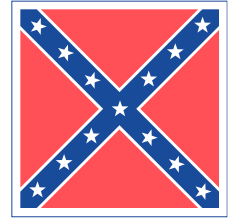


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Founded December 3, 1940



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Diane Monroe Smith *Command Conflict in the Overland Campaign*



The characters and confusion that surrounded Ulysses Simpson Grant in springtime 1864 Virginia come vividly to life in “Command Conflicts in Grant’s Overland Campaign,” the latest book by Civil War author Diane Monroe Smith.

Author of the Chamberlain biography *Fanny and Joshua*, Smith wrote “Command Conflicts” after researching the role that Joshua Chamberlain played during the siege of Petersburg.

look at the Fifth Corps and their experience in Grant’s Overland Campaign,” she said. Drawing upon her research, she started investigating Grant and the generals who surrounded him during spring and summer 1864. Her effort led to the January 2013 publication of *Command Conflicts in Grant’s Overland Campaign*. Painstakingly researched and highly detailed, the 248-page (bibliography and index included) book follows Grant as he assumes higher command in the

Western Theater and ultimately becomes the commander of all Union armies in winter 1864.

Smith meticulously introduces the many generals who commanded various components of that army and explains how ambition, ego, and personality traits adversely impacted the army’s command structure.

A Maine resident, Diane Smith has now written three Civil War-themed books, accomplishments made possible by her lifelong interest in the war. (h/t Bangor Daily News)



761st REGULAR MEETING

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Friday, April 21st

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HOLIDAY INN, SKOKIE
5300 TUOHY AVE., SKOKIE

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$50 - Members/Non-members

**ENTRÉE
SIRLOIN OR WHITEFISH**

During her research for her book, “Fanny and Joshua” (a dual biography of Joshua and Fanny Chamberlain), Smith contacted an archivist at Duke University, which she had heard still possessed some Joshua Chamberlain letters. Instead the university had an unpublished “Chamberlain manuscript” detailing the history of the Petersburg campaign, during which Chamberlain commanded a brigade in the Fifth Corps, she learned. Smith “heavily annotated” the manuscript and published the book *Chamberlain at Petersburg*. The book presents “a good, hard



SECRETARY ZINKE ACCEPTS PRESIDENT TRUMP'S Q1 SALARY AS A DONATION FOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

WASHINGTON - Today, President Donald J. Trump donated his first quarter salary to the National Park Service (NPS) to help fund the maintenance backlog in America's historic battlefields. The donation, totaling \$78,333, was accepted by Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke and Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Superintendent Tyrone Brandyburg at the daily White House Press briefing.

"President Trump is dedicated to our veterans, our public lands, and keeping his promises, and by donating his salary to the National Park Service to repair our historic battlefields proves his commitment," Secretary Zinke said. "These historic places tell the story of conflicts that helped shape our country's history, and they also honor the many men and women who have given their lives in service of this great nation. I'm honored to help the president carry out his love and appreciation for our warriors and land."

There are 25 sites across the National Park Service that are classified as National Battlefields, National Battlefield Parks, National Military Parks and National Battlefield Sites. Antietam National Battlefield in Maryland, which commemorates the battle that led to President Abraham Lincoln's issuance of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, saw over 350,000 visits last year. Gettysburg National Military Park in Pennsylvania, where the bloodiest battle of the Civil War took place, saw over 1 million visits in 2016.

"The National Park Service is proud and deeply honored by President

Trump's donation to support the preservation of battlefields in the National Park System," said Acting National Park Service Director Michael T. Reynolds. "Philanthropy has been essential to the National Park Service's mission since its establishment, and this notable contribution will enable the National Park Service to share these remarkable places with more visitors for generations to come."

Since being confirmed, Secretary Zinke has made it clear that addressing the \$12 billion in deferred maintenance across the National Park Service, which includes \$229 million for battlefield sites, is one of the top priorities at the Department. (DOI Press release, April 3, 2017)

GENERAL LEE'S GETTYSBURG HQS HOUSE TO OPEN FOR SPECIAL EVENTS AND COMMEMORATIONS

(Gettysburg, Pa.) - In conjunction with anniversary programming and other special events throughout 2017, the Civil War Trust will hold open houses at the site of Gen. Robert E. Lee's headquarters in Gettysburg. The house and grounds, which served as Gen. Lee's command center during the Battle of Gettysburg, was preserved by the Trust in 2016 as part of a \$6 million acquisition and restoration project.

The site is located at 401 Buford Avenue in Gettysburg. In addition to the grounds and interpretive trail -

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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.

which are open from sunrise to sunset - the headquarters building will be open at the times noted below. Visit Civilwar.org/LeesHQ for details.

Friday, April 28, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Arbor Day Apple Orchard Planting

June 9/June 10, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

History Meets the Arts Program

Saturday, June 24 - Sunday, June 25
Artillery Encampment and
Demonstration

Friday, June 30 - Sunday, July 2

Living History Encampment

Sunday, November 19, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Remembrance Day

Saturday December 9, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Historic Gettysburg Holiday Open
House

In addition, interpreters from the nearby Seminary Ridge Museum will be onsite periodically to discuss topics such as the Battle of Gettysburg's impact on civilians, the major command decisions made at the Lee's Headquarters site, and the battle action that occurred on the headquarters property on July 1, 1863. Please visit SeminaryRidgeMuseum.org for programming dates and details. (Civil War Trust, press release, April 4, 2017)

MARCH MEETING

By Mark Matranga

Paul Kahan offered a revisionist view of the career of Simon Cameron, "Amiable Scoundrel," at the 760th Regular Meeting of The Civil War Round Table. It is commonly held that Cameron was quite corrupt, "He wouldn't steal a hot stove" being his political epitaph. However, Kahan maintains that Cameron was one of the most talented and successful politicians of his time who is ignored by historians. He questions how Cameron, an influential key state political leader, became the most corrupt politician in American history.

In answering the question posed, Kahan concludes that no one better mastered the political environment of his time than did Cameron. A model for understanding the age, he lived the longest of any of Lincoln's cabinet and his life (1799-1889) spanned the time of Washington to the Cleveland administration. More important, his career illustrates the four main themes of 19th century American politics: the relation of state to federal power, the changing media environment, and the role of factions and patronage in politics.

The rules of American politics were changing in the 1820's. This development is generally attributed to Andrew Jackson, but Kahan has a different view. Jackson came to prominence as a national figure whereas Cameron emerged in a system where control of state political factions was the route to national power. State power led to prestige and influence on the national level for Calhoun, Van Buren, Clay, and others who created or led political machines in their states. Pennsylvania was a central component

in 19th century electoral politics whose leaders exerted commensurate influence.

Also changing was the media environment. Early in the century, printing and distributing papers were expensive, creating a narrow, factionalized media environment. But technological innovations were eroding these barriers. Steam powered printing presses dramatically increased circulation, and wood pulp paper reduced the cost from cotton-based paper. Telegraph and railroads increased the speed at which information disseminated to all parts of the country. Cameron came of age when the number of newspapers had exploded and which appealed to a proliferating number of political and social groups.

This factionalism was elementary to 19th century politics. Early in the century, parties were not driven by platforms but were made up of diverse groups - southern planters and northern urban working class coalesced into the Democratic Party; the Whig Party contained Clay and Calhoun, who had little in common. Kahan calls these amalgamations of groups in both parties, "shared antagonism." This existed in Pennsylvania, where there were multiple power centers, one of which was Cameron's.

Policy differences between political factions were few; patronage was the key element in the power struggle. Patronage brought out the vote and generated party unity; it was "The glue that holds these factions together and the gasoline that makes the engine of politics work."

Cameron utilized all these elements in his career. As a newspaperman, he supported politicians who offered political patronage; government printing contracts brought wealth and appointment as Adjutant General of the state militia. As a banker he invested in railroads and funded political campaigns which purchased fidelity among politicians and a seat the Senate in 1845. His paper in Washington was a Polk organ. By the 1850's he had become a national political force considered for the presidency. He ultimately pledged his delegates to Lincoln at the 1860 convention, ensuring the nomination for Lincoln and a cabinet position for himself. After the war, he returned to the Senate in 1867 and served ten years; his political machine endured until the New Deal.

Kahan admits that Cameron's tenure as Secretary of War was not without controversy but considers claims of corruption overblown. Cameron's bigger problem was his abolitionist/'hard hand of war' stance which in the early stage of the war conflicted with administration policy. Kahan argues effectively that Cameron's career is a laboratory for understanding 19th century political life and worthy of study.

Tour Reminder—Sign up NOW for our CWRT's annual Battlefield Tour, covering the 1862 Peninsula Campaign. It will be held May 3-7, and as usual Ed Bearss is the head guide. See <http://www.chicagocwrt.org/battletour.html> for more information.

GRAPESHOT



Leslie Goddard will portray Clara Barton Saturday, May 13th, at the Kenosha Civil War Museum. On April 25th Leslie and Laura Keyes will portray “Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Lincoln” for the Crisis Center of South Suburbia, Ladies Auxiliary. Visit www.lesliegoddard.info for times and more information.

The Civil War Museum in Kenosha will host its Second Friday Lecture Series, Friday, May 12th, at noon. The topic is “Slavery, Secession, and the Voyage of the Lady Elgin,” presented by Brian Kangas. This program focuses on Milwaukee on the eve of the election of 1860 highlighting the conflict between Wisconsin’s Radical Republicans, led by Governor Alexander Randall and Irish Democrats in Milwaukee’s Third Ward. On April 29th the museum is sponsoring a seminar on the Civil War Home Front.

Information on all Civil War Museum programs is available at (262) 653-4140 or www.thecivilwarmuseum.org.

Rob Girardi will present “The Murder of General Bull Nelson” April 13th at the Grand Rapids Historical Society, and May 8th at the Indianapolis CWRT.

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.

PLEASE NOTE

Make your reservations by Sunday, April 16, 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 FREE.

More Upcoming Civil War Events

Apr. 13th, Lake County CWRT: Dave Noe on “The Pennsylvania Home Guard”

Apr. 18th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: John Hessler on “Pickett’s Charge at Gettysburg”

Apr. 20th, Milwaukee CWRT: Diane Smith on “Command Conflict in the Overland Campaign”

Apr. 21st, Salt Creek CWRT: Steven Alban on “Lincoln’s Political Generals and the Roles They Played”

Apr. 22nd, Du Page County Fairgrounds: Chicagoland Civil War and Military Extravaganza

Apr. 27th, South Suburban CWRT: Charlie Banks on “Civil War Military Railroads”

May 3rd, Kankakee Valley CWRT: Bruce Allardice on “Jeff Davis’s Colonels”

May 5th, Northern Illinois CWRT: Dan Joseph on “The 82nd Illinois”

Bulletin Board



FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held at the Holiday Inn O’Hare, the second Friday of each month, *unless otherwise indicated*.

May 12th: Connie Hansen presents a “First Person Portrayal of Jennie Wade’s mother”

June 9th: Don Sender on “Untold Facts of the Custer Debacle”

Sept. 8th: Ed Bonekemper on “False Remembrance of the Civil War, The Myth of the Lost Cause”

Oct. 13th: Dave Powell on “Chickamauga”

Nov. 10th: Tom Clemens on “Antietam”

Dec. 8th: David Dixon on “Lost Gettysburg Address”

Abraham Lincoln Bookshop

Their next “Author’s Voice” is 12-1 p.m. April 15th, when Daniel Weinberg talks with author Brian Dirck about his book, Lincoln in Indiana and Jodi Kantor, author of Presidential Libraries.

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