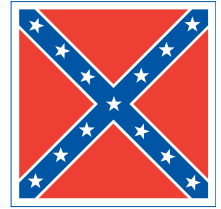


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

Volume LXXI, Number 5

Chicago, Illinois

January 2011



697th REGULAR MEETING

Lawrence L. Hewitt

on

“Slandered Heroes:
Deserters Who Didn’t”

★★★★★

Friday, January 14

★★★★★

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 Napoleon,
Baked Tilapia, Vegetarian
Plate or Fruit Plate*

please note

Make your reservations by Monday, Jan. 10 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.

Larry Hewitt

on

“Slandered Heroes:
Deserters Who Didn’t”

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

Historian James McPherson is the most prominent of the many historians who’ve pointed out that the Union and Confederate armies lost to desertion many “summer soldiers and sunshine patriots” (to borrow Thomas Paine’s famous phrase). Getting a handle on the numbers of deserters has seemed a relatively easy task, since the muster rolls of both armies recorded when and if a soldier went AWOL and deserted. Those numbers have often been used to denigrate the common soldier’s devotion to cause and country.

On January 14th, Professor Larry Hewitt will challenge the conventional wisdom and assert that many Civil War soldiers whose official service records conclude that they were absent without leave at the end of the war, in fact either died in service or remained on duty. The vast majority of these were the result of bureaucratic procedures used by both sides that required soldiers who disappeared on the battlefield to be labeled as deserters on subsequent muster rolls. These same regulations enabled at least one massacre to be covered up by the North, while amendments to them in the fall of 1863 by the South required thousands of men who were present with their units to be listed as deserters. Union and Confederate soldiers representing the Eastern, Western, and Trans-Mississippi theaters will be highlighted as examples of these bureaucratic injustices.

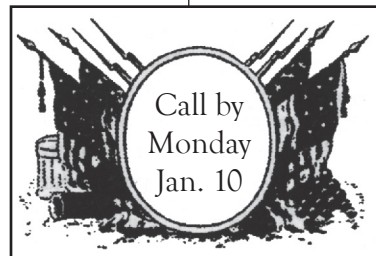


Larry Hewitt

A native of Louisville, Kentucky, **Lawrence Lee Hewitt** received his B.A. from the University of Kentucky in 1974, and his Ph.D. at Louisiana State University, studying under T. Harry Williams and Bill Cooper.

After serving as the Historic Site Manager of the Port Hudson (1978-82) and the Camp Moore State Commemorative Areas (1982-1986), he joined the faculty of Southeastern Louisiana University in 1985. He resigned his professorship in 1996 to marry a native of Chicago, where he currently resides. Since relocating to Chicago, Hewitt served as Managing Editor (1997-1998) and Book Review Editor (1997-1999) for *North & South Magazine*.

Hewitt’s books include *Port Hudson, Confederate Bastion on the Mississippi* (1987); *Louisianians in the Civil War* (2002), co-edited with Arthur W. Bergeron, Jr.; *Kentuckians in Gray: Confederate Generals and Field Officers of the Bluegrass State* (2008), coedited with Bruce S. Allardice. Hewitt and Bergeron also edited *Confederate Generals in the Western Theater: vol. 1, Classic Essays on America’s Civil War* and *Confederate Generals in the Western Theater: vol. 2, Essays on America’s Civil War*, published in 2010 by the University of Tennessee Press.



Battlefield Preservation

BY BRIAN SEITER

CWPT Agrees To Buy 49 Acres at Wilderness, Must Raise Over One Million

by Scott C. Boyd

Orange County, Va—The CWPT has a contract to buy “49 incredibly significant, historical acres” of the Wilderness Battlefield, and a lot of money to raise in a short time, CWPT President Jim Lighthizer told an October 27 news conference. “It’s the hole in the doughnut of this part of Wilderness Campaign. It completes this part of the Wilderness Battlefield,” Lighthizer said. The tract “is part of historic Saunders Field, which is one of the most iconic landmarks in all of Virginia’s Civil War battlefields.”

The 49 acres, known by the owner’s name as the Middlebrook Tract, are on the northern side of Route 20. This is less than two miles from the intersection of Routes 20 and 3 where a controversial Walmart Supercenter, the subject of a lawsuit, is proposed to be built.

The purchase price is \$1,085,000. CWPT cannot receive matching money from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund because the land is inside the National Park Service (NPS) boundary for the battlefield, Lighthizer explained.

This means all of the money must come from private sources. A further difficulty is that CWPT must close on the deal by December 31st.

Some donors have stepped up already. Long-time member John Janson of Wisconsin donated \$100,000, according to a CWPT news release.

Historian James McPherson, whom Lighthizer introduced as “the premier Civil War scholar in the U.S.” put the battle into context.

“The Battle of the Wilderness is a contender for one of the most impor-

tant turning points in the Civil War, because if it had come out differently or if General Grant had made a different decision after the two bitter, vicious days of fighting May 5 and 6, 1864, here in the Wilderness, the whole course of the Civil War might have gone differently, and maybe even the whole course of American history,” according to McPherson.

“Grant had promised President Abraham Lincoln that whatever happens, there will be no turning back, and now he was proving it,” McPherson said.

“The Wilderness set a pattern for the next 11 months. Whether a battle was a Union victory, a draw or a defeat, Grant would keep moving forward until he achieved final victory at Appomattox.”

McPherson said that if Grant has not pressed ahead “maybe the Confederacy would yet today 146 years later be its own separate, independent nation, and the United States of America would have continued to be the dis-United States of America.”

Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park Superintendent Russ Smith said, “It was here in Saunders Field that Lt. John Henry Patterson (11th U. S. Infantry Regiment) was awarded the Medal of Honor for dragging a wounded officer to safety.”

Smith said the exact place is not known, “but it could be on the very land that we are embarking on preserving today.”

During his tour of Saunders Field after the news conference, NPS historian Frank O’Reilly said, “For one brief, white-heat moment, this field and those woods were the nexus of the American Civil War on May 5, 1864. This is where the Battle of the Wilderness begins, where the first

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www.chicagocwr.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.

shot that brings on this huge conflagration that consumes 30,000 people, begins.”

Property owner Warren Middlebrook was personally thanked by Lighthizer during the event. Besides the selling price, there was one more thing Middlebrook wanted. Lighthizer handed a freshly-signed copy of McPherson’s Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, to a beaming Middlebrook.

Middlebrook later said he bought the property in 1957. Being a widower without children, he explained why he agreed to sell to CWPT.

“I didn’t want to see it paved over. I’ve taken pretty good care of it for 53 years and I know they’ll do it from now on.” He has lifetime rights to continue to live on the property.

For more information about the tract, Wilderness Battlefield and CWPT’s fundraising go to www.civilwar.org. The Civil War Round of Chicago through the Battlefield Preservation Committee donated \$1,000 dollars to the Wilderness Campaign.

From the December *Civil War News*

December Meeting

BY MARK MATRANGA

Samuel C. Hyde, Jr. addressed the 696th meeting of The Civil War Round Table on December 10, 2010, presenting the life and wartime experiences of Halbert Eleazer Paine, a *Wisconsin Yankee in Confederate Bayou Country*. Paine was a Milwaukee attorney, partners with Carl Schurz, who received the call from his governor to serve as quartermaster of the 2nd Wisconsin Infantry. At this he was an “utter failure” but nonetheless was “fired and promoted.” His new command, the 4th Wisconsin, was summoned east where it participated in quelling the Baltimore riots and served in the Maryland peninsular campaign, helping to keep that state in the Union.

The regiment then transferred west for operations resulting in the capture of New Orleans. Moving north to Baton Rouge, he came under the command of General Thomas Williams, with whom he clashed. Paine described Williams as “an imbecile, juvenile, drunken, malignant, shallow, cowardly, traitorous, incompetent blockhead who can not by any possibility do otherwise than bring disaster and disgrace to whatever he touches.” Williams had Paine arrested for refusing to return fugitive slaves but Paine later took command of the brigade when Williams was killed.

Paine admitted involvement in the burning of Baton Rouge which General Butler ordered so as to forestall a return of Confederate forces to that city, and had no remorse over it. Paine and his command took part in the initial actions of the Vicksburg campaign and participated in the laying waste of the Bayou Teche region. He also commanded troops in anti-guerilla activities in the Florida Parishes. At Port Hudson, he was severely wounded and suffered the am-

putation of a leg. After recuperating, he was transferred back east where he saw service in the 1864 raid on Washington, D.C. He was then ordered to Southern Illinois where he coordinated anti-Copperhead operations.

Following the war, Paine served three terms in Congress, where he supported the radicals and proponents of the “State Suicide Theory” for dealing with the post-war south. He was appointed Commissioner of Patents in 1878, and introduced the use of the typewriter into the federal bureaucracy.

Professor Hyde considered Paine’s service important not only for his role in many significant military actions in the lower Mississippi Valley and elsewhere but also for his descriptions of daily life in the army and the difficulty in keeping an army together. While at Ship Island, for example, he learned that keeping an army together involved, in part, keeping casks of rum away from the troops. Also, Paine was relatively forthright when discussing the ‘hard hand of war,’ admitting his role in the burning of Baton Rouge and expressing no remorse when describing the destruction of Grand Gulf, Mississippi. He considered looting justifiable retribution against those who resisted government authority.

Paine was struck by the comparative conditions of his troops versus those of his opponents. He noted the disparities in food; supplies, housing and transportation enjoyed by northern troops and reflected on “what the barefoot, ragged, underfed rebels...would have done,” with such logistical support. He wondered what kind of people they were fighting. This may have influenced conflicting attitudes toward the war—

he condoned looting by his troops. His approach to former slaves was similar—his refusal to return fugitive slaves stemmed not from ideological or moralistic reasons but rather due to feelings toward General Williams’ incompetency. He sympathized with the condition of “contrabands,” but did not embrace enlightened attitudes toward former slaves. In this he was like other Midwesterners—the war was not a crusade to end slavery.

Paine’s reminiscences do not glorify the grand and glorious cause. He did not dwell on polemics or the need to preserve the Union, but was motivated strictly by his sense of duty—he was asked to serve and he did. Paine’s memoir contains little mention of any of his accomplishments outside his service in the army and even in this made no claim for recognition. Rather than describing his actions within any larger context, he focused on what he saw and did. Professor Hyde considers these observations an important contribution to our understanding of the “real story” of the war. In his own turn, Professor Hyde brought the story of Halbert Paine to life as well.

A recording of this (and every) meeting is available from **Hal Ardell**, audio librarian. Contact Hal at (773) 774-6781 or hal229@ameritech.net.

The **Colorado Historical Society** is planning an exhibit on the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre, and for that exhibit is asking collectors for the loan of wartime Union army uniform items, including trousers, ankle boots, overcoats, and gauntlet gloves. Contact James Peterson of the CHS at 303-866-3917 for more details.

GRAPESHOT



Looking for a good presentation on the Civil War for your library, school, historical society, or civic group? The Coalition of CWRTs of Northern Illinois has put together a **Speakers Bureau** to help you find one. Best of all, most presentations are FREE! Visit <http://www.saltcreekcwrt.org/primary%20pages/speakers.html> for the list, with details and contact information.

January 22nd **Dave Corbett** and his "Battlefield Balladeers" will perform at the Civil War Symposium at Midway Village in Rockford.

On Jan. 7th, **Leslie Goddard** portrays "Clara Barton" for the Northern Illinois CWRT.

On Jan. 21st, **Roger Bohn** will speak on "North Carolina's Civil War Governor Zebulon Vance" at the Salt Creek CWRT.

The **CWRT Winter Executive Committee Meeting** will begin at 9:00 am on Saturday January 8, 2011 at the Chicago History Museum, 1601 N. Clark Street, Chicago, IL 60614; (312) 642-4600. All CWRT members are invited to attend.

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.

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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

Jan. 5th, Lake County CWRT: Open Discussion on "Prisoners of War"

Jan. 5th, Kankakee Valley CWRT: Open Discussion on the Wilderness Campaign

Jan. 7th, Northern Illinois CWRT: **Leslie Goddard** portrays "Clara Barton"

Jan. 13th, Milwaukee CWRT: **Lawrence L. Hewitt** on "Slandered Heroes: Deserters Who Didn't"

Jan. 14th, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Lunchbox Lecture Series, on "First Bull Run". Visit www.thecivilwarmuseum.org for more details.

Jan. 18th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT in Alsip: **Brian C. Miller** on "John Bell Hood"

Jan. 21st, Salt Creek CWRT: **Roger Bohn** on "North Carolina's Civil War Governor Zebulon Vance"

Jan. 22nd, McHenry County CWRT: Discussion on "Colorful People of the Civil War"

Jan. 23rd, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Presentation on "The Underground Railroad".

Jan. 27th, South Suburban CWRT: **Cathy Schultz** on "The Civil War in Film"

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*.

Jan. 14, 2011: **Lawrence L. Hewitt**, "Slandered Heroes: Deserters Who Didn't"

Feb. 11: **Dan Sutherland** on "Guerilla War"

March 11: **Susan Boardman**, "Gettysburg Cyclorama"

April 8: **Richard McMurry**, TBA

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 Jan. 15th at noon, with **George Rable** talking about his new book, *A Religious History of the Civil War*, and **Michael Peake** talking about *Blood Shed in This War: Civil War Illustrations by Captain Adolph Metzner, 32nd Indiana*. For more information on these and upcoming events, visit www.virtualbooksigning.net or www.alincolnbookshop.com.

Lincoln Program this March

The Chicago Public Library, this Round Table, and other local historical organizations are sponsoring a program titled "150th Anniversary of the Inauguration of Abraham Lincoln". The date is March 4, 2011, at the Union League Club in downtown Chicago, and will feature talks by historians, display of artifacts, and a "private tour" of the Chicago Public Library's Civil War/Lincoln artifact collection.