JAMES I. (BUD) ROBERTSON, JR.,
ON CIVIL WAR CHAPLAINS

The problems, exploits, and contributions of an unsung
battalion of patriots, men of the chaplaincy service, will
be the subject of remarks by Dr. James I. (Bud) Robertson,
Jr., when he addresses The Round Table on March 10. The
title of his talk is “Holy Joes of the 1860s: Civil War
Chaplains.”

Those who are acquainted with Bud Robertson’s works,
or who have heard this distinguished Civil War historian
speak before, know they are in
for an interesting evening. His
visit to Chicago on this oc-
casion is even more eagerly
anticipated since his last
scheduled appearance before
us in January, 1977, was can-
celled due to bad weather in
the east.

Dr. Robertson intends to
begin his discussion with an
overview and general remarks
about the chaplaincy service
in the 1860’s. He will also
make some comparisons be-
tween Northern and Southern
chaplains, comment on re-
sentation by the various de-
nominations, and underscore the host of problems faced
by chaplains of that era. The remainder of his talk will
concentrate on the exploits and contributions of individual
chaplains. In his closing remarks, Bud will demonstrate
that, as he puts it, “although those devoted men sometimes
left much to be desired, the group as a whole comprises an
unsung battalion of patriots.”

Bud Robertson has contributed immeasurably to the
scholarship of Civil War history, having authored or
edited fourteen books, including The Stonewall Brigade,
The Concise Illustrated History of the Civil War, Civil War
Books: A Critical Bibliography (two volumes), The Civil
War Letters of General Robert McAllister, as well as the
annotated editions of the memoirs of General James
Longstreet, Colonel Walter H. Taylor, Privates John H.
Worsham and John O. Casler, and Sarah Morgan
Dawson. He has also written more than fifty articles in
encyclopedias and historical periodicals and journals.
From 1959 to 1961 he was editor of the quarterly journal,
Civil War History, and in December, 1961, was appointed
by President John F. Kennedy as Executive Director of the
U.S. Civil War Centennial Commission. He served in that
capacity throughout the centennial period.

Bud is currently C. P. Miles Professor of History and
head of the History Department at Virginia Polytechnic
Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia. He
is also a member of the board of directors of the Virginia
Historical Society, Jefferson Davis Papers, Civil War
History, and the New Market Battlefield Park. For his
brilliant efforts he has deservedly received many awards.
These include the Harry S. Truman Historical Award, The
Mrs. Simon Baruch University Award, and commenda-
tions from several governors. He has also twice been
awarded certificates for teaching excellence at Virginia
Tech.

Bud is a native of Danville, Virginia, and received his
Ph.D. from Emory University. Prior to joining the faculty
at Virginia Tech, he taught at Montana, George
Washington, and Pennsylvania State universities.

369th REGULAR MEETING

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DR. JAMES I. “BUD” ROBERTSON

on

Civil War Chaplains

Friday, March 10, 1978

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Chicago Bar Association
29 South LaSalle Street

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

Once again at the February meeting we had a
serious problem because of more than twenty people
who attended the meeting without making a prior
reservation. This obviously creates a severe strain on
the Bar Association, especially with regard to food
preparation. While last minute changes of plans are
sometimes unavoidable, all members are urged to
make reservations for themselves and their guests,
whenever possible, by returning the reservation card
or, if time will not permit mailing, by calling the Book
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Battlefield Preservation .... Henry Pomerantz

The only requirement for membership in The Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For
information, address Ward C. Smidl, 1104 Whippoorwill Lane, Palatine, Illinois 60067.

Through the efforts of an anonymous donor, whose identity is unknown even to Park officials, the Gettysburg
National Battlefield Park has a new memorial marker. Recently discovered near the Twentieth Maine regimental
monument is a newly installed small bronze marker, bearing the inscription:

"There is on earth no worthier grave
To hold the bodies of the brave
Than that place of pain and pride
Where they nobly fought and nobly died. J.K."

Much speculation is presently occurring with regard to the meaning of the initials "J.K." and as to who provided
the marker and why. If anyone has any theories, the Park Service Staff would welcome them.

from the Editor's pen

(Probably no single issue is of greater importance today to students of the Civil War than that of battlefield
preservation. For this reason, we devote our column this month to reprinting an announcement from the editors
of Civil War Times Illustrated. We earnestly call your attention to this vital message which appeared in the
December, 1978 issue of that fine publication. Please take the time to read it and then reach into your pocket as deeply
as you can. Neither you nor your children will ever be sorry.)

"Back in September 1973, CWTI, in conjunction with the National Park Foundation, established the Civil War Sites Fund and made an opening donation of $1,000. In an editorial a few months later, our readers were told of the creation of the fund and urged to contribute to it to help save Civil War battlefield sites within the National Park System from anachronistic commercial development and similar depredations. But the response has been woefully meager. In the 4 years that have elapsed since the fund was started, only $4,000.00 has been contributed—and that includes our initial contribution.

Still we receive dozens of letters each month deploring the desecration of battlefield land by bulldozers and neon signs. And I am reliably informed that members of the House and Senate Interior Committees are swamped each year with letters from citizens outraged by the condition of national battlefield parks. Yet if this multitude of letterwriters would invest some of their money in contributions to the Civil War Sites Fund as well as in stationery and stamps, the causes for many of their complaints would be eliminated far more quickly.

Even with the small amount of money available from the fund, the National Park Foundation has done commendable work. An important tract along Bloody Lane at Antietam was purchased with money from the Sites Fund; an option for property at the entrance to Port Donelson National Military Park was also acquired. And the beauty of the fund is that while the land is purchased as it is made available, by-passing the lengthy Congressional authorization and appropriation process which often leads to higher prices or loss of the land to private developers, the money used is replenished when appropriations are finally made, thus it is essentially a revolving fund. None of the money contributed is eaten up by administrative costs since the National Park Foundation donates its staff time and office space to administer the fund. And, of course, contributions are tax-deductible.

A single dollar from each of our readers would be a far more effective weapon in the fight for battlefield
preservation than a dozen letters to Congressmen and Senators. And that's what we are asking each of you to do;
to contribute just $1.00 to the Civil War Sites Fund. But we won't ask you to do something that we wouldn't. We will
match your contributions for the first $1,000. In addition, each month we will publish a Roll of Honor listing those
who have contributed $25.00 or more.

We care about our past and its preservation, and we will put our money where our mouth is. The battlefields of the
Civil War are an ever-present inspiration, a reminder of the heritage that belongs to us all. Do you care? If you do,
send your contributions to The Civil War Sites Fund, c/o National Park Foundation, Washington, D.C. 20240."
February Meeting

Seventy members and guests were in attendance on February 10 to welcome Thomas Buckley, Professor of History at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, as he spoke to us on “The Civil War and the Modernization of the Navy”. He began his remarks and slide presentation by defining the “modern warship” as one which possessed most of the following characteristics: steam powered; fueled by land resources; propeller driven; metal hull; metal armour; relatively small number of powerful guns, rather than numerous smaller weapons; guns housed in a central location, rather than broadsides; guns which fired from the center line of the vessel; revolving turret or turrets; ram bow (this feature was eventually eliminated prior to World War II); and a high seas capability.

In comparing the Monitor and Merrimac to the above definition, Professor Buckley pointed out that, while these famed Civil War ships fit into the general classification, each was lacking a few of the required characteristics. For example, the Merrimac did not possess a revolving turret and did not house its guns in a central location. Although the Monitor did have a propeller, its poor location and design resulted in extremely low speed potential. Neither vessel had a high seas capability, a factor which eventually led to the loss of the Monitor. More importantly, however, while the combat between the Monitor and the Merrimac focused the attention of the world on this new concept of naval warfare, the development of the concept of the “Modern Warship” had been proceeding steadily prior to the Civil War.

Even before Fulton’s completion of the Clermont in 1807, John Fitch of Philadelphia had experimented with a steam powered ship at the time of the Constitutional Convention. In the later stages of the War of 1812, Fulton developed the first steam powered warship which hopefully would defeat the British blockade of New York harbor. The British, learning of the project, denounced it as an infernal machine and promised no quarter to its crew if they were captured. However, the war ended before the ship was completed and ready to sail.

During the 1820’s and early 1830’s, the United States Navy was extremely reluctant to gamble the necessary expenditure on steam power experimentation. Rather it sat back and waited for civilians to perfect the concept. Finally, however, prompted by international tensions between the United States and England, France, and Mexico, over such issues as Oregon, Texas, and Canada, our Navy entered the field of steam construction in the 1840’s. In this period, numerous original concepts were attempted. The first iron hulled vessel began operations on the Great Lakes in 1843, commencing a career that was to last until 1923. Horizontal paddles wheels, less vulnerable to opposing fire than the normal vertical design, were experimented with, but proved unsuccessful. The Stevens family, a long line of prominent inventors, began, in 1842, the construction of a coastal defense ship, named the Stevens Battery, which was to include an iron hull and two propellers. By the Civil War, over $700,000.00, of which $500,000.00 was government funds, had been invested in this project and the ship was still not completed. After the war, Gen. McClellan was put in charge of the project. Characteristically, he spent a large amount of additional money and finished nothing. Finally, in 1874, the whole idea was scrapped.

The first screw propeller warship had been completed in 1843. However, during a test run with President Tyler and other government dignitaries on board, a gun exploded killing the Secretaries of State and War. This incident and the concurrent easing of international tensions in the 1850’s again slowed naval experimentation and construc-

Continued
THE NEW BOOKS

(Compiled by Dick Clark)


McBrien, Joe Bennett. The Tennessee Brigade. Chattanooga, Tenn.: McBrien. $9.95


Newman, Harry Wright. Maryland and the Confederacy. Privately printed. Deluxe limited edition of 600 signed copies. $32.35


BULLETIN BOARD

FUTURE MEETINGS

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

March 10: Dr. James L. Robertson, Jr. on “Civil War Chaplains.”

April 14: Marshall D. Krolak on “Brandy Station.”

May 3-7: Annual Battlefield Tour to Chancellorville, Wilderness, Fredericksburg, etc.

May 12: Kenneth Carley on “The Sioux Uprising of 1862.”

June 9: 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.

Last Tuesday of each month: Informal noon luncheon meetings at Caravelle Hotel, River Road and Bryn Mawr Avenue, Rosemont; all members welcome.

NEW MEMBERS


Betsy Ross Davis, 1120 N. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

Helen V. Dutch, 500 N. Clay Street, Hinsdale, Illinois 60521.

Martin Gaber, 2301 Greenwood Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois 60091.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

George L. Curry, 19 S. Park Street, Westmont, Illinois 60559.

Dr. James E. Gleichert, 3420 W. 16th, Eugene, Oregon 97405.

John P. Wolgamot, 4 Vermillion Park Mall, Danville, Illinois 61832.

We are happy to learn that our long-time member, and fellow battlefield tour companion, Dr. Allan M. Giddings, of Battlecreek, Michigan, has recently been released from the hospital after a long confinement with a broken hip. Dr. Giddings is further convalescing at home. Also on the road to recovery after recent illnesses are Betsy Davis and Elmer Pendarvis.

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The Eleventh Annual Reenactment of the Battle of New Market, sponsored by the New Market Battlefield Park, will be held Sunday, May 14, 1978, at 2:00 p.m. Co-hosts with the Battlefield Park for this year’s event will be the Army of Northern Virginia (ANV) and the Sons of Veterans Reserve (SVR). Participants will receive a medal, free Civil War type breakfast rations, free admission to the Hall of Valor museum, and free camping. Unit streamers will be awarded to units with five or more participants. Participation is by pre-registration only and limited to the first 600 troops to register, 400 Confederates and 200 Union. A registration fee of $2.50 per person should accompany the registration form which must be postmarked no later than midnight April 30, 1978. For registration forms, write to the New Market Battlefield Park, P.O. Box 1864, New Market, Virginia 22844.