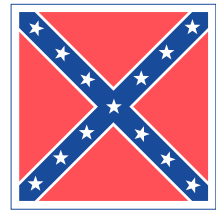


# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Founded December 3, 1940



Volume LXXV, Number 2

Chicago, Illinois

September 2014



## 734th REGULAR MEETING

★★★★★

Friday, September 12th

★★★★★

HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA

350 NORTH ORLEANS STREET

*Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.*

*Dinner at 6:30 p.m.*

**\$49 - Members/Non-members**

*Entrée:  
Sliced Roast  
Sirloin or Baked  
Salmon*

**Please Note:**

Make your reservations by Wednesday, September 10, by emailing [dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org](mailto: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](mailto: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.*

## Frank Varney on General Grant and the Rewriting of History

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE



Frank Varney

The Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant (1885) is considered a classic of American literature. Many judge it the greatest book ever written by a former U. S. President. Mark Twain, for one, declares of the Memoirs: "Their style is at least flawless and no man can improve upon it." Now, Twain was not a disinterested party, being the book's publisher. But his praise has been echoed by others. Historian Bruce Catton, for instance, observed that: "the book itself has a glow and shine..."

Ironically, this praise is offered to the memoirs of a president perhaps least known for his intellectual powers.

However, while the prose and narrative flow of Grant's memoirs earns near unanimous approval, historian Frank Varney has challenged the book's value as history.

"The shame is that Grant shaped history," explains Varney in his controversial new book, General Grant and the Rewriting of History: How the Destruction of General William S. Rosecrans Influenced Our Understanding of the Civil War. "[I]t is his version of the story, and not the truth, which has become the accepted account." By taking Grant's word for the matter instead of checking other

sources, he later says, historians "have allowed one man's personal agenda to dictate how history is written."

"As important as Grant's Memoirs are," Varney contends, "there is much more to know and to understand—and, I would argue—errors to correct, prejudices to overcome, and distortions to be balanced."

And with that, Varney sets off on a quest to do just that, using Grant's treatment of Maj. Gen. William Rosecrans as a case study. Varney uses the written record other than Grant to demonstrate that, as always, there is more than one side to the

story.

Frank Varney earned his Ph.D. at Cornell University. He regularly leads student groups to Civil War battlefields and makes frequent speaking appearances before Civil War Roundtables and historical societies. Professor Varney is currently developing a course to be taught on-site at Gettysburg, and will do the same for a course on Chickamauga. He teaches U.S. and classical history at Dickinson State University of North Dakota, where he is also the director of the Theodore Roosevelt Honors Leadership Program.



## Georgia Preservation

By Charlie Crawford

(July 2014 Civil War News - Preservation Column)

Many readers of Civil War News are familiar with the 1993 report of the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission (CWSAC), which resulted from Congressional legislation and was conducted under the auspices of the U.S. Department of the Interior. The CWSAC report estimated 10,500 engagements – large and small – occurred during the war, and it examined the status of 384 battlefields, 25 of which were in Georgia.

Also in 1993, the Georgia legislature chartered the Georgia Civil War Commission to coordinate any activities, including preservation, relating to battlefields in Georgia.

In early 1995, Georgia Battlefields Association was established as a private organization to assist the Commission, particularly in raising funds for preservation, as the enabling legislation restricted the Commission from soliciting donations.

In 1998, researchers for the Georgia Civil War Commission compiled a database of almost 400 Civil War sites in the state. Some were the scene of major battles. Others were transitory camp sites for small units.

While most people are aware that Georgia played a significant role in the Civil War, the 1998 survey provided a way to quantify the physical legacy beyond the 25 sites covered by CWSAC and CWS II.

Despite this abundance of sites, Georgia has only four Civil War-related national parks: Chickamauga, Kennesaw

Mountain, Andersonville, and Fort Pulaski. State government protects about a dozen sites, including Pickett's Mill, Griswoldville, and Fort McAllister.

City and county governments protect another dozen or so, such as Fort Walker and Nash Farm. Finally, a few sites are protected by non-governmental organizations, such as the Atlanta History Center's ownership of Gilgal Church battlefield land and Georgia Battlefields Association's preservation of a parcel near New Hope Church.

This leaves well over 300 sites in private hands. During the housing boom that lasted until 2008, earthworks and original terrain at many sites were damaged or destroyed. This was especially true in the northwest Georgia corridor, where three major campaigns occurred.

At the state level, Georgia Battlefields Association tries to influence rezoning hearings, communicates with legislators, educates the public through presentations and tours, sponsors historical markers, owns small parcels of battlefield land, and raises money to purchase historic sites.

While preserving the land is the first priority, it is also important to make the land accessible and interpret it with historical markers, walking trails, and – optimally but most costly – visitors' centers.

The battlefield at Resaca provides a case study. Resaca saw fighting May 13-15, 1864, as the

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Darien, Illinois 60561

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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](mailto:editor@chicagocwrt.org).

first large battle of the Atlanta Campaign. After the war, the land was farmed and timbered and developed for houses. The greatest insult occurred in the late 1950s and early 1960s when Interstate Highway 75 was built through the battlefield.

Still, readily identifiable earthworks remained, several of which could be correlated to George Barnard's 1864 photos. Some landowners protected the earthworks, some saw them as a nuisance, and some were unaware of their presence.

In 1998, battlefield preservation groups, both local and statewide, persuaded the state government to negotiate for the purchase of 1,200 acres of the Resaca battlefield west of I-75; but an individual with ready cash bought the land instead.

In 2000, the state government was able to buy 500 acres from the new landowner for slightly less than they were offering for 1,200 acres two years earlier; but plans for an access road, visitors' center, markers, trails, etc., fell victim to reduced state government budgets during the recession that began in 2001. (cont page 3)

## Georgia Preservation *(cont from page 2)*

When a renewed effort appeared ready to launch, another recession affected state funding beginning in late 2008. Not until 2012 did work get underway, and the Resaca State Historic Site opened in May 2014 for the sesquicentennial of the battle.

...Farther north, the Trust for Public Land bought 474 acres about to be foreclosed in late 2008. This land was the scene of heavy fighting on both May 14 and 15, 1864, and contained a Confederate artillery position made famous when its four guns were captured and later removed under cover of darkness.

With the help of the American Battlefield Protection Program, Gordon County government, Civil War Trust, Georgia Battlefields Association and Friends of Resaca, a conservation easement was put on this land in early 2011, and 51 acres of the parcel, including the Confederate battery position, was bought outright in March 2012, to be protected as county property.

While Resaca provides an example of a sustained preservation effort that sometimes proceeded in fits and starts, other preservation victories in 2013 included the purchase of 109 acres adjoining Chickamauga National Military Park and 42 acres next to Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park.

We've also had partial victories by convincing developers to rework site plans to preserve earthworks, such as the unique

Confederate forts that guarded the Chattahoochee River, though they are now surrounded by houses. ...Thanks to the determination of local, state, and national governments and non-profit organizations, Georgia has preserved over 840 acres of battlefield land in the last three years.

Contact the Georgia Battlefields Association at [info@georgiabattlefields.org](mailto:info@georgiabattlefields.org), [www.georgiabattlefields.org](http://www.georgiabattlefields.org) or c/o Treasurer Frank Chew, 7 Camden Rd. NE, Atlanta GA 30309

### August Meeting

By Paul Walker

On Friday, August 15, The Civil War Round Table of Chicago held a special meeting at the Rosewood Banquet Hall in Rosemont, Illinois. The meeting was attended by 65 members and guests. The speaker was **Lance Herdegen**, well-known author, historian, and Chairman of the Wisconsin Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission. The topic was Gettysburg: A Fight for the Colors.

At the first day's fighting at the battle of Gettysburg, July 1, 1863, the storied Iron Brigade was present on the field. A detachment of the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteers, known as the "Calico Boys," was in position northwest of town, and could see the flag of the Second Mississippi. The detachment ran over one half mile to attack the Confederate Brigade. The

intense fight between the troops took place in an unfinished railroad cut; combat became hand-to-hand. The flag of the Second Mississippi was taken in the engagement. This successful action was important to the outcome of the battle of Gettysburg.

Lt. Col. Rufus Dawes observed his ragged line enduring a "fearful" and "destructive" fire, "an unbroken roar before us. Men were being shot by twenties and thirties." Dawes ordered his men to Charge and align on the colors. The rebel flag was actually seized by a farmer boy, Cpl. Frank Waller, found himself in the midst of "a general rush and yells enough to almost awaken the dead." The flag was seized and the Sixth Wisconsin won the engagement, albeit with fearful carnage.

The capture of the flag, what became of it and some of the men, was the topic of Lance's talk. He relayed a story about one officer's encounter with a rebel officer, and, being out of ammunition, threw his sword at the rebel. Lance then told of how, years after finding this particular anecdote, he was doing research for one of his books and came upon the first-person account of the other half of this encounter written by the rebel. What a find for a historian! He told other anecdotes about the flag and the men, much to the appreciation of all in attendance.

## GRAPESHOT



On September 12th at the **Midwest Civil War Museum in Kenosha** Frank Crawford will speak on soldier Jennie Hodgers. On Saturday, September 13th they're hosting their 7th annual **Civil War Forum**. On September 20th, family-friendly reenactors will present "A Soldier's Life," a 45-minute interactive presentation. Visit <http://www.kenosha.org/wp-civilwar/events> for more details.

**Rob Girardi** will speak on "The Murder of Maj. Gen. William "Bull" Nelson to the Manitowac, WI CWRT on Sept. 8th; at Fountindale Library, Bolingbrook, Sept. 10th on "General Impressions of the Civil War"; on "The Union High Command at Chancellorsville" Sept. 16th at Carroll University; and on "General Impressions of the Civil War" to the Richmond KY, CWRT Sept. 19th.

On Sept. 16th **Bruce Allardice** will speak on "Baseball and the Civil War" for the Flag Creek Historical Society. Visit [www.civilwarbruce.com](http://www.civilwarbruce.com) for more.

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](mailto: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](mailto: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

- Sept. 5th, Northern Illinois CWRT: Charles Knight on "Battle of New Market"
- Sept. 9th, McHenry County CWRT: Frank Crawford on "The Baltimore Riots"
- Sept. 11th, Lake County CWRT: Frank Crawford on "New Ways to Study the Civil War"
- Sept. 11th, Milwaukee CWRT: Frank Varney on "General Grant and the Rewriting of History"
- Sept. 13th, Decatur CWRT Symposium at Arthur, IL
- Sept. 16th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Michael S. Green on "Lincoln and the Election of 1860"
- Sept. 19th, Salt Creek CWRT: Bruce Allardice on "The Ten Worst Civil War Generals"
- Sept. 20th, Du Page County Fairgrounds: Semi-Annual Civil War Show
- Sept. 25th, South Suburban CWRT: George Levy on "Camp Douglas"
- Sept. 28th, Illinois State Museum Lockport Gallery: Leslie Goddard will present "Clara Barton"

## 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. 10: Mark Bradley on "Joe Hooker, O.O. Howard, and the Atlanta Campaign of 1864"
- Nov. 14: Steve Towne on "Civil War Espionage"
- Dec. 12: Jim Ogden, Nevins-Freeman Address
- Jan. 9, 2015: John Horn on "George Barnard and the 12th Virginia Infantry"
- Feb. 1: Leslie Goddard on "Gone With the Wind and the Construction of Civil War Memory"
- March 13: Thomas Huntington on "Searching for George Gordon Meade"
- April 10: Michael Burlingame on "The Assassination of President Abraham Lincoln"
- May 8: Eric Leonard on "Cartel, Code and Consequences at Andersonville"
- June 12: Garry Adelman on "4D Civil War Photography Extravaganza"

### Dinner Costs

At the CWRT's summer executive committee meeting the decision was reluctantly made to raise the dinner costs from \$47 to \$49 for this upcoming year. The CWRT was forced to do this to keep the costs in line with what the meeting place charges the CWRT.

# 150 Years Ago - September 1864

**Sept. 1** Confederates begin the evacuation of Atlanta, Georgia

**Sept. 2** Fall of Atlanta. The city is surrendered to Union forces by Mayor James Calhoun.

**Sept. 4** John Hunt Morgan is shot dead by federal troops fleeing the home of a woman who had betrayed him (Greenville, Tennessee)

**Sept. 5** Voters in Louisiana who had taken an oath of loyalty to the United States ratified a state constitution abolishing slavery

**Sept. 5** Tennessee Unionists meet in Nashville to restart the state government and plan participation in national elections that fall.

**Sept. 7** Gen. W. T. Sherman [US] orders the evacuation of Atlanta

**Sept. 7** USS Wachusett captures CSS Florida at Bahia, Brazil

**Sept. 10** Joe Wheeler [CS] returns to Confederate lines following a raid into North Georgia

**Sept. 17** John C. Fremont withdraws from the race for President

**Sept. 19** 3rd battle of Winchester (Opequon Creek). Phil Sheridan [US], with a force of 40,000 men, strikes Jubal Early's [CS] 14,000 man Confederate army north of Winchester. Sheridan simply overpowered the Confederates. General Robert E. Rodes was mortally wounded in the conflict.

**Sept. 22** Battle of Fisher's Hill. George Crook's [US] 8th Corps overpowers Jubal Early [CS] marking the start of Phil Sheridan's [US] destructive Shenandoah Valley campaign.

**Sept. 23** To please Radical Republicans before the Election of 1864, Lincoln asks Montgomery Blair to resign as Postmaster General, which he does later in the day.

**Sept. 25** Jefferson Davis visits General John Bell Hood at Palmetto. Hood asks permission to relieve William Hardee.

**Sept. 27** A small Confederate force under "Bloody" Bill Anderson attacks Centralia, Missouri. 24 Union soldiers are killed in the town and another 116 are killed in an ambush.

**Sept. 29-Oct. 2** Battle of Peebles' Farm. Hoping to extend his line westward south of Petersburg, George Meade pushed towards the Southside Railroad. Fighting occurred at Wyatt's, Peebles, and Pegram's farms, Chappell House, Poplar Spring Church and Vaughan Road

**Sept. 29-30** Battle of Fort Harrison. Southeast of Richmond, Fort Harrison was the main bastion of a string of Rebel defenses. 3,000 men under George Stannard [US] swarmed over the fort, capturing it in less than 20 minutes. Robert E. Lee directed a counter-attack the following day that failed to regain the position

# West Point 1964 Class & Others Seek A Washington Defenses National Park

*(August 2014 Civil War News)*

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Military Academy Class of 1964 is urging Congress to take action on H.R. 4003, the Civil War Defenses of Washington National Historical Park Act.

A class letter with 105 signatures is circulating among preservation groups and historians asking them to encourage the House Natural Resources Committee to hold a hearing on the bill and move it on so that it can be considered and enacted in this session of Congress.

The bill seeks to affiliate sites in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia that were part of the city's defenses and related to the 1864 Valley Campaigns.

By the end of the war, these defenses included 68 forts, 93 unarmed batteries, 807 mounted cannon, 13 miles of rifle trenches and 32 miles of military roads.

The act would create a historical park “to protect, preserve, enhance, and interpret for the benefit and use of present and future generations the cultural, historical, natural, and recreational resources of the Civil War defenses of Washington....”

...According to the bill, 19 sites, including Battleground Cemetery, are owned by the federal government and managed by the National Park Service (NPS), four are owned by local units of government in Northern Virginia, and one is owned by Montgomery County, Maryland.

The bill makes provision for Washington defensive sites that other entities own to be affiliated with the new national park through cooperative agreements. Sites owned by willing private sellers could be acquired. ...

A second part of the bill would study and consider cost-effective ways to display and share the Defenses of Washington

and 1864 Shenandoah Campaign history with the public in a National Civil War History Education Center.

The Class of 1964 said the legislation would help convey “the legacy of the Civil War in terms of the war’s historic and transcendent impacts on our nation’s social fabric, on the issues of states’ rights and slavery, on foreign policy, agriculture and manufacturing, on the role of women in war and peace, on art, medicine, music and our country’s economic and military capabilities.”

Among the bill’s supporters is historian William C. Davis, who noted that Americans and people around the world “are hungrier than ever to learn more about what happened, and to try to understand why it occurred.”

He said a Civil War Defenses of Washington National Historical Park “can only enhance visitors’ understanding of the war itself, and Washington’s pivotal role in that story, but also provide context for the broader story itself.”

The legislation is supported by the Civil War Trust, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and others, including the Alliance to Preserve the Civil War Defenses of Washington.

The Summer 2014 issue of the Civil War Trust’s Hallowed Ground magazine featured the Alliance which was formed in 2002 to increase protection and appreciation of the remaining defenses.

The bipartisan House bill to create the Civil War Defenses of Washington National Historical Park is one result of the Alliance’s work. ...

For information email:

[wp1964civilwar@verizon.net](mailto:wp1964civilwar@verizon.net)

## In Memorium-Jerry Feinstein

The CWRT’s longtime friend, Jerry Feinstein, passed away on August 16.

Jerry will be remembered for organizing the Veteran’s Day Memorial service at Rosehill Cemetery. His dedication to that event never wavered even when he wasn’t feeling well. He organized three Chicago Cemetery tours for the round table and for many years ran the auction along with Dan McCarthy for Salt Creek raising thousands of dollars for battlefield preservation. He reenacted in the First Michigan Engineers and mentored new recruits. In 2009 he was presented with a special plaque from the Chicago Light Artillery for his outstanding service to the organization and the reenacting community in general.