Grapeshot

The Union League Club Civil War discussion group is planning a 2011 Lincoln Symposium. The tentative date is March 4, 2011, and speakers include Illinois State Historian Tom Schwartz, Prof. Orville Burton, Prof. Michael Burlingame, and Doug Wilson. More details when they become available.

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May 13: Tom Schott, “Alexander Stephens”

June 10: Peter Carmichael, TBA

Reminder

Bjorn Skaptason at the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop reminds us that the next “Virtual Book Signing” will be Dec. 11th at noon, with Anne Marshall talking about her new book, Creating a Confederate Kentucky and David Hirsch talking about Abraham Lincoln and the Structure of Reason. For more information on these and upcoming events, visit www.virtuallincolnbooksigning.net or www.lincolndbshop.com.

Note: Make your reservations by Monday, Dec. 6 by calling (312) 386-1847, or emailing chicago@virginiaeastern.org, with the names of your party and choice of entrée. If a cancellation becomes necessary after dinner reservations have been made, please call the number below 9 a.m. Thursday.

We are offering the option of choosing sweet or heat dinner entrees only for the reservation at 7:30 p.m.; for an additional $1 per person. Parking at the Holiday Inn is $22 with a validated parking sticker.

696th REGULAR MEETING

Samuel C. Hyde on “A Wisconsin Yankee in the Confederate Bayou Country”

Friday, December 10

HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA

350 NORTH ORLEANS STREET

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

$45 - Members/Non-members

Call by Monday Dec. 6

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December 2011

Samuel C. Hyde on “Reckonin’ in Louisiana’s Florida Parishes (winner of a 1998 American Association for State and Local History Award) and author/editor of Plain Folk of the South Revisited. His forthcoming Class Conflict in the Piney Woods South continues his study of Southern Plain Folks. Dr. Hyde is also the author/editor of Sunbelt Revolution: The Historical Progression of the Civil Struggle in the Gulf South, 1866-2000, A Fierce and Fractional Frontier: The Curious Development of Louisiana’s Florida Parishes, 1699-2000: A Wisconsin Yankee in Confederate Bayou Country: The Civil War Reminiscences of a Union General, among other publications. He serves as executive director of the Gulf South Historical Association and has work has been featured in numerous regional and national media outlets such as The Discovery Channel, The History Channel, ABC’s World News Tonight, National Public Radio, and The New York Times.

Samuel C. Hyde on “Politics: The Dilemma of Democracy”

December 2011

Samuel C. Hyde on “A Wisconsin Yankee in the Confederate Bayou Country”

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

General Halbert E. Paine commanded the Fourth Wisconsin Infantry Regiment during Civil War operations that included early maneuvering on the Maryland Peninsula, the occupation of New Orleans and capture of Baton Rouge, the Bayou Teche Campaign, and the siege of Port Hudson. His reminiscences not only reveal much about the Union purpose in the War and the attitudes of Confederates, but are also revealing of the subtle advantages enjoyed by Federal forces that contributed to the final outcome. Paine’s observations highlight the suppression of guerrilla operations, the treatment of southern civilians and property, and the attitudes of Union soldiers toward slavery and conquered peoples all from the perspective of a duty bound citizen soldier from the West.

A Professor of history at Southeastern Louisiana University, Samuel C. Hyde is the Director of the Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies and holds the Leon Ford Endowed Chair in Regional History. Dr. Hyde is the author of Pirates and Politics: The Dilemma of Democracy in the Gulf South, 1866-2000, A Fierce and Fractional Frontier: The Curious Development of Louisiana’s Florida Parishes, 1699-2000: A Wisconsin Yankee in Confederate Bayou Country: The Civil War Reminiscences of a Union General, among other publications. He serves as executive director of the Gulf South Historical Association and has work has been featured in numerous regional and national media outlets such as The Discovery Channel, The History Channel, ABC’s World News Tonight, National Public Radio, and The New York Times.
The Civil War Round Table

November Meeting

By Jackie Wilson

The 695th meeting of The Chicago Civil War Round Table was a very special meeting. We awarded the annual Nevins-Freeman Award to our very own Robert Girardi, past president of our Round Table and Chicago Homicide Detective. In his case he serves twice—the city he lives in and the Civil War historical community through his support of the Round Table movement and his writings.

Rob discussed the massive deployment of large armies and the logistical and intelligence networks necessary to support them and how they were put into effect. The nature of combat and command in the Civil War necessitated the reorganization of the armies. In Europe, the Napoleonic Wars 50 years prior had seen the major European armies introduce army corps composed of two or more infantry divisions. These army corps were designed to be small enough to travel on one road, but large enough to fight a day’s battle on their own. The corps contained cavalry and artillery so that the corps could carry out a variety of tasks. In the Civil War, Brigades and Divisions, previously the largest organizational bodies in the American army, were replaced by the introduction of army corps for the first time.

But how to deal with the problem of commanders for these corps? “The solution to the problem was a problem in itself. No officers of the United States Army had ever commanded anything of the size and complexity of an army corps. While it is true that the army gained much practical experience in the Mexican War, that conflict was as nothing in its scope and scale and in the responsibilities it taught to senior commanders, compared to the latter conflict.” He stated that “The largest army in the Mexican War would have been but a weak corps in the Civil War that followed.” The prewar U.S. army had only 5 generals, only one of whom had ever commanded as many as 10,000 men, all but one so old they’d reached the modern age of retirement.

Besides commanders, one of the biggest problems was identifying just exactly who was who in the field. Eventually badges were created to identify the individual corps, with color coding for the divisions within each corps. Rob had an excellent display of each Corps badge.

Our next battlefield tour will be APRIL 27- MAY 1, 2011. This Tour is limited to two buses. As always, Ed Sears is our Chief Guide and Will Greene is Bus #2 Guide. We will be staying at The Hilton Garden Inn Richmond South/Southpark; 800 Southpark Blvd. Colonial Heights, VA. For more details, see the attached tour registration form and tour itinerary.
Local Effort Begins To Enlarge Missionary Ridge Reservations

By Brian Seiter

Chattanooga, TN—One hundred and forty-seven years after the Battle of Missionary Ridge in 1863, and decades of discussions and planning, a coalition is moving forward on the battlefield preservation and management efforts for the Missionary Ridge Neighborhood Association and the Orchard Neighborhood Association. The goal is to create a series of small parks, or “reservations,” along the ridge and at the top of it. The plan has the support of officials who are looking into adding acreage to the four “reservations” along the ridge crest and seeking congressional approval for changing park boundaries. They hope such legislation will be filed in January.

Made up of a few acres each along what today is Credt Road, these reservations are essentially small parks managed as part of Chickamauga & Chattanooga National Battlefield. Park Service personnel patrol and maintain the reservations. While there are numerous markers, even in some front yards, the small parks are basically islands of history in the midst of residential development. Going north or south along the ridge, they are known as the Bragg, Ohio, De Long and Sherman Reservations. “There is virtually an unannounced interest among the various homeowners groups and the Chattanooga City Council to pursue additional land,” says Ed Bearss of the Missionary Ridge Neighborhood Association (MRNA). Murphy also is a member of the Chattanooga City Council.

After the Confederates ran out of ice and ammunition, they abandoned Chattanooga in the spring of 1863. Before the Federals arrived, they occupied the heights that Chattanooga, which they had abandoned the previous March, and historians are working to enhance and expand the interpretive sites of this often-overlooked battle.

Today, the ridge which runs from Georgia north along the eastern side of downtown Chattanooga, is dotted with century-old, homes known more for their spectacular views of the city and its surrounding areas than the November 25th, 1863, battle up its steep slopes.

Neighborhood groups and government officials are working to bring the park to the public and to add acreage to the four “reservations” along the ridge crest. The plans are ironed out, funds will come with additional land much of the view from the valley below could be restored making for a better understanding of the story of Chattanooga during the War.

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) has been working with MRNA and other neighborhood groups, local and state officials to determine what interest landowners would have in selling their properties to “enhance and expand the reservations.”

TPL is a national organization dedicated to conserving “land for human enjoyment and well being, from inner city to wilderness,” according to its Web site. TPL’s Rick Wood says any additions would have to be approved by Congress, even if the ground were donated.

Also Murphy is emphatic that any land purchases would be from willing landowners and there “would be no compensation.”

Wood says “strong local support is the first step in this process, which we have.” Tennessee U.S. Senators Bob Corker and Lamar Alexander and Chattanooga area Congressman Zach Wamp learned that local residents and neighbors support the effort when they were briefed by TPL. “Local support was critical for Congressional support,” Wood says.

The neighborhood groups which also include Battery Heights Neighborhood Association and the Orchard Knob Neighborhood Association, have issued letters of support for the continued pursuit the plan.

Noting it is not often a project receives such backing, Murphy says he hopes the Federal legislation will be filed as early as January to begin the process of potential boundary “change actions.”

“These new additions would come with a lot of study from National Park Service historians,” says Wood, “and would give those with homes in the area an idea of how the new lines known as “minor boundary adjustments” would play out.”

He says it is much too early to determine any costs as appraisals and desired properties have to be mapped out. When Congress does approve the boundary changes and purchase agreements are ironed out, funds will come through the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Getting the legislation passed will then virtually guarantee the process of narrowing down what parcels and what boundaries will change and will be a time-consuming process.

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The enthusiasm of the various association members and citizens will make the process with the National Park Service and Congress much easier. Murphy says.

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