



THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Founded December 3, 1940



Volume LXV, Number 1

Chicago, Illinois

September 2004



633rd REGULAR MEETING

PARKER HILLS ON "THE FORGOTTEN VICKSBURG: THE LOUISIANA CAMPAIGN"

★★★★★

Friday, September 10

★★★★★

**HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA
350 NORTH ORLEANS STREET**

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

\$30 - Members/Non-members

*Entrée:
Roast Pork Loin with
Dijon Mustard Glaze or
Catch of the Day*

(We are offering, on a Trial Basis, the option of choosing not to have dinner and coming only for the address at 7:30 p.m., for a charge of \$10 per person.)

PLEASE NOTE

Make your reservation by **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6**, by calling Pepper Zenger at 630-460-1865. We now also have a **new online dinner reservation system** at www.thecwrt.org/commiss.htm. Just fill in your name, email address, choice of entree and number of attendees on the easy-to-use form, then click on the "send information" box. The system will send you a confirmation of your reservation.

People who attend without having made a reservation will pay a \$5 walk-in charge. If you make a reservation and then find you cannot attend, please call to cancel or you will be billed for a dinner.

Until the end of the year, parking is at the lot at the corner of Hubbard and Orleans Streets. The hotel is providing shuttle bus service for guests between the lot and the hotel.

Parking is \$8 with a validated parking sticker. Tickets will be validated by the Round Table treasurer at the meeting.

PARKER HILLS

- on -

"The Forgotten Vicksburg: the Louisiana Campaign"

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

When most people think of the Vicksburg Campaign, they think of Ulysses S. Grant's landing on the Mississippi shore April 29, 1863, and his subsequent offensive to bottle up the Confederate army in Vicksburg. What is not generally remembered is the prior months Grant spent trying one plan after another to take that vital fortress. On September 10th, General Parker Hills will address our Round Table on "The Forgotten Vicksburg: the Louisiana Campaign", a look at the beginning of Grant's campaign.

Some of the most vicious fighting of the Vicksburg Campaign was fought in the 90 days from the time General Grant personally assumed command at Young's Point, Louisiana, on 30 January 1863, until the first men of his army boarded Admiral Porter's boats on 29 April and steamed from Hard Times, Louisiana, across the Mississippi River to Bruinsburg, Mississippi. This fighting was not between

armed forces, though some combat did occur. The combatants were Grant and his army versus weather, water, disease, fatigue, politics, and the press. Grant recalled that, "This long, dreary and, for heavy and continuous rains and high water, unprecedented winter was one of great hardship to all engaged about Vicksburg." Sherman later wrote, "I well remember when the high water of the Mississippi drove us to the levees which were also the only burial places, when the living and the dead lay with but a foot of damp earth between, when Grant and his army demonstrated the largest measure of patience



Parker Hills

and courage and perseverance." A Northern newspaper editor reported that, "There never was a more thoroughly disgusted, disheartened, and demoralized army than this is, and all because it is under such men as Grant and Sherman."

To understand the leadership required in surviving the trials of the winter months of 1863 in the lowlands of Louisiana is to understand Grant's statement after his army had crossed the Mississippi River and reached the high ground. "When this was accomplished I felt a degree of relief scarcely ever equaled since."

Parker Hills was born in Jackson, Mississippi and graduated the University of Southern Mississippi. He entered active military service in October, 1969, and served almost 32 years in uniform, including Regular Army and National Guard duty, retiring with the rank of Brigadier General.

Shortly after his military retirement, he established *Battle Focus*, a training company with the mission of developing ethical and effective

leaders and enhancing teamwork through on-the-ground battle and leader studies. He has conducted battlefield tours and military staff rides nationwide. He is the author of numerous articles on American history and the American Civil War, to include A Study in Warfighting: Nathan Bedford Forrest and the Battle of Brice's Crossroads.



THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940
9670 N. Dee #205
Des Plaines, Illinois 60016
Phone: 630-460-1865
www.thecwrt.org

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The only requirement for membership in The Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Membership Committee, 9670 N. Dee #205 Des Plaines, Illinois 60016, or contact webmaster@www.thecivilwar.org.

BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION UPDATE

BY ROGER E. BOHN

Our 36th Illinois Civil War flag is coming to town! The Civil War Round Table of Chicago's Battlefield Preservation Fund donated \$2500 to the flag's restoration effort through Flag Commission member Brooks Davis. The "Save the Flag" project is a joint effort of the CWRT of Chicago, the Salt Creek CWRT (SCCWRT), the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW), the DuPage County Historical Museum (DuPCHM), the DuPage County Historical Society (DuPCHS), and the Illinois State Military Museum (ISMM). The DuPage County Historical Museum in Wheaton is hosting a month-long Civil War oriented effort to raise the \$22,000 needed to restore and preserve our "chosen" flag.

Tuesday, October 5, 2004, the kick-off will be the unveiling of that actual Civil War national colors battle flag at a 7:30 PM reception at the DuPCHM in Wheaton (details listed below).

The 36th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Regiment was formed by men in the Chicagoland area and was known as the "Fox Valley Regiment." Of the 1376 men enrolled, 204 lost their lives in the various battles, as displayed on the silk flag itself. The honors shown are Pea Ridge, Perryville, Stones River, Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, Resaca, Pleasant Hill, Kennesaw Mountain, Peach Tree Creek, the Atlanta Campaign, Spring Hill, Franklin, and Nashville.

Jody Crago, Director of the DuPage County Historical Museum, will host the event. Speakers that evening will include Robert Schillerstrom, Chairman of the DuPage County Board; Major Mark Whitlock, Curator of the Illinois State Military Museum; and Dr. John Schmale, historian and specialist on Illinois Civil War flags. We will also have the opportunity to visit with special "celebrity guests"—President and Mrs. Abraham Lincoln, General Ulysses S. Grant, General Robert E. Lee, General George A. Custer, General William T. Sherman, and (our own) General George H. Thomas. As a special attraction, a dozen Chicago area collectors will also be at this event to "show-and-tell" about Civil War artifacts in their collections.

Light refreshments will be served at the October 5 reception, and there will be a cash bar. Authentic and live Civil War music will be played throughout the evening. A special door-prize drawing will also be held, with the prize being a United States flag that has been flown over the Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. **Tickets for the October 5 evening event are \$50 each and are tax deductible.**

Wednesday, October 6, Major Mark Whitlock of the Illinois State Military Museum will be with the 36th Illinois flag all day, after which the flag will return to its preservation cabinet at the Illinois National Guard facility. From 1:30 to 3:30, he will discuss with visitors the overall problems of flag conservation in Illinois and in the

nation. At 7:30 PM, Dr. John Schmale will present "If the Flags Could Talk," describing the various regimental flags in the ISMM collection and giving interesting stories about them. Light refreshments will be served.

Sunday, October 10, the Chicago Light Artillery will hold an artillery demonstration in the park opposite the DuPage County Historical Museum (see address below) at 1:30 to 3:30 PM.

Tuesday, October 12, Bruce Allardice will present "How the North Won the War," 7:30 to 9:30 PM.

Tuesday, October 19, Dr. David Maas will present "Wheaton College in the Civil War," 7:30 to 9:30 PM.

Sunday, October 24, Robert Girardi (and a friend) will demonstrate "A Day in the Life of a Civil War soldier," 1:30 to 3:30 PM.

Tuesday, October 26, General George H. Thomas — aka Jerome W. Kowalski — will present "Reminiscences of the Civil War and the 36th Illinois at Stones River," 7:30 to 9:30 PM.

Sunday, November 7, a live Civil War Era Fashion Show, 1:30 to 3:30.

Following the Fashion Show, the Prize Drawing for the "Save the Flag" prizes will be held. **Winners need not be present.** The drawing prizes are: 1) A signed and framed Keith Rocco print, "To the Last Round." 2) Eighteen holes of golf, including lunch, at historic Chicago Golf Club in Wheaton, as a guest of a member. Winner selects the date of play. 3) Two VIP tickets to a day at the Walker Cup Golf Matches to be held at the Chicago Golf Club, August 2005. 4) A reprint copy of the "History of the Thirty-sixth Regiment Illinois Volunteers During the War of the Rebellion."

Prize Drawing tickets are available at any of the sponsoring organizations listed above and are a \$5 donation per ticket, three for \$10. Make checks payable to: DuPage County Historical Society. Mail to: DuPage County Historical Museum, 102 E. Wesley Street, Wheaton, IL 60187. (*The DuPCHM is one block north of the railroad tracks on Main Street, Wheaton, at the corner of Main and Wesley...park on the street or in the lots west on Wesley.*) Questions, call Director Jody Crago: 630-682-6745. **All proceeds from these events will benefit the restoration and preservation of the 36th Illinois flag that was carried by the unit in the Civil War.**

Note: Circumstances may occur which could cause changes in the intended schedule--call Jody Crago at the DuPage County Historical Museum with any questions you may have.

The actual Civil War flag of the 36th Illinois being exhibited in the Chicago area is a rare treat—and the balance of the month's events at the DuPCHM is really something in which we should all participate. It is a project of our Round Table, and it will greatly benefit the necessary preservation fund-raising...and it will surely be a lot of fun, too!

JUNE MEETING

BY LARRY GIBBS

On June 11, Mark Lawrence Bradley gave a stimulating speech entitled "I Rely Upon Your Good Judgment and Skill: The Command Partnership of Robert E. Lee and Joseph E. Johnston in 1865". Ninety-one members and guests attended the 632nd meeting of The Civil War Round Table of Chicago. Bradley, presently a research assistant at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, had received many awards for his contributions to Civil War studies for his books and speeches in North Carolina. Bradley authored the well-received book, "This Astounding Close; The Road to Bennett Place" in 2000.

In his presentation Bradley illustrated the relationship between Confederate generals Robert E. Lee and Joseph Johnston during the last months of the Civil War. Comparison of the two generals has not been kind to Johnston. Bradley contended that Confederate President Jefferson Davis deserved criticism for his handling of the prickly Johnston. "Lee has been considered the greatest Confederate generals of the conflict while Johnston has been deemed one of the most controversial and passive generals of the Confederacy," claimed Bradley.

By January 1865 the Confederates had suffered a series of recent defeats. The Army of Tennessee was annihilated on December 16, 1864, at the Battle of Nashville. Savannah, Georgia fell to Union forces on December 21, 1864. The Battle of Fort Fisher, on January 16, 1865, resulted in the Confederate loss of their last major open seaport. In this period of disarray the Confederacy was on the brink of total collapse. On February 6, 1865, President Davis made two decisions that linked Lee and Johnston to a parallel connection. On that date Davis appointed Lee commander-in-chief of the entire Confederate army; then Davis gave command of the nearly decimated Army of Tennessee to Joseph Johnston.

Bradley asserted "Lee faced a dilemma in Virginia; his Army of Northern Virginia was outnumbered three to one, since he had only 50,000 troops facing Union General Ulysses Grant in Virginia." Johnston in North Carolina had 25,000 soldiers to slow down Sherman's 60,000 men. Bradley stated, "Considering his options in March 1865 Lee made his greatest mistake by remaining behind trenches at Petersburg and Richmond. This strategy of paralysis by Lee made eventual defeat almost inevitable." Without a Confederate threat, Union forces strengthened.

The period of March 1-7, 1865 was cru-

cial for Lee and Johnston. In North Carolina Union General Sherman had been delayed nearly a week due to swollen streams. Lee sent suggestions, not orders, to Joseph Johnston to attack Union forces in detail. Johnston, following Lee's advice, took the offensive against Sherman with (minor) positive results at Monroe's Crossroads and Averasboro. Lee made a believer out of Joseph Johnston because Lee gave Johnston confidence for an offensive move. President Davis was perhaps too brusque and demanding for Johnston. As a result Johnston bristled at the demands and orders of Davis, who showed very little tact.

On March 19-21, 1865, Johnston attacked the Union forces at Bentonville. At first the rebels were successful, but superior Union artillery and infantry repelled later Confederate charges. The Confederate offensive under Johnston was a good attempt, because Johnston and Lee had gained a mutual trust and confidence.

Lee's passive strategy around Petersburg shifted on March 25 when he attacked the Union lines around Fort Stedman. Although an initial success, the attack soon foundered. The Union movement to the west of Petersburg, culminating in the Battle of Five Forks and a successful assault on the Petersburg lines, caused Lee to retreat. Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House in western Virginia on April 9th. After the Battle of Bentonville, Johnston retreated into Western North Carolina. At first Johnston thought the Army of Northern Virginia would join the Army of Tennessee for a last ditch, desperate fight to preserve the Confederacy. However, President Davis, who had fled Richmond to Danville, Virginia, informed Johnston of Lee's surrender.

Since almost every Confederate leader realized that the war was all but over, Johnston met Sherman at Durham Station, North Carolina, to discuss surrender terms. They met three times in all. At the second meeting, on April 18th, Sherman drafted his own surrender terms, terms extremely lenient to Southern interests. Johnston could hardly believe Sherman's generosity.

President Abraham Lincoln rejected Sherman's surrender terms and offered to Johnston the same agreement that Lee had accepted at Appomattox. On April 26, Sherman and Johnston met a third time to settle the finalized version of Johnston's surrender. To allow Confederate soldiers to protect themselves against roving bands of outlaws, one-seventh of Johnston's troops were allowed to retain their arms. The second large Confederate army had surren-

dered to Union forces.

To summarize, Joseph Johnston was not timid when he took command of the Army of Tennessee in early 1865. He attacked with skill and daring at Averasboro and Bentonville. Bradley gave Robert E. Lee a great deal of credit for Johnston's transformation from a passive, and too many ineffective, command in the Atlanta Campaign, to a proactive, aggressive, and effective commander in the 1865 North Carolina Campaign. Lee gave Johnston the necessary confidence to succeed as an aggressive commander. However, Johnston's reputation was forever tarnished by his inaction during the earlier Atlanta Campaign. Bradley speculated that Davis's personality and gruff manner hurt the Confederate cause in his handling of Joseph Johnston during the vital Atlanta Campaign of 1864.

At the February meeting of the CWRT Executive Committee, longtime newsletter editor Barbara Hughett was voted an honorary life member in recognition of her years of service in that capacity.

On September 12th, the Bloomingdale Historical Society will dedicate new grave-stones for 4 Union army veterans buried at St. Paul Cemetery, Bloomingdale. The ceremony will honor all veterans buried at that cemetery. For information, contact Bob Kurek, (630) 894-0045, BlmHisSoc@webtv.net

CONGRESS OF CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLES

As you all know, our friend Jerry Russell passed away last December, but the events he helped catalyze are carrying on. This year's 30th Annual Congress of Civil War Round Tables will be held in Jackson, Mississippi, October 7-10, 2004, at the Ramada Inn Southwest Conference Center. The theme of the Congress will be the Vicksburg Campaign. The schedule includes talks by Ed Bearss, Terry Winschel, Don Nall and Pat Purcell, plus a 2-day tour of the campaign sites with Ed and Terry as guides. Ed will be delivering a memorial tribute to Jerry Russell, and topics of general round table interest will be discussed. For more information, contact CWRT Associates, 9 Lefevre Lane, Little Rock, AR 72227, (501) 225-3996, aar@aristotle.net. The website for the Congress is <http://www.civilwarbuff.org/vicks.html>.

GRAPESHOT



This last summer CWRT President Jerry Kowalski, aka General George H. Thomas, addressed the Will County Threshermans' Reunion on "Steam Power During the Civil War"; the McHenry County CWRT on "Artillery Tactics"; and the Sons of Union Veterans on "The Battle of Chickamauga".

The latest issue of "North & South" Magazine has a review by CWRT member Pat Brennan of a new book in CD format, "The Official Records of the 13th Mississippi Infantry Regiment of Volunteers, As Told By Those Who Were There", by Jess N. McLean.

CWRT newsletter editor Bruce Allardice will be addressing the Michigan Civil War Round Table in Ann Arbor, Michigan, Monday, September 13th, on "Why the North Won the Civil War". (Hint: It wasn't because they had Ambrose Burnside on their side). During the summer Bruce spoke before the North Suburban Genealogical Society on "Civil War Era Genealogy" and reviewed Bob Krick's "Lee's Staff Officers" for the "National Genealogical Society Quarterly".

CWRT Ex-President Rob Girardi will be giving a slide presentation titled "A Soldier's View" on Tuesday, September 14th at 7 p.m. at the Berwyn Public Library. Rob's new book, "The Soldier's View" The Civil War Art of Keith Rocco" (Military History Press, Berkeley, 2004, \$69.95, \$50.00 pre-publication price) should be available by then and he will be happy to sign copies.

CWRT Ex-President Mary Abroe presented a paper titled "Written on the Battlefield: Veterans Identify Their Civil War, 1861-1900", at an April 17th, 2004 "Identities Through Battlefields" conference held at Morehead State University. Mary also reviewed two books ("Interpreting Historic House Museums" and "Adult Museum Programs: Designing Meaningful Education Experience") for the Spring, 2004 issue of the "Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society".

Know of any upcoming talks, events, or publications? All members are welcome to contribute items to the newsletter. Contact the editor at bsallardice1@aol.com or (847) 375-8305.

SCHIMMELFENNIG BOUTIQUE

The following items are generally available at each monthly meeting: The Civil War Round Table History. Lapel pins, Mugs, Meeting Tapes and CDs, and Civil War Buff posters. Proceeds from the sale of these items go to support the Battlefield Preservation Fund of The Civil War Round Table of Chicago. There is also a book raffle, with proceeds again going to benefit battlefield preservation.

SILENT AUCTION

A silent auction is held at each monthly dinner meeting, for books donated by Ralph G. Newman and other members. The minimum bid is \$5 per book, with a minimum raise of \$1 per bid. Five minutes after the conclusion of the speaker's presentation, bidding will close and the highest bid is the winner of each book. Proceeds benefit battlefield preservation.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

At last June's general meeting, much confusion was created by the attendees who had not made dinner reservations. Sixty-three people made reservations and eighty-one showed. The confusion results from the large increase of dinners to be prepared in timely fashion. The result is dinners served to non-reservations and delayed substitute dinners to those who did reserve. Please be helpful and courteous in making your dinner reservations by the Monday before the meeting. Thank you.

PERIOD DRESS FOR SEPTEMBER MEETING

Round Table members who are re-enactors, or who just like to dress up in Civil War era outfits, are encouraged to come to the September 10th meeting in their costumes. President Kowalski, aka General George H. Thomas, will lead the display of finery. This has been done at other Round Tables and is a lot of fun for all.

MIDWEST CIVIL WAR COLLECTORS SHOW

The semiannual Midwest Civil War Collectors Show will be held Saturday, September 18, 2004, from 8:30 to 4:30, at the Midwest Conference Center, Concord Plaza, 401 W. Lake St., Northlake, Illinois. Admission is \$6 for adults. This show features collectors buying and selling Civil War artifacts such as rifles and swords, booksellers (including our friends at the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop), paintings and prints, a raffle, and just about anything else you can think of that's related to the era.

For more information contact Bob Nowak, (608) 884-3237, info@mwcwcs.com. Website: <http://www.mwcwcs.com>.

Bulletin Board



FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held at the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, 350 North Orleans Street, the second Friday of each month, *unless otherwise indicated*.

September 10: Brig. Gen. Parker Hills (U.S. Army Retired), "The Vicksburg Campaign" **General Hills will be one of our tour guides to Vicksburg during our Spring Tour.**

October 15: Dr. Robert Zaworski, "An Underwater Look at the Monitor" **This is a THIRD FRIDAY meeting for us.**

November 12: Dorothy Kelly, "The War in East Tennessee"

December 10: Dr. David Zarefsky, "Lincoln, Douglas and Slavery: in the Crucible of Public Debate"

January 14: Terry Winschel, "Stephen D. Lee and the Making of an American Shrine" **Nevens - Freeman Award Presentation**

February 11: Rev. Bob Miller, "Religion during the Civil War"

NEW MEMBER

John Conlon, 247 East Chestnut Street #501, Chicago, Illinois 60611, (312) 337-5205

CHICAGO HISTORICAL SOCIETY CIVIL WAR SYMPOSIUM

The Chicago Historical Society will be holding its 8th annual Civil War Symposium Saturday, October 2nd, 2004, at the CHS building, 1601 N. Clark St., Chicago. The symposium runs from 8:30 a.m. all day, with a reception following the symposium. As in prior years, our Civil War Round Table is a cosponsor of this event. Speakers include Elizabeth Varon, Michele Tucker Butts, William Scarborough, Jerry Thompson, and Steve Woodworth. Each presentation will last about an hour, with opportunity for question-and-answer. An optional lunch can be ordered. Cost is \$40 to the General Public, with a \$10 discount to CHS members.

To register, or for further information, call (312) 799-2271 or visit www.chicagohistory.org/civilwar.html.