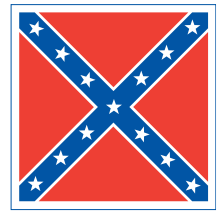


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

Volume LXXI, Number 2

Chicago, Illinois

October 2010



694th REGULAR MEETING

Earl Hess

on

“Petersburg”

★★★★★

Friday, October 8

★★★★★

HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA

350 NORTH ORLEANS STREET

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$45 - Members/Non-members

*Entrée: Chicken AegEAN,
Baked Tilapia, Vegetarian
Plate or Fruit Plate*

please note

Make your reservations by Monday, Oct. 4 by calling 630 460-1865, or emailing chicagocwrttdinner@earthlink.net, 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 before 9 a.m. Thursday.

We are offering 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.

Parking at the Holiday Inn is \$12 with a validated parking sticker.

Earl Hess

on

“Soldier Life in the Trenches at Petersburg”

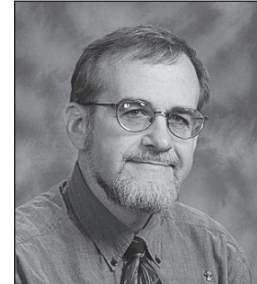
BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

The trenches were almost knee deep in mud and it was still raining. Our clothes were covered with mud and soaked with rain, no place to sleep and nothing much to eat, and sixty-four pound mortar shells bursting all around. —

W. A. Day, 49th North Carolina

The Petersburg campaign began 15 June 1864 with Union attempts to break an improvised line of Confederate field fortifications. By the time the campaign ended on 2 April 1865, two opposing lines of sophisticated and complex earthworks stretched for thirty-five miles, covering not only Petersburg but also the southeastern approaches to Richmond.

Professor Hess’s presentation will examine the Petersburg works within the context of strategic and tactical operations in Virginia during the last ten months of the Civil War, when field fortifications dominated military planning and the landscape of battle. The presentation will humanize the experience of the soldiers working in the fortifications, revealing their attitudes toward attacking and defending earthworks and the human cost of trench warfare in the waning days of the Civil War. The presentation is based on Hess’s latest book, In the Trenches at Petersburg, which Wil



Earl Hess

Greene of Pamplin Park calls “the finest study of the Petersburg Campaign in more than a century”.

Earl J. Hess grew up in rural Missouri. He completed his B.A. and M.A. degrees in History at Southeast Missouri State University, with a Ph.D. from Purdue University. He has taught at a number of institutions, including the University of Georgia, Texas Tech University, and the University of Arkansas. Since 1989, he

has been an assistant and associate professor at Lincoln Memorial University, in Harrogate, Tennessee, where he also is director of the History Program and holds the

Stewart W. McClelland Chair in History. Dr. Hess has published twelve books, twenty-three articles, and more than 100 book reviews. Among his publications is In the Trenches at Petersburg—Field Fortifications and Confederate Defeat (U. of N.C. Press, 2009). Dr. Hess has also co-authored, with his wife Dr. Pratibha Dabholkar, Singin’ in the Rain—The Making of an American Masterpiece. He was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in 2002.



Battlefield Preservation

BY BRIAN SEITER

Two Owners Donate Easements On 782 Brandy Station Battlefield Acres. by Scott C. Boyd, Brandy Station, VA — Two conservation easements donated to the state have added a total of 782 acres of preserved land to the Brandy Station Battlefield in Culpeper County.

“What this means is that, in return for some state tax credits based on the value of their property, these landowners have forsaken all future development rights to this land—meaning, it will be protected just the way it is forever,” Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) President Jim Lighthizer said in a July 30 appeal letter. He wrote, “As part of the deal, and to help make sure these transactions went through, the Civil War Preservation Trust was asked to pay some of the landowners’ closing costs—a total of about \$67,000.” He called the \$85.68 per acre cost to CWPT “one of the better and more innovative bargains we have ever struck.”

Until the easements were announced the CWPT had preserved slightly over 1,000 acres at Brandy Station. Now the total is 1,797 acres, according to CWPT Policy and Communications Director Jim Campi. “In both these easements here, you’re talking about highly significant battlefield property,” according to Clark B. “Bud” Hall, president of the non-profit Brandy Station Foundation (BSF) and historian of the battle. “We’re thrilled about it,” Hall said. “All congratulations are due to the CWPT, because without their money, which comes from their donors, we couldn’t close the deal.” “CWPT has been extraordinarily willing to work to secure easements around America’s greatest cavalry battlefield.” Hall noted. “It’s a fact that the Brandy Station Battlefield remains threatened because of the pressures of adjacent residential and

commercial development,” he said. Negotiations, which he could not yet discuss publicly, are under way to secure additional “significant acreage” on and around the battlefield. Lighthizer’s letter said the easement donors wished to remain anonymous, however local newspapers identified the Gyory family as the donors of 433 acres of Willow Run Farm on the eastern portion of the battlefield.

The second easement was for 349 acres of the Beauregard Farm tract, Hall said, “I can’t imagine a more important easement on the entire battlefield.” Of the Beauregard Farm tract, Hall said, “I can’t imagine a more important easement on the entire battlefield.” Confederate Brigadier General W.H.F. “Rooney” Lee’s entire defensive position during the morning of 9 June is on the Beauregard Farm. “You could not more precisely draw an easement that would more accurately incorporate an entire line of troops,” according to Hall. “Importantly, the CWPT already owns the Federal attack platform on the Cunningham Farm and this is contiguous with the Beauregard Farm.” He said, “The dividing line between the properties is a stone wall which Rooney Lee’s brigade held during that morning. West of the stone wall are the Confederates and east of the stone wall are the Federals.” “How many battlefields can you say that you got the entire morning phase of the battle protected—in one case by acquisition, CWPT land, and in the next case by this incredibly valuable easement? I’m thrilled to have it,” Hall said.

“What you’ve got is, in concert, a saved piece of battlefield that was purchased by acquisition now complemented in a major, major way by this easement.”

Lighthizer mentioned the potential fate the Beauregard Farm faced be-

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www.chicagocwrt.org

The only requirement for membership in The Civil War Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Membership Committee, 1039 Hinswood, Darien, Illinois 60561, or contact bsa1861@att.net.



fore the easement: “Three million square feet of retail stores, a 2,500 seat multiplex movie theater, 16 restaurants, 300 apartments, a water park, three hotels, three banks, three gas stations, a lighted(!) 18-hole golf course, an equestrian center, an ice skating rink and even a private K-12 school.” Hall was also extremely pleased with the 433-acre Willow Run Farm easement. “This property gives us a wonderful piece of land that was marched over, camped upon and fought over as Confederate and Union cavalry forces vied with each other for control of the Brandy plain,” he said. “Now you can have Confederate Major General J.E.B Stuart’s viewscape from Fleetwood Hill all the way to the Rappahannock River,” he pointed out. “This was ground where Federal cavalry officers would deploy their troops for attacks against Fleetwood Hill.” “When preservation groups work together, terrific things happen. The BSF is privileged to be a partner with CWPT,” Hall said. For more information go to www.civilwar.org/battlefields/brandy-station.html and www.brandystationfoundation.com.

From the September “Civil War News”

September Meeting

BY JACKIE WILSON

A native son, Dr. **Wayne Mahood** returned to the Chicago area to present his talk on Brigadier General James S. Wadsworth at the 693rd meeting of The Chicago Civil War Round Table.

The General, born 1807, liked excitement and was very impetuous and was eventually kicked out of Harvard for not going to classes. He was a dandy. His father feared he would never settle down. He loved to be outdoors and have adventures. He built his own home when he was 28. He married a Philadelphia beauty and had six children with her, although many wondered when he had time. He also inherited a very large estate from his father and uncle as the sole surviving heir and it included 300,000 acres in both New York and Ohio.

At age 43, he returned from Scotland with a totally white head of hair, thanks to a horrible experience with a storm in the mid-Atlantic. The trip took a total of 63 days from start to finish, having to turn around and go to Ireland after almost reaching Nova Scotia.

He attended the 1861 Peace Conference where he became an abolitionist. When the war broke out, he was a 53 year old millionaire and he became an unpaid aid to General McDowell. He also was the Military Governor of Washington DC. As such, he was responsible for all the troops coming and going, the logistics of housing and feeding those troops as well as for all the escaped blacks who came into the city. He was also responsible for the incarceration of rebel

spies including Rose Greenhow and Belle Boyd, who gave him a lot of grief. He used his influence with the politicians to promote deserving officers, such as John Gibbon, the first commander of the famed Iron Brigade.

In 1862 Republicans drafted the wealthy Wadsworth to run for Governor of New York. He refused to leave the army to campaign, and that, plus his known abolitionist views and a Democratic resurgence in the north, caused his to narrowly lose this, his only foray into politics.

Eventually Wadsworth got his own army command, and it was a well-known unit: the 1st Division of the 1st Corps, which included the Iron Brigade. He played a large leadership role at Gettysburg, especially in the heavy fighting on the first day when corps commander John Reynolds was killed. Wadsworth's men loved him as he made sure that they were always taken care of and usually out of his own pocket. Nobody could understand why the millionaire would want to be in the front lines at his age. Perhaps the same problem that kept him from his father's good graces when a youth: he was what we now call today, an adrenaline junky?

After Gettysburg, General Meade was moving too slow for him, so slow, that Wadsworth resigned. Lincoln sent him to study the military camps in Mississippi. When Grant takes over the entire army in 1864, Wadsworth then came back to Virginia to command a division in the 5th Corps

under General Gouverneur K. Warren. At the battle of the Wilderness, May 6, 1864, as he got ready to lead a charge, his horse went wild and as he bent down, he was shot in the forehead. Captured by the enemy, Wadsworth died two days later without ever regaining consciousness.

Mahood opines that his contemporaries considered him as a curiosity, and was not sure how lucid he really was. A monument was raised to him in 1914 at Gettysburg and there have been four forts named in his honor in Petersburg, VA; Staten Island, NY; Pierre, SD; and SC. Professor Mahood ended his talk by relating the career paths of the General's descendants.

A recording of this (and every) meeting is available from **Hal Ardell**, audio librarian. Contact Hal at (773) 774-6781 or hal229@ameritech.net. For photos of this CWRT event, see <http://www.flickr.com/photos/ChicagoCWRT>.



The University of North Carolina Press, one of the nation's finest historical publishers, has announced the March 2011 launch of a new publication, "**The Journal of the Civil War Era.**" The new journal will focus on the many issues raised by the sectional crisis, war, Reconstruction, and the memory of the conflict. See www.journalofthecivilwarera.com for more details.

GRAPESHOT



Dave Corbett and his “Battlefield Balladeers” will perform Oct. 2nd at the Civil War Symposium at Cantigny. Visit www.youtube.com/battlefieldballadeers for details.

Leslie Goddard presented “Clara Barton” Sept. 25th at the Wade Historic Home in Greenbush, WI.

On October 6th Bruce Allardice will speak on “Who the Heck is Abner Doubleday?: Baseball and the Civil War” at the Des Moines, Iowa CWRT.

Mike Weeks will speak on “America’s Civil War Sites Today” at the Bradley (IL) Public Library on Oct. 14th and the Champaign County CWRT on Oct. 21st.

Pamplin Park’s 14th Annual Symposium will be held Oct. 15th-17th. The topic is the 1860 Presidential Election. Speakers include our old friend Wil Greene, William W. Freehling, Elizabeth Varon, George Rable, and others. Visit www.pamplin-park.org for more details.

Know of any upcoming talks, events, or publications? All members are welcome to contribute items to the newsletter. Contact the editor at bsa1861@att.net or (630) 297-8046.

SCHIMMELFENNIG BOUTIQUE

Sixty plus years of audio recordings of CWRT lectures by distinguished historians are available and can be purchased in either audio cassette or CD format. For lecture lists, contact Hal Ardell at hal229@ameritech.net or phone him at (773) 774-6781.

Each meeting features a book raffle, with proceeds going to battlefield preservation. There is also a silent auction for books donated by Ralph Newman and others, again with proceeds benefiting battlefield preservation.

Upcoming Civil War Events

- Oct. 1st, Northern Illinois CWRT: Harold Knudsen on “General Longstreet”
- Oct. 2nd, 13th Annual Civil War Symposium and Reenactment at Cantigny, featuring presentations by Bruce Levine, Russell McClintock, William K. Scarborough, and Joan Waugh. Contact the National Archives at (773) 948-9001 for more information.
- Oct. 2nd, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Ken Stark on “Illustrating the Civil War.” Visit www.thecivilwarmuseum.org for more details.
- Oct. 6th, Kankakee Valley CWRT: Don White on “Civil War Facts”
- Oct. 7th, Milwaukee CWRT: Earl Hess on “Petersburg”
- Oct. 10th Lake County CWRT: Charlie Jarvis on “The Bell City Rifles”
- Oct. 12th, McHenry Co. CWRT: Jeff Rees and Fred Reczkowicz on “The Greatest Military Campaign”
- Oct. 12th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT in Alsip: Michael Phelps presents “A Dark & Bloody Ground”
- Oct. 15th, Salt Creek CWRT: John Kociolko on “Whatever Became of the Union”
- Oct. 16th, Kenosha Civil War Museum: “Friendship Quilts” presentation.
- Oct. 23rd, Kenosha Civil War Museum: “Historical Timekeepers” living history presentation.
- Oct. 28th, South Suburban CWRT: Mike Weeks on “Finding Hallowed Ground: America’s Civil War Historic Sites Today”
- Nov. 6th: McHenry County CWRT Annual Symposium, featuring David Powell on “Chickamauga” and Bruce Allardice on “Civil War Baseball”

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*.

Oct. 8: Earl Hess, “Petersburg”

Nov. 12: Robert Girardi, the Nevins Freeman Address

Dec. 10: Samuel C. Hyde, “A Wisconsin Yankee in the Confederate Bayou Country”

Jan. 14, 2011: Lawrence L. Hewitt, “Slandered Heroes: Deserters Who Didn’t”

Feb. 11: TBA

March 11: Susan Boardman, “Gettysburg Cyclorama”

April 8: Richard McMurry, TBA

May 13: Tom Schott, “Alexander Stephens”

June 10: Peter Carmichael, TBA

Reminders

Bjorn Skaptason at the **Abraham Lincoln Book Shop** reminds us that the next “Virtual Book Signing” will be noon, Oct. 9th, with Earl Hess talking about his new book, [Into the Crater: The Mine Attack at Petersburg](#), and Chris Hartley on his new book, [Stoneman’s Raid](#). For more information on these and upcoming events, visit www.virtualbooksigning.net or www.alincolnbookshop.com.

The **Stephen A. Douglass Association** is proud to announce the unveiling of a huge new repository of the senator’s papers. The unveiling event will begin at 2 p.m. at the U. of Chicago’s Regenstein Library, Saturday, Oct. 2nd. Cocktails and dinner to follow. For more details, visit www.stephenadouglass.org.