THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XXXIII, Number 2
Chicago, Illinois
October, 1972

Dan J. Lapinski on the Battle of Island No. 10, October 13

The story of the battle of Island No. 10 reads more like the scenario for a Hollywood wide-screen movie epic than the history of a somewhat obscure military operation. Yet, for sheer drama and suspense, it has few rivals in the annals of Civil War History.

Our Dan J. Lapinski will attempt to trace the events that led to this confrontation in the middle of the Mississippi River in the spring of 1862 at the October 13 meeting of the Civil War Round Table at the Chicago Bar Association.

In an effort to capture the strategic island located 90 miles below Cairo, Illinois, Gen. John Pope marched his army down the west bank of the Mississippi River to New Madrid, Mo. where he was halted by the pesky Confederate gunboat fleet. Pope called on Flag Officer Andrew Hull Foote and his flotilla of iron clad gunboats for support. Foote responded, but his experiences at Fort Henry and Fort Donelson had taught him respect for Confederate artillery and for weeks he refused to plunge into headlong battle with the heavily fortified island.

A feud developed between Pope and Foote and Pope was forced to attempt to bypass the island by cutting a canal through the swamps near New Madrid. This feat was considered an engineering triumph at the time but its impact was diluted by the rapidly falling river and a most dramatic event that gives this story its element of suspense.

After pleading and demanding that Foote attempt to at least bypass Island No. 10 with one of his ironclads, Pope managed to get the old salt water sailor to call a council of war. The captains of the gunboat fleet were assembled and Pope’s plan was laid before them. Commander Henry Welke, an ambitious naval officer, volunteered to run the gauntlet with his boat the Carondolet. It is the story of this action that proves to be the highlight of the operations at Island No. 10.

Dan Lapinski is not an unfamiliar face to the members of the CWRT as he has been a fellow member for almost 10 years. Dan served as a member of the Board of Directors, Tour Chairman for the Shiloh Battlefield tour, Senior Vice President and President of the round table two years ago.

A graduate of the University of Chicago, Dan was for a number of years an economist with a large cement manufacturing firm. Later he formed his own firm, the Melrose Supply Corporation which he heads today.

His devotion to American history is evidenced by his active membership in many history oriented organizations such as the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table, the Westerners, the Caxton Club, the Chicago Historical Society, the Illinois

314th REGULAR MEETING

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Dan J. Lapinski

on

The Battle of Island No. 10

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Friday, October 13, 1972

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Chicago Bar Association
29 South LaSalle Street

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Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

Historical Society and a dozen or more other historical organizations.

Other than the Civil War, his interest lies in a lifelong study of the Black Hawk War.

The 1972-73 fiscal dues are now payable for those who have not yet paid and all members who have not paid by the October meeting will be dropped from our roster. Second notices to delinquents were mailed out September 15 for dues that were due last July 1, 1972.

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The Kentucky Civil War Round Table is featured in an article by Holman Hamilton in the August, 1972, issue of Civil War Times Illustrated. A portrait of William H. Townsend has caption noting that it was his address to Chicago CWRT that stimulated formation of the Kentucky CWRT.
Such routine-ridden souls as are accustomed to mark their calendars on the second Friday of each month for the meeting of the Civil War Round Table only to find that in September the meeting was set for the fourth Friday may either be mildly annoyed or excessively irritated by the change. Understanding fully the necessities of the case, making the change entirely unavoidable, your editor may still be counted among the excessively irritated. Where is the report of the last meeting? Members never can be made to understand that this Bulletin has not been produced simultaneously with the day you get it, although most of them can cite instances of the slowness of the United States mails as now administered. There are a few other time-consuming problems, such as getting the copy written, getting it set in type, getting it made up, which means a considerable amount of paper-doll work in fitting its various bits and pieces into place, running off addresses on envelopes, folding the separate copies of the Bulletin and placing them in the addressed envelopes, and finally getting it into the mail with the hope that ultimately it will be delivered in time for you to mail in your reservation card so that it will be delivered, codified, and transmitted before the Bar Association runs short of beef and potatoes.

Now all of this takes about a month, which means that we go to press immediately following the preceding meeting, provided the preceding meeting has not moved from the second Friday to the fourth Friday. In the present instance,
TO THE CAMP FOLLOWERS (LADIES)

Time: 5:30 p.m., October 13, 1972

Place: The Book and Bottle, 17 East Chestnut Street

Program: Mr. Bill Sullivan will give an address on the subject of historical archaeology entitled, "History Written with Pick, Shovel and Camera."

Reservations: Write or phone before October 10, 1972 Betty Walter (Mrs. Robert), 1511 East Miner Street, Arlington Heights, Ill. 60004, 253-7053.

Last Program: Pat Newman performed double duty by being a most gracious hostess and giving the ladies an interesting and enlightening account of Julia Dent Grant. Our many thanks and gratitude to Pat for a most enjoyable evening.

TO ALL CWRT MEMBERS: your womenfolk always qualify as a camp follower and are cordially invited to attend the meetings. Perhaps some of the newer members don't know this. We meet when they do, drink, eat and have a program—then break camp simultaneously with the gentlemen.

LINCOLN LECTURES ABROAD

President Nixon has named four American scholars to inaugurate Lincoln Lectureships abroad, marking the 25th anniversary year of the Board of Foreign Scholarships that promotes intellectual exchanges. The four are John Hope Franklin, professor of history at the University of Chicago; Paul A. Samuelson, Nobel Prize-winning professor of economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Charles H. Townes, Nobel prize-winning professor of physics at the University of California in Berkeley, and author John Updike of Ipswich, Mass.

CONFEDERATE ARTILLERY ACTIVATED. At Petersburg National Battlefield last summer a bronze Napoleon gun went into action as part of a demonstration unit activated by the National Park Service. The artillery unit consisted of gun, limber, six horses, and eight artillerymen in Confederate uniforms. Three men ride the near horses (left-hand string); two ride the caisson; one is guidon bearer; and the corporal walks alongside. The unit gave three or four performances daily at Fort Steedman, to the delight of visitors. Photos, courtesy of Martin R. Conway, superintendent, Petersburg National Battlefield, Petersburg, Va.
THE NEW BOOKS

(Compiled by Dick Clark)


Bums, Zed H. Ship Island and the Confederacy. Hattiesburg, Miss., $2.75.


BULLETIN BOARD

FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held at the Chicago Bar Association, 29 South LaSalle Street, second Friday in each month except as noted.

September 29-October 1: Special Battlefield Tour—The Kentucky Bluegrass.

October 13: Dan Lapinski on Island No. 10.

December 8: Richard M. McMurtry of Valdosta State College, Valdosta, Ga., on John Bell Hood.

March 9: Bell I. Wiley of Emory University, Atlanta, Ga., on Women of the Lost Cause.


May: Annual Battlefield Tour, dates and details to be arranged.

June: Special Award meeting and Ladies Night, G.A.R. Room, Chicago Public Library; tentative; date and details to be arranged.

NEW MEMBERS

Dr. Paul W. Arndt
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