

# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume L, Number 9

Chicago, Illinois

May 1990

## William E. Parrish on "Confederate Governors"

by Barbara Hughett

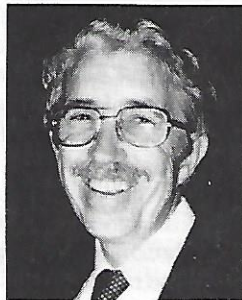
Confederate state governors have not been given the amount of scholarly attention that their Northern counterparts have received. Since much has been written about Georgia's Joseph E. Brown and North Carolina's Zebulon B. Vance, theirs has tended to become the stereotyped image in the minds of many. In reality, the governors of the Confederacy were a diverse group of men. Most of them, however, had political experience prior to the Civil War, either in their state legislatures or in Congress. During those years, many of them fought legislative battles to curb the powers of the governor, traditionally a weak office in most Southern state governments. Also, most of them had been supporters of secession and, at least during the early months of the war, their enthusiasm waxed strong for the Confederacy and the Southern cause.

"Confederate Governors" will be the topic of William E. Parrish's address to The Civil War Round Table on May 11th. While analyzing all twenty-four men who served the Confederacy as governors of their respective states, Dr. Parrish will focus on two in particular: John J. Pettus of Mississippi and Joseph E. Brown of Georgia. These two present an interesting contrast in the manner in which they managed the affairs of their constituencies and in their support of the Confederate cause.

Pettus, a distant cousin of Jefferson Davis, was a staunch supporter of the Confederacy. Brown constantly plagued the Davis administration with his efforts to maintain Georgia's states rights in the midst of the wartime struggles. Of the two, Pettus was the more typical.

As the military situation deteriorated in many areas of the South by mid- to late 1862 and distress increased on the homefront, most Southern governors found themselves in the uncomfortable position of being "men in the middle." They were caught in the crossfire between the needs of their constituents and those of the Confederate government, which was fighting for its very existence.

Dr. William E. Parrish has been professor of history at Mississippi State University since 1978. Prior to that, he served as Harry S. Truman Professor of American History and Dean of the College at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. He has written extensively on the Civil War and Reconstruction periods. His *A History of Missouri: Volume III, 1860-1875* is part of the Sesquicentennial History of



William E. Parrish



491st Regular Meeting

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William E. Parrish  
on  
"Confederate Governors"

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Friday, May 11, 1990

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Merchants and Manufacturers Club  
Merchandise Mart Plaza

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

\$15.00 per person

Entree: Top Sirloin of Beef with Mushroom Sherry  
Sauce or New England Scrod



**Please note:** The May meeting will be held at the Merchants and Manufacturers Club, located on the second floor of the Merchandise Mart. Enter the parking area at Kinzie and Orleans Streets. Parking is free. In order to guarantee a meal, reservations must be made by noon the Thursday before the meeting.

### Executive Committee Meeting

President Richard McAdoo has announced there will be an Executive Committee meeting on May 11th at 5:00 p.m. at the Merchants and Manufacturers Club. The main item on the agenda is the selection of the 1991 Battlefield Tour site. All officers, committee chairpersons, and past presidents are urged to attend.

Missouri series, published by the University of Missouri Press. In 1985, he collaborated with twelve others on *The Confederate Governors*, a series of sketches on the various state governors, published by the University of Georgia Press. He is a past national president of Phi Alpha Theta, the history honorary society. Dr. Parrish's most recent work is an article on "The Western Sanitary Commission" in the March 1990 issue of *Civil War History*.

## THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



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

### Officers

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Senior Vice President .....	David R. Richert
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Nominating .....	William J. Sullivan
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Battlefield Preservation .....	Robert Girardi
Tape Record Librarian .....	Hal Ardell
Fiftieth Anniversary .....	Paul Kliger
House .....	Steve Horton
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.



Following a university-wide competition among graduate students in all departments, Round Table vice president Mary Munsell Abroe was awarded a Loyola University dissertation fellowship for the 1990-1991 academic year. The topic of Mary's dissertation is "A History of the Preservation of the Civil War Battlefield Parks Currently in the National Park System."

*The Killer Angels*, a feature film based on Michael Shaara's novel about the Battle of Gettysburg, will star Robert Duvall as General Robert E. Lee and will feature Hal Holbrook and Richard Jordan in supporting roles. Scheduled for release during 1991, more than half the scenes are to be filmed in Gettysburg.

## Battlefield Preservation Report

by Mary Munsell Abroe

It is a pleasure to begin this column with some positive news from the Shenandoah Valley. We have been following with great interest the efforts of the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation to protect that site. Happily, in early January the Foundation was able to go to settlement on 158 acres of battlefield land offered to it by local developers. A significant segment—about \$80,000—of the required down-payment of \$125,000 was raised through private contributions; this outpouring of support in turn convinced the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Marathon Bank to lend their financial backing to the endeavor. Still, Foundation officials warn us against complacency; as president Michael Gore noted recently: "Going to settlement was only the first step in the long process of raising the remainder of the \$450,000 to satisfy our debt." According to Kristen Sanders, the Foundation's executive director, a \$32,500 installment plus interest is due this July and the same amount will be due semiannually until the debt is retired. The Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation, therefore, must rely heavily on our continued assistance—and rightly so; it is doing this important work for us! Donations will be accepted gratefully and may be sent to the Foundation at P.O. Box 229, Middletown, Virginia 22645.

In a recent interview, Ms. Sanders also provided interesting information concerning an historic building on the property. The Heater House, which dates to the 1830s, was the home of a Union sympathizer during the Civil War; while details on the woman's husband remain sketchy, it is known that her two sons fought for the Confederacy. A local company, the Top of Virginia Building Association, has contributed time and material to help stabilize the structure. The house eventually will serve as the battlefield's interpretive center.

The January edition of this report focused on the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites and its efforts to raise monies for the establishment of a permanent office; the Gilder Foundation of New York had offered matching funds if the Association could raise \$35,000 between December 1, 1989 and April 30, 1990. In late April, APCWS executive director A. Wilson Greene reported that over \$41,000 in contributions had been received, thereby acknowledging the successful fulfillment of the Gilder Challenge requirements. Greene also indicated that a key project of his office this year will be a major membership drive. He emphasized the Association's deep appreciation for the ongoing support of its current 1500-plus members; at the same time, he noted the existence of a larger body of possible constituents for the APCWS. (For example, there are approximately 150,000 subscribers to *Civil War Times Illustrated*.) His goal is to tap this potential membership pool. For further information, please contact Will at the APCWS, 613 Caroline St., Suite E, Fredricksburg, Virginia 22401.

The Stephen A. Douglas Association will hold its annual luncheon meeting on Saturday, June 2nd, at 12:00 noon in the Executive Dining Room of the Chicago Historical Society. Ellsworth Brown, president and director of the Society, will give an address on "Stephen A. Douglas and Company" and will lead the group on a tour of "A House Divided: America in the Age of Lincoln." For further information and reservations, call (312)787-1860.

## April Meeting

by Barbara Hughett

If you had been living in the United States during the Civil War, there would have been four means by which you could have received information from other parts of the world: word-of-mouth, mail, the telegraph, and newspapers. Newspapers were the medium through which most people of that time, especially those in the rural South, found out what was happening in the rest of the country. Historian James M. McPherson has said that, in the mid-nineteenth century, the United States was "the world's preeminent newspaper reading country." On April 13th, historian and author Richard M. McMurry spoke before 103 members and guests at the 490th regular meeting of The Civil War Round Table. The topic of his address was "Confederate Journalism."

By the time of the Civil War, advances in technology and communications made it possible to print far more newspapers than had been printed before and at a much lower cost. The old hand-powered newspaper presses could only turn out 200 newspapers an hour; with the new steam-powered presses, 5500 newspapers could be printed in the same amount of time. The invention of the telegraph, in 1844, enabled almost instantaneous transmittal of news. Railroads, steamboats, and an improving postal service made it easier for newspapers to circulate over a wider area more quickly. By 1860, increased literacy in this country, largely the result of educational reforms, created a society in which—for the first time in the history of the world—the average citizen was literate. In the North, only 15% of the citizenry could not read or write; in the South, the illiteracy rate was 25%. The United States enjoyed a far higher literacy than could be found anywhere else in the world at that time. These factors combined to make Civil War America a great time and place for newspaper publishing.

There were about 3300 newspapers published in the United States in 1860, representing one-third of all newspapers printed anywhere in the world. Even though the Southern states, with their rural, agricultural society, were not as literate as those in the North, their 844 newspapers in 1860 had a total circulation of 1,259,000. (By comparison, Horace Greely's *New York Tribune* alone had a circulation of 200,000.) These 844 papers included daily, bi-weekly, tri-weekly, and weekly publications.

The Southern newspapers exercised great influence in the political life of the South. "The virtual unanimity of the Southern press in support of slavery and secession," Dr. McMurry observed, "undoubtedly helped to bring many Southerners, who had nearly no other source of information from the outside world, to fear the abolitionists and the 'Black Republican' party and to follow those political leaders who pointed to secession and the establishment of an independent country as the solution for the South."

Confederate newspapers often came into and out of being with great rapidity. In the course of his research, Dr. McMurry continues to discover new newspapers which he did not know existed. The *Phoenix* was first published in Columbia, South Carolina in February 1865 in the ruins that General Sherman left after he had vacated the city. "To show you what optimists those people were," Dr. McMurry noted, "they accepted Confederate money in payment for subscriptions."

Most historians are familiar with the major metropolitan newspapers in the South. But the typical Confederate paper was a country paper with a circulation of a few

hundred at most. In addition to the news, these papers carried numerous advertisements, as well as legal notices, tariff and postal schedules, and marriage and funeral notices. Many novels were first published in the newspapers. Almost every Confederate newspaper carried letters from at least one soldier correspondent. Illustrations were made from woodcuts and could not generally be made quickly enough for newspaper use. However, standard woodcuts of everyday objects were made for advertising purposes.

Southern newspaper writers were frequently venomous in their language when describing Northern politicians, but they could also be critical of their own leaders and of writers and editors of competitive papers. Many of these journalists were very colorful individuals. Dr. McMurry's favorite Southern journalist, Anthony B. Norton of the *Southern Intelligencier*, published in Austin, Texas, was a gentleman of the old Whig school. In 1844, he took an oath that he would not shave or get his hair cut until Henry Clay was elected president of the United States. Although Clay died in 1852 without ever attaining his long-sought goal of the presidency, Norton was a man of his word. By the time of Texas' secession—which Norton opposed—it had been seventeen years since he'd had a shave or a haircut. He died in the 1890s, having been unshaven and unshorn for nearly a half-century.

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## Nominating Committee Report

William J. Sullivan, chairman of the Nominating Committee, has announced the following proposed slate of officers for the 1990-1991 year:

President .....	David R. Richert
Senior Vice President .....	Joseph L. Wisheart
Vice President .....	Mary Munsell Abroe
Vice President .....	Hal Ardell
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Trustee .....	L. Bradford Gregg
Trustee .....	Adrienne Hanrahan
Trustee .....	Joyce Warshaw
Trustee* .....	Wayne Anderson

(\*One-year term to complete the unexpired term of Dale Weitman, who is nominated for the position of Assistant Treasurer)

The election will be held during the May meeting, at which time additional nominations may be made from the floor. Three current trustees—John M. Coverick, Sr., Robert Girardi, and Steven Horton—will remain in office as they complete their two-year terms.

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**On Saturday, June 23rd, at 1:30 p.m.,** Round Table members are invited to an open house to celebrate the relocation of the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop, and thus the offices of The Civil War Round Table, to 357 West Chicago Avenue. Festivities will include the rededication of the Centennial Park Marker, originally dedicated at the close of the Civil War Centennial, and an auction of Civil War books and prints and original drawings by artist Keith Rocco. Proceeds from the auction will benefit programs for The Round Table's 50th Anniversary celebration. Additional information will appear in the June newsletter.

# The New Books

compiled by C. Robert Douglas



Beck, Brandon H. & Charles S. Grunder. *The Second Battle of Winchester, June 12-13, 1863*. H.E. Howard, Inc. 1989. \$16.95.

Davis, Keith F. *George N. Barnard, Photographer of Sherman's Campaign*. University of New Mexico Press. 1990. pbk. \$25.00.

Dickinson, Jack L. *16th Virginia Cavalry*. H.E. Howard, Inc. 1989. \$16.95.

Jones, The Reverend J. William. *Personal Reminiscences of General Robert E. Lee*. LSU Press. 1990. \$39.95. pbk. \$18.95. Original of 1875.

Howard, William F., compiler. *The Federal Dead at Gettysburg*. Morningside Bookshop. 1990. \$22.50.

McManus, Howard R. *The Battle of Cloyd's Mountain. The Virginia-Tennessee Raid, April 29-May 19, 1864*. H.E. Howard, Inc. 1989. \$16.95.

Phillips, Christopher. *Damned Yankee: The Life of General Nathaniel Lyon*. University of Missouri Press. 1990. \$26.00.

Piston, William G. *Lee's Tarnished Lieutenant, James Longstreet and His Place in Southern History*. University of Georgia Press. 1990. pbk. \$11.95.

Robinson, William M., Jr. *The Confederate Privateers*. University of South Carolina Press. 1990. \$24.95.

Schultz, Wallace. *Abandoned by Lincoln: A Military Biography of General John Pope*. University of Illinois Press. 1990. \$27.50.

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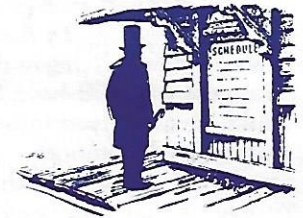
**The Civil War Battlefield Project** of The Conservation Fund is publishing *The Civil War Battlefield Guide*, which will be a selection of the Book of the Month Club and the History Book Club. Proceeds will go for battlefield preservation. For further information, write Frances H. Kennedy, Director, Civil War Battlefield Project, 1800 N. Kent St., Suite 1120, Arlington, VA 22209.

**Round Table member Ernest A. Griffin** has commissioned the construction of a Heritage Memorial Wall to honor Civil War veterans, Union and Confederate. The Wall is on the grounds of the Griffin Funeral Home, 3232 Martin Luther King Drive, which is located on a portion of land which was the site of Camp Douglas, the United States Army's recruiting camp and prison for captured Confederate soldiers, from 1862-1865. This was the site of enlistment of Private Charles H. Griffin (1846-1926), Ernest's grandfather. A dedication will take place on May 26th at 12:00 noon. For further information, call (312)842-2422.

**Gold-plated Round Table lapel pins** are available for \$6 each. To purchase a pin, call Jerry Warshaw at (708) 866-6667, or see him at the next meeting.

**A reminder:** Please submit any Round Table memorabilia you may have to the 50th Anniversary Committee. Bring the materials to a meeting or send them to Jerry Warshaw, 748 Hinman Ave., Evanston, IL 60202.

## BULLETIN BOARD



### Future Meetings

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

May 11: William Parrish on "Confederate Governors." **Note: The May meeting will be held at the Merchants and Manufacturers Club.**

June 8: Jerry Rodgers on "The Invincible Consensus: A Proposal for Protection of Battlefield Parks."

August 12: Annual Round Table picnic.

September 14: To be announced.

October 12-14: 50th Anniversary celebration.

November 9: William L. Burton on "Ethnic Soldiers in the Union Army."

December 14: Marshall Krolick, Nevins-Freeman Address.

### New Member

Dr. P.J. O'Connell, 17200 S. School, South Holland, IL 60473, (708)339-3515

### Changes of Address

Colleen Duffy-Kowalski, 2303 W. Addison St., #3, Chicago, IL 60618

Randall J. Gingiss, 25 E. Delaware St., #7A, Chicago, IL 60611

E. Dean Howard, 20505 Woodvale, Maringo, IL 60152, (815)943-3700

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### Moments in Round Table History

May 12, 1944: James G. Randall speaks on "Generals, Secretaries, and Some Senators."

May 7, 1953: Douglas Southall Freeman delivers his last public address on the Civil War, during The Round Table's third annual battlefield tour, in Richmond, Virginia.

May 6, 1955: T. Harry Williams speaks on "Beauregard The Man."

May 20, 1966: Robert W. Johannson speaks on "Stephen A. Douglas and the South."

May 8, 1970: Jerry Warshaw presents a "Civil War Film Night."

May 6, 1975: Ralph G. Newman speaks on "The Last Full Measure of Devotion: Abraham Lincoln's Incredible Funeral."

May 13, 1983: Kathy Georg speaks on "Actions at the Rose Farm on the Second Day at Gettysburg."

May 12, 1989: Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons speaks on "Fort Fisher: Amphibious Finale to the Civil War."

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**A new Civil War Round Table** has been formed in Birmingham, Alabama. The Alabama Civil War Round Table will hold its first meeting on May 10th.