. \$15, paper \$4.90).

BANDS AND DRUMMER BOYS OF THE CIVIL WAR, by Frances A. Lord and Arthur Wise (Yoseloff, 237pp, \$10). Bugle calls, 350 photos and drawings.

STORIA DELLA GUERRA CIVILE AMERICANA, by Raimondo Luraghi (Guilio Einaudi, Turin, Italy, 1395pp, 8000 lira).

JOHN C. CALHOUN, by Richard N. Current (Washington Square Press, 182pp, \$3.95).

GEORGE WASHINGTON JULIAN: A Study in 19th-Century Politics and Reform, by Patrick W. Riddleberger (Indiana Historical Bureau, 344pp, \$5).

TRAVELS IN THE SOUTHLAND, 1822-23: The Journal of Lucius Verno Pierce, edited by George W. Knepper (Ohio State, 131pp, \$4.50).

SIMON CAMERON: Lincoln's Secretary of War: A Political Biography, by Stanley Erwin Bradley (U. of Pennsylvania, 451pp, \$7.50).

ONE OF JACKSON'S FOOT CAVALRY, by John H. Worsham, edited by James I. Robertson, Jr. (McCowat-Mercer, Jackson, Tenn., 207pp, \$5).

COMBAT: The Civil War, edited with a running commentary by Don Congdon, intro. by Bruce Catton (Dela-corte Press, 564pp, \$10). Another in the Combat Series which includes books on other American wars.

DOUGLAS'S TEXAS BATTERY, C.S.A., compiled and edited by Lucia Rutherford Douglas (Smith County Historical Society, Tyler, Texas). Mostly 89 letters from James P. Douglas to his sweetheart.

THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR, by Ralph Andreano (Schenkman Pub. Co., Cambridge, Mass., cloth \$5.95, paper \$2.95). Revised edition.

DEMOCRACY ON TRIAL: 1845-1877, edited by Robert W. Johannsen (McGraw, 405pp, \$2.95).

FIFTY MILLION ACRES: Conflicts over Kansas Land Policy, 1854-1890, by Paul Wallace Gates (Atherton, 311pp, \$2.95). Reprint of 1954 Cornell U. volume.

ANTISLAVERY: The Crusade for Freedom in America, by Dwight Lowell Dumond (Norton, 422pp, \$2.25).

### BOOK NOTES

ED BEARSS'S "Hardluck Ironclad" is only a few months in print and he has another book almost ready, "Battle of Poison Springs, Marks Hill, and Jenkins Ferry."

AT VICKSBURG, Old Court House Museum has honored its founder by adding "Eva Whitaker Davis Memorial" to its title. An inscription on a plaque says, "In grateful appreciation for her vision and dedicated efforts in behalf of the preservation of this landmark and the founding of the Old Court House Museum in 1947." Our CWRT holds two life memberships in the museum as well as a number of individual memberships. "Miss Eva" was our hostess on two battlefield tours to Vicksburg.

Elmer Brinkman spoke to Sons of Union Veterans April 8. George Fleming spoke at Madison March 16.

## BULLETIN BOARD



### FUTURE MEETINGS —

April 20-23 — 17th Annual Battlefield Tour to Wilson's Creek, Pea Ridge, Prairie Grove, Lone Jack, Kansas City, Westport, Independence, and Lexington, Mo.

Tuesday, May 25 — Henry Simmons, "Northern Censorship of the Press: Necessary or Needless?"

Sunday, June 4 — Auction for benefit of Graduate Fellowship fund, at Centennial Park, 18 East Chestnut street.

Friday, June 23 — J. Robert Smith, "Gen. Mike Lawler."

### SPECIAL EVENTS

Friday to Sunday, May 19-21, Spring Tour of Illinois State Historical Society at Monticello, Ill.

Friday to Sunday, Sept. 29-Oct. 1, Fall Tour and Annual Meeting of Illinois State Historical Society at Benton.

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NEW MEMBERS: Richard C. Bjorklund, 2959 Wilson Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60625; G. Paul Doucette, 4622 N. Hirschberg Ave., Schiller Park, Ill. 60176; George Kirksey, 2125 Nantucket #1, Houston, Tex., 77027.

CHANGE of Address: James J. O'Connor to: 72 W. Adams St., Chicago, Ill. 60603.

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AVAILABLE at meetings: Lapel pin, \$2; Key Chain with CWRT emblem, 50¢; Cloth patch of emblem, 50¢.



Our member Dr. Harold M. Hyman, professor of history at the University of Illinois, was speaker on "The Human Side of Post-War Troubles" at the annual Appomattox Day meeting of the CWRT of Vanderburgh Court House, Inc., on April 6 in Evansville, Ind.

ROBERT E. LEE'S boyhood home in Alexandria, Va., has been purchased by the Stonewall Jackson Memorial to save the structure from threatened destruction. To preserve the place, the Memorial assumed a mortgage of \$61,000 and is seeking contributions to aid in the work. Send donations to Jay W. Johns, 532 Park St., Charlottesville, Va.

AS PART OF THE 2.5 million dollar program to improve park service facilities in Virginia, the entrance and about 12 feet of the tunnel that figured in the Battle of the Crater at Petersburg will be reconstructed. Sand bags filled with concrete will form a revetment at the entrance and visitors entering the tunnel will be able to view the interior through a plastic window. A painting depicting work on the tunnel will be placed against the rear wall. A recording will tell visitors about the tunnel and the part it played in the siege of Petersburg. Several years ago, picks, shovels, and a wooden box used to haul dirt out of the tunnel were found and have been on display in the visitors center. More recent finds include a musket barrel with a minie ball inside, part of the tunnel's original floor and two 5-inch hand made nails.

—from newsletter of Prison CWRT, Richmond, Va.