BROOKS DAVIS ON "THE MISSISSIPPI MARINE BRIGADE"

On November 12th, we will have the honor of having past-president Brooks Davis return to the speakers podium after an absence of seven years. Brooks last appeared before us on March 14, 1969, when he spoke on the Battle of Perryville. His topic in November will be the Mississippi Marine Brigade.

Brooks has given his remarks the interesting subtitle of "He Who Fights and Runs Away May Live to Fight Another Day", thus indicating that the performance of this little known unit may have left something to be desired. His interest in the Mississippi Marine Brigade began when one of the descendents of a member of the brigade asked him about it. He hadn't heard of the Mississippi group before, and so began his study of this obscure unit. Brooks also mentioned that he feels safe in making this talk since so little is known about the brigade that nobody will ask questions about it. Perhaps this will encourage a few of our members to present some challenging inquiries to our good friend during the discussion period.

Brooks Davis, without question, is one of the corner stones of The Round Table. Through the years he has given unselfishly of his time and efforts to insure its success and growth. His own reputation as a Civil War scholar is a source of pride to all of us who share his friendship. As might be expected, Brooks is a member of many other historical organizations, such as the Louisville, South Suburban, and Salt Creek Round Tables, and the Chicago, Kentucky, and Tennessee Historical Societies. He also serves as secretary of the Stephen A. Douglas Association. Because of his intense interest in the war he has developed close relationships throughout the country and this he feels is his greatest reward. Brooks has recently spoken before the South Suburban and Salt Creek Round Tables, and will speak to the Louisville Round Table this October, and the Kansas City and St. Louis Round Tables in March.

The Mississippi Marine Brigade was unique in both concept and execution. Its object was to clear the river of Confederate vessels and snipers. The brigade was formed by Brigadier General Alfred W. Ellet in early 1863. Ellet, a resident of Illinois, had begun his Civil War career as a Captain of the 59th Illinois Infantry, and was later promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, while working with his brother, Colonel Charles Ellet, who had been ordered by the War Department to purchase vessels and convert them to rams.

In November, 1862 Alfred Ellet was promoted to Brigadier General and later placed in command of the Mississippi Marine Brigade.

The brigade consisted of one infantry regiment, four squadrons of cavalry and an artillery battery. It was quartered on the ram fleet which Ellet had helped form. Although an army unit, the brigade was considered a part of the Mississippi squadron and therefore was under the direction of the Navy Department, receiving its orders from Rear Admiral Porter. Many of the troops of the Mississippi Marine Brigade were from Illinois, including detachments from the 18th, 59th, and 63rd Illinois Infantry.

As Brooks will describe, the brigade saw heavy service, harassing almost everyone on or near the river, including the Union high command. In a letter dated March 9, 1864 to Major General J.B. McPherson, Brigadier General C.P. Stone states "I consider it my duty to inform you that the Marine Brigade is reported to these headquarters to have stopped at every landing thus far on its way out of the Red River, solely for the purpose of pillaging and the destruction of private property". They were obviously a maverick unit, hard to discipline, but Admiral Porter felt they made great contributions, as did General Blair during his operations up the Yazoo in May, 1863. Blair states in Battles and Leaders that he requested to have this floating conglomerate force assigned to his command, during which time they proved very useful.
The State of Illinois has recently received, as a donation, a collection of Lincoln Memorabilia worth more than $100,000. The donor was Robert Todd Lincoln Beckwith, 72, the only living descendant of the 16th President. Included in the collection were a rare portrait of Mrs. Lincoln, an octagonal table with inlaid portraits of Lincoln, Johnson, Grant, and Butler, and other furnishings and artworks belonging to the Lincoln family. The portrait of Mrs. Lincoln and the table will be displayed in the reception room of the Executive Mansion in Springfield. The other articles will be on exhibit in the Lincoln collection in the Illinois State Historical Library.
TO THE CAMPFOLLOWERS (LADIES)

A last minute disappearance of the tape caused a second postponement of the presentation to the ladies of Roger Holloway's excellent speech on "Great Britain and the American Civil War". However, a most entertaining substitute was on hand as Margaret April presented a delightful review of Richard Harwell's new book on the letters of Margaret Mitchell, author of "Gone With the Wind".

As the tape of Mr. Holloway's remarks has now been found and, we hope, placed in a secure location, we will once again schedule it as our next program, to be held on November 13, 1976. As usual, we will meet in the Little Corporal Restaurant, State and East Wacker Drive, with bar service beginning at 5:30 p.m., to be followed by the running of the tape, and dinner. This promises to be a very interesting evening, so please join us and bring a friend. Add your reservation to your husband's card, or write or telephone Margaret April at 787-1860, 175 E. Delaware Place, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

As many of our members know, the Lincoln Herald is a fine historical quarterly published by Lincoln Memorial University under the editorship of the R. Gerald McMurtry. Mr. McMurtry is seeking original manuscripts on topics concerning Lincoln for future publication. Anyone interested in submitting an article should contact Mr. McMurtry at 910 West Rudisill Boulevard, Ft. Wayne, Indiana 46807.

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We are happy to learn that John Y. Simon, professor of history at Southern Illinois University and Executive Director of the U.S. Grant Association, Dr. G.P. Calusius, Lincoln Scholar and champion of Stephen A. Huribut, and Will Leonard, prominent battlefield campaigner and columnist for the Chicago Tribune, are all recovering nicely from recent hospital stays. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the nurses who tended them. Where are you Mother Bickerdyke when we need you?

opportunity arrival of Longstreet. From the Wilderness to Petersburg, Hill was ill and unable to perform active service. However, he returned to participate in the siege, only to be killed while attempting to rally his troops during the final Union assault, on April 2, 1865.

In summarizing the career of A.P. Hill, Dr. Hassler characterized him as an outstanding tactician, although at times careless and overly solicitous of his men. Extremely proud of the representation to criticism, his personality was colored by a volatile temper, the excessive use of profane language, and an exacting self-imposed obligation of protecting the rights of himself and others. It was the latter trait which lead him into conflict with his superiors while at the same time being too tolerant of his subordinates.

Ill health marked Hill's entire life and, during the Civil War, this seemed to be most prevalent at the time of battle. While none of his critics believe this to be an indication of personal cowardice, most feel that his sickness was psychosomatic. However, Dr. Hassler has arrived at a different conclusion after describing Hill's persistent symptoms to a medical expert. The latter's diagnosis is that Hill suffered from malaria, an attack of which is characteristically triggered by stress and strain, emotions which would obviously accompany impending battle.
THE NEW BOOKS

(Compiled by Dick Clark)


U.S. War Dept. Revised Regulations for the Army of the United States, 1861. Harrisburg, Pa.: Civil War Times Illustrated. $10.00.


It would appear that the State of Alabama has finally acknowledged that the Confederacy lost the Civil War. For many years, the Stars and Bars has flown at the top of the highest flagpole over the State Capitol in Montgomery. The State flag flew immediately below it on the same pole, while the Stars and Stripes were on a shorter pole elsewhere on the Capital grounds. Lawsuits were brought by disgruntled Unionists, but a Federal Judge ruled that there was nothing illegal in this manner of paying homage to the Lost Cause. However, criticism continued to mount and Governor George Wallace has finally yielded to the pressure. He recently directed that all three flags, will, henceforth, fly from the same pole with the American flag at the top, the State flag second and the Confederate flag third.

BULLETIN BOARD

FUTURE MEETINGS

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

November 12: Brooks Davis on "The Mississippi Marine Brigade."


January 14: Dr. James L. Robertson, Jr. on "Lee and Jackson: The Confederacy's Premier Team."

February 11: Mark E. Neely, Jr. on "To Distinguish Myself: Lincoln and the Mexican War."

March 11: Dr. William E. Parrish on "The Bohemian Brigade: The East Covers the War in Missouri in 1861."

April 8: Elden E. (Josh) Billings on "Sherman: A Critical Character Sketch."

May 4-8: Annual Battlefield Tour to Middle Tennessee.

May 13: Dr. Richard J. Sommers on "Petersburg."

June 10: Ladies night, Nevins-Freeman Award Dinner and Installation of Officers.

Every Monday: Informal noon luncheon meetings at Wieboldt's Men's Grill, 9th Floor, State and Madison; all members welcome.

NEW MEMBER

Francis B. Cosentino, 2810 Patton Drive, Arlington Heights, Illinois 60004.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS


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The Superintendent of Gettysburg National Military Park has announced that the Statement for Management for the Park and National Cemetery will be available for public review. This Statement is the first step in the new National Park Service planning process, a process involving several intermediate steps and culminating in the production of a Master Plan. It is to be used to guide short and long term management of the park, and to determine the nature and extent of planning required to meet the park's management objectives, as well as to provide a general framework for directing park operations and communicating park objectives to the public. The 17-page Statement consists of the purposes, significance and land classifications of the park and National Cemetery, as well as influences on management by legislation and administrative constraints, regional, and in-park influences. It concludes with objectives for management of the park and cemetery and is supported by an extensive appendix.