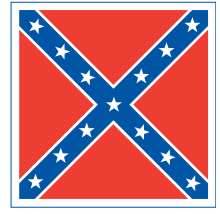


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Founded December 3, 1940



Volume LXXIV, Number 4

Chicago, Illinois

December 2013



726th REGULAR MEETING

Kevin Weddle

on

“Lincoln’s Tragic Admiral”

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Friday, December 13

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA

350 NORTH ORLEANS STREET

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$47 - Members/Non-members

Entrée: Prime Rib,

Baked Salmon

Vegetarian Plate or

Fruit Plate

Please Note:

Make your reservations by Wednesday, Dec. 11, by emailing dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org, or calling 630 460-1865 with the names of your party and choice of entrée.

If a cancellation becomes necessary after dinner reservations have been made, please email us at dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org and/or call us at 630-460-1865.

We are offering the option of choosing not to have dinner and coming only for the address at 7:15 p.m., for a charge of \$10 per person.

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

Kevin Weddle

on

“Lincoln’s Tragic Admiral”

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

On Dec. 13th Colonel Kevin Weddle will discuss Rear Admiral Samuel Francis Du Pont. At the start of the Civil War, Du Pont was considered one of the finest officers in the US Navy. Yet a little more than two years into the war, he was disgraced, having been relieved of his command after his failed naval effort to take Charleston, SC. Today Du Pont is little more than a footnote. Kevin Weddle, Ph.D., Colonel (Retired), US Army, and Professor of Military Theory and Strategy at the US Army War College, will talk about this all but forgotten officer who actually made a significant contribution to US Navy success before and during the war.



Kevin Weddle is Professor of Military Theory and Strategy at the US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. He is a native Minnesotan, graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, and served over 28 years as a combat engineer officer. Throughout his career he worked in a variety of command and staff positions in the United



Kevin Weddle

States and overseas and he is a veteran of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Colonel Weddle holds masters’ degrees in history and civil engineering from the University of Minnesota and a Ph.D. in history from Princeton University.

He has written numerous articles for popular and scholarly journals and his first book, *Lincoln’s Tragic Admiral: The Life of Samuel Francis*

Du Pont (University of Virginia Press, 2005), won the 2006 William E. Colby Award, was runner up in the Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt Naval History Prize competition, and won the Army War College’s faculty writing award. He is currently writing a strategic history of the Saratoga campaign for the Oxford University Press.

Battlefield Preservation

BY BRIAN SEITER

(Richmond, Va.) – Governor Bob McDonnell announced today that Wal-Mart has donated to the Commonwealth of Virginia more than 50 acres of land in Orange County associated with the Civil War battle of Chancellorsville and most notably with the battle of the Wilderness.

“We are delighted by this generous and voluntary gift from Wal-Mart,” said Governor McDonnell. “It’s another demonstration of Wal-Mart’s role as a good and positive corporate citizen in Virginia, whose presence here serves long range goals for our vitality.”

Henry Jordan, Senior Vice President, Eastern Seaboard Wal-Mart said, “Wal-Mart is extremely pleased that we have both found a home for our new store in Orange County while donating the property at the originally proposed site to the Commonwealth. In this way, we have been able to give back to the community and serve the needs of our customers.”

Virginia’s Department of Historic Resources, the agency that will receive and steward the donated land, has worked quietly with Wal-Mart to complete the donation documents and its acceptance. Those documents are now final and will be record by Wal-Mart. The department holds or co-holds numerous easements on thousands of acres of privately-owned battlefield lands throughout the commonwealth,

easements that protect the lands from future development.



Gov. McDonnell
of Virginia

“This is a wonderful legacy gift from Wal-Mart that comes during the midpoint of the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War,” said Kathleen S. Kilpatrick, director of the Department of Historic Resources. “We look forward to working with community leaders to steward the property and realize its potential for public benefit. We are grateful to the Company and to Speaker Bill Howell, Chairman of the Sesquicentennial Commission, for his work to encourage the donation.”

“On behalf of the entire Sesquicentennial Commission, I want to thank Wal-Mart for this generous donation,” added Speaker Bill Howell. “The Civil War is an important part of Virginia’s history. This donation will allow for the preservation of these historic lands for future generations.”

Wal-Mart had originally purchased the land, which was zoned for development, for construction of a Wal-Mart Supercenter store, a decision the company was willing to revisit when the site’s close affiliation with Chancellorsville and Wilderness were brought to light.

Wal-Mart has since then selected,

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940
1039 Hinswood
Darien, Illinois 60561
Phone: 630-460-1865
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 editor@chicagocwrt.org.

purchased, and constructed a store at an alternative site four miles west of the original site located at the intersection of Routes 3 and 20. The company’s alternative site was supported by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Civil War Trust, and other groups who today applauded the donation.

“With this donation, Wal-Mart successfully fulfils the commitment made in 2011 to choose an alternate site and work to set aside the original location,” said Jim Lighthizer, president of the Civil War Trust. “The Commonwealth and Virginia’s Department of Historic Resources are ideally suited to be stewards of this resource, safeguarding its integrity for future generations of Americans to visit and study. We deeply appreciate Wal-Mart’s gift and the Commonwealth’s willingness to facilitate this important milestone in the protection of battlefield lands.”

From the office of Gov. McDonnell

November Meeting

BY MARK MATRANGA

The Civil War Round Table awarded **Lawrence Hewitt** the 2013 Nevins-Freeman award at its 725th regular meeting on November 8, 2013. In his lecture, *Civil War Myths and Mythmakers*, Hewitt focused on the differing methods by which a myth is created. Mythmakers can be supposed eyewitnesses or historians writing after the fact. Despite the historians' job to ferret out the truth and expose lies, sometime the story is just too good not to retell. At times historians are misled by available evidence and at times historians manufacture facts, and even the best historians make honest mistakes.

As an examples of the latter, Hewitt discussed how the death of Lloyd Tilghman at Champion Hill was mistakenly based on the account of one 'F.W.M.' who had left the field four hours before Tilghman's death. As 'Misleading Evidence' the Official Records state Brigadier General John Roane accompanied Earl Van Dorn to Mississippi in the spring of 1862 and commanded a brigade during the Siege of Corinth when he was commanding forces in Arkansas at the time.

The meeting of Generals Lee and Stuart on the afternoon of July 2, 1863 contains a 'Blatant Fabrication.' Based on a 1934 biography of Stuart, Douglas Southall Freeman wrote that "the tradition is that Lee said, 'Well, General Stuart, you are here at last.'" Burke Davis turned the meeting into an altercation, Lee raising his arm as if to strike Stuart and saying, 'General Stuart, where have you been?' Neither man nor

any of Lee's staff left an account of this event. Hewitt ponders the possibility that Lee heartily welcomed Stuart.

A 'Tall Tale' involves the oft-repeated story of Braxton Bragg, who as company commander issued a requisition to the quartermaster of the fort, himself, who denied the request. He referred the dispute to the post commander who marveled that he had argued with every other officer in the army and was now arguing with himself. The story's source? Grant's *Memoirs*, published some forty years after this event could have happened.

An archetype of 'The Fake' is the iconic photograph of a dead confederate in the Devil's Den. There is a second photo of the same body in another location, making it obvious that the body had been moved. In 1975, William Frassanito claimed Alexander Gardner had moved the body uphill to create a better composition; he retracted this but to no avail. Forensic research later determined that Gardner moved the body down the hill where the photo was staged. But the government does not accept this - the myth continues.

Another long held myth is that the rifled musket rendered traditional tactics outmoded and was responsible for the high rate of casualties. This was debunked by Paddy Griffith and Earl Hess who showed that using traditional tactics, civil war armies did not open fire until their adversaries were within 200 yards, negating the rifle's increased effective range.

Hewitt exposed another long held assumption, that the Trans-Mississippi was the 'junkyard' of the Confederacy, by citing a set of unassailable facts: of 73 generals who served in the Trans-Mississippi, ninety per cent were not 'dumped' by the eastern armies. Of the remaining seven, John G. Walker was transferred to the Trans-Mississippi over Lee's objection, William Preston was sent away by Bragg, and Sibley was initially assigned there.

Hewitt challenged another great myth of the war, one biographer of Nathan Bedford Forrest and Braxton Bragg have perpetuated, that Forrest threatened Bragg after Chickamauga. This 'war story' was initiated by Dr. James Cowan, a member of Forrest's staff, long after both were dead. Hewitt cited communications from Forrest to Bragg and Bragg's actively recommending Forrest's promotion as proof that this incident never happened.

Last, Hewitt took on the "The Passing of the Armies," a 'Blatant Fabrication' of events at Appomattox which Hewitt attributes to shameless self-promotion by Joshua Chamberlain. There was no exchange of salutes, no shifting of arms, and John Gordon did not order his men to return a salute. Rather, Gordon used Chamberlain's account in his memoirs as a post-war gesture of reconciliation.

Larry Hewitt's dedication to teaching and understanding civil war history, and his publications in this field, are well known. His legacy will be his dogged determination to get history right.

GRAPESHOT



On Dec. 14th, the Civil War Museum in Kenosha will present an afternoon of songs, crafts and activities exploring how soldiers and civilians celebrated the Christmas holiday during the Civil War.

The December issue of *Civil War News* has an extensive article with photo of the Sons of Union Veterans grave marker ceremony at Plainfield Township Cemetery on Sept. 28th. Among those pictured is our own **Jerry Kowalski** (General George Thomas), in his role as Chaplain General of the SUV. This is the seventh Civil War veteran headstone project completed by the Sheridan Camp, SUV.

On Dec. 7th, the Civil War Museum in Kenosha will have Steve Sherry hosting a workshop on Civil War small arms and uniforms

The CWRT's winter **Executive Committee** Board Meeting is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 25th at the Chicago History Museum, starting at 9 a.m. Any member is welcome to attend.

Check the **Announcements** section of the CWRT's website for additional coming events.

Know of any upcoming talks, events, or publications? All members are welcome to contribute items to the newsletter. Contact the editor at editor@chicagocwrt.org 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 CD format. For pricing and a lecture list, please 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.

More Upcoming Civil War Events

Dec. 4th, Lake County CWRT: Christmas party

Dec. 6th, Union League Club of Chicago, Kevin Peraino will discuss his new book, Lincoln in the World

Dec. 6th, Northern Illinois CWRT: Charlie Banks on "U.S. Military Railroads"

Dec. 8th, McHenry County CWRT: Annual Christmas luncheon

Dec. 12th, Milwaukee CWRT: Kevin Weddle on "Lincoln's Tragic Admiral"

Dec. 13th, Civil War Museum in Kenosha: Neil Shafer discusses Civil War paper currency

Dec. 17th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Dave Clark on "The Roads that Lead to Lincoln"

Dec. 19th, South Suburban CWRT: Holiday Party at Aurelio's in Frankfort

Dec. 20th, Salt Creek CWRT: Roger Bohn on "Richard Yates"

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. 20, 2014: Rob Girardi, "The Murder of General William 'Bull' Nelson"

Feb. 14: Harold Knudsen, "General Longstreet"

March 14: Aaron Barnhart, "Price's 1864 Missouri Raid"

April 11: Scott Bowden, "Last Chance for Victory"

May 9: Dan Bastian, "Grant's Canal"

June 13: Kenneth Noe, "The War in Appalachia"

The next **Virtual Book Signing** will take place in Thursday, December 5th at 6:00pm. Join the Abraham Lincoln Bookshop for Kevin Peraino and Jared Peatman. Kevin's book, Lincoln in the World, is the first on over 40 years to examine Lincoln's foreign policy initiatives. Jared Peatman will talk about The Long Shadow of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. This revealing work provides fresh insight into the enduring legacy of Abraham Lincoln and his Gettysburg Address on American history and culture.

*From the CWRT to all,
Happy Holidays!*



150 YEARS AGO – DECEMBER 1863



-
- 2nd:** Union General George Meade withdraws to north of the Rapidan River, ending the brief Mine Run Campaign
- 3rd:** Confederate General James Longstreet begins a two-day withdrawal from Knoxville, TN to Greeneville following the Siege of Knoxville.
- 8th:** President Lincoln announced the Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction to Congress. He offered a full amnesty to those who fought for the Confederacy except to former Federal army officers and senior government officials. Lincoln also promised that all property in the South (except former slaves) would be restored to their legal owners. He also guaranteed that any Southern state would be allowed back into the Union if just 10% of those in a state swore allegiance to the Union. Each of these states would also have to abandon slavery.
- 9th:** Unhappy with proposals from the mint director, Salmon Chase recommends the words “In God We Trust” be added to the design of the new one, two and three-penny coins.
- 14th:** Battle of Bean’s Station, TN. Federal forces probe Longstreet’s lines near his winter camp. After several days of heavy skirmishing, Longstreet struck the Union line on Dec. 14, driving Brigadier General James Shackleford back about 1.5 miles before he made a stand. Union forces withdrew that evening.
- 16th:** Joe Johnston ordered to take command of the Army of Tennessee in Dalton. He formally takes command of the army Dec. 27th.
- 22nd:** Leonidas Polk ordered to take command of the Army of Mississippi.
- 26th:** The strength of the Confederacy was put at 465,000 men but only 278,000 were actually present for duty.

Scholarship Award in Honor of Dr. Joseph L. Harsh

In 2011, the Board of Directors of Save Historic Antietam Foundation Inc. established an award for scholarly research of selected aspects of the Maryland Campaign of 1862, especially the battle of Antietam or Sharpsburg. The award is named in honor of Dr. Joseph L. Harsh, longtime professor at George Mason University, and author of the prize-winning trilogy on the Maryland Campaign. Through the generosity of the family and friends of Dr. Joseph L. Harsh, SHAF is able to provide an annual stipend of up to \$2,500 for the successful applicant to undertake a research project to enhance understanding of aspects of the campaign and battle. The stipend will be offered annually and will be awarded based on review of the applicant’s proposal by a committee composed of representatives of the SHAF Board of Directors, the Harsh family and Antietam National Battlefield. SHAF hopes that this funding will promote research on unresolved issues concerning the campaign. If a scholar does not have a topic in mind,

suggestions can be provided by SHAF.

Applicants need not be enrolled in any school, but must provide evidence of their ability to perform the research required for completion of the project. Because this award honors a great scholar it is imperative that the completed project reflect the highest standards of scholarship and research. Topics must be approved by the stipend committee, and the successful applicant will present his or her finished project at an event in conjunction with the annual anniversary commemoration at Antietam National Battlefield. The awardee will also produce a written summation in a format suitable for publication. Applications can be made to SHAF no later than February 15, and the award will be announced by March 1. Research must be completed by September 1. The guidelines and more details are available at the SHAF website, www.shaf.org

(over)

Civil War Discovery Trail African American Civil War Memorial and Museum

The African American Civil War Memorial and Museum, located in Washington, D.C., commemorates the service of the 208,000 African American troops and their officers in the American Civil War. The United States Colored Troops (USCT) comprised more than 10 percent of the Union army and 25 percent of the Union navy—a remarkable contribution, considering only one percent of the North's population prior to the war was of African descent. These men are now forever memorialized for their courage, valor and service to their country.

The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities commissioned Ed Hamilton to begin work on The Spirit of Freedom, the first national monument commemorating the service of the USCT, in 1993. A walking trail and wall etched with the names of enlisted men in the USCT encircles the bronze sculpture, which is located in proximity to the African American Civil War Museum. Initially opened in 1999, the museum relies on images, newspaper clippings, artifacts and other forms of media to tell the story of these men and their sacrifice. One unique offering available at the museum is the African American Civil War Memorial Registry, which contains information on the genealogy of thousands of descendants of USCT members.

The men who comprised the 175 regiments of the USCT played a pivotal role in the Union war effort. Serving as engineers, sailors, cavalry, infantry and artillery in the same capacity as their white counterparts, the USCT troops proved all men are created equal. In many instances, these men faced unlikely odds, leading the Union charge against Confederate strongholds like Petersburg, New Market Heights, Fort Wagner and Port Hudson.

The African American Civil War Memorial and Museum is located at 1925 Vermont Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20001. The website is www.afroamcivilwar.org.

From Civil War Trust, *Hallowed Ground*

News From the Camp Douglas Restoration Foundation

November 15, 2013, Presentations at Hyde Park and Des Plaines Historical Societies

CDRF provided presentations on Camp Douglas, Chicago and Illinois during the Civil War at meetings of both societies. The events were well attended and information well received. Any organization interested in a presentation for your group contact David Keller at dkeller@campdouglas.org.

November 1, 2013, Archaeological Excavation a Success

CDRF in cooperation with De Paul University and the Chicago Public Schools successfully completed an excavation at 3200 S. Calumet on Prisoners Square of Camp Douglas October 29. Nearly 30 volunteers under the direction of Dr. Michael Gregory began excavation on October 25. Artifacts and other data will be evaluated by Dr. Gregory by early 2014. These results will help determine future investigations. CDRF provided a special program for third grade students at Pershing East Magnet School including participation in the "dig." Details can be found on the website.

September 24, 2013, Special Artifacts Fund Established

A special fund has been established by CDRF to acquire and preserve artifacts relating to Camp Douglas. The Houston drawings, Robinson Papers, D. F. Brandon photographs and Col. Sweet 1865 Circular are part of the growing collection.

Donations are received at:

Camp Douglas Restoration Foundation
Artifacts Fund
1368 N. Mohawk 2S
Chicago, IL 60610