



THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume LIX, Number 7

Chicago, Illinois

March 1999

Peter Cozzens on "My Poor Little Ninth: The Ninth Illinois Infantry at Shiloh"

by Barbara Hughett

The Shiloh Campaign of the Spring of 1862 was one of the most brutal and costly—in men lost—of the Civil War. Shiloh was especially hard on the Ninth Illinois Infantry. In two hours of fighting there, the Ninth Illinois suffered the greatest number of casualties of any regiment in the battle, and of any Illinois regiment in any battle of the Civil War!

The Ninth, composed in large measure of German immigrants—for whom many American soldiers had only contempt—lost 366 members on the fields of Shiloh; two months earlier, at Fort Donelson, 210 had fallen. That a new regiment should lose, in less than two months, 576 men is one of the most remarkable events in the annals of the war. On March 12, Peter Cozzens will address The Round Table on the topic of "My Poor Little Ninth: The Ninth Illinois Infantry at Shiloh."

Peter Cozzens is a career diplomat with the U.S. State Department and one of the nation's most highly acclaimed Civil War authors. All five of his books have been selections of the History Book Club. His *Terrible Sound: The Battle of Chickamauga* and *The Shipwreck of Their Hopes: The Battles for Chattanooga* were both main selections and also were chosen by *Civil War* magazine as two of the one hundred greatest works ever written on the war.

He recently completed a biography entitled *General John Pope: A Life for the Nation* and has edited a supplement to *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*. He also co-edited, with former Round Table President Robert I. Girardi, *The Military Memoirs of General John Pope*. Cozzens is at work on a biography of famed Indian fighter General George Crook, and on a multi-volume work, tentatively titled *Eyewitnesses to the Indian Wars*.



Peter Cozzens

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579th Regular Meeting

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**PETER COZZENS ON "MY POOR
LITTLE NINTH: THE NINTH
ILLINOIS INFANTRY AT SHILOH"**

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Friday, March 12

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**UNION LEAGUE CLUB
65 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD**

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$25 - The Civil War Round Table of Chicago members
\$30 - Nonmembers

*Entrees: Beef Stroganoff or
Catch of the Day*



PLEASE NOTE

Make your reservation by Wednesday, March 10, by calling Registrar Carole Le Claire at 847-698-1438. People who attend without having made a reservation will pay a \$5 walk-in charge. If you make a reservation and then find you cannot attend, please call to cancel or you will be billed for a dinner. **No last-minute orders for the Catch of the Day can be honored. The chef must have at least twenty-four hours notice.**

The Union League Club is located at the corner of Jackson Boulevard and Federal Street. Federal Street runs north and south between Dearborn and Clark Streets.

Parking is available at the General Parking lot, just south of the Union League Club, at the rate of \$8 per car if you park between the hours of 4:30–10:30 p.m. If you do not get your ticket validated or park beyond the hours listed, you must pay the full amount.

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940
601 South La Salle Building, Suite C-817
Chicago Illinois 60605
Phone: 847-698-1438

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The only requirement for membership in The Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Membership Committee, 601 South La Salle Building, Suite C-817, Chicago, Illinois 60605.



William C. (Jack) Davis, this Round Table's 1998 Nevins-Freeman Award honoree, recently received the Frank Vandiver Award of the Houston Civil War Round Table.

BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION

☆ UPDATE ☆

by Mary Munsell Abroe

For the first time since its inception in the mid-1960s, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which receives its revenues in part from federal offshore oil leases, will be used to assist in the acquisition of threatened Civil War battlefields that are not federal properties—in the amount of \$8 million. Working with key members of Congress for over a year, the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites (APCWS) and the Civil War Trust (CWT) cooperated to achieve the financial commitment. The carrot-and-stick approach is fundamental here: each dollar of the \$8 million must be matched on a two-to-one basis by private groups that receive the monies, thus instituting a potential \$24-million venture to save non-federal battlefields.

Last year Congress voted to take nearly \$700 million from the bloated LWCF, with the Interior Department receiving an allotment of \$272 million. More than half of the \$272 million was earmarked by September 1998; it was only in late December that the Senate Subcommittee on Interior Affairs recommended to Secretary Bruce Babbitt that of the final \$130-plus million, \$8 million be designated “for the preservation of Civil War battlefields.”

The American Battlefield Protection Program, created in 1990 as an arm of the National Park Service, will distribute the funds to private preservation organizations that have two years in which to match the grant. According to the February/March 1999 issue of *Civil War News*, the APCWS and CWT played a key role in determining which sites would receive funds; those decisions, in turn, were based on the 1992 findings of the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission, which identified and prioritized 384 Civil War battlefields (including units of the National Park system) according to historical importance and the immediacy of threats to their integrity.

The bulk (\$7.3 million) of the \$8 million is earmarked for twenty-four sites in ten states. Among them are Prairie Grove in Arkansas; Resaca in Georgia; Perryville and Mill Springs in Kentucky; Port Hudson in Louisiana; Brices Cross Roads, Corinth, and sites related to the Vicksburg campaign in Mississippi; Bentonville and Averagesboro in North Carolina; Honey Springs in Oklahoma; Spring Hill in Tennessee; Harpers Ferry in West Virginia; and Brandy Station, Third Winchester, and Cedar Creek in Virginia. A total of \$1 million is set aside for School House Ridge at Harpers Ferry, where much of the land in the Confederate position lies outside the boundaries of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park—and development is a constant danger. A total of \$3.1 million is allocated to the three APCWS acquisitions at Brandy Station, Third Winchester, and Cedar Creek—the only battlefields of those specified where land already has been purchased and a sizeable debt seeks retirement.

Appropriations approved last spring by Congress also will provide financing in the amount of \$11.1 million from the LWCF to purchase about twelve hundred acres at federal Civil War parks. The acreage to be acquired constitutes “inholdings,” privately held land inside park borders. Among the parks that are scheduled to obtain

(continued on page 3)

☞ FEBRUARY MEETING ☞

by Larry Gibbs

On February 12, the legendary Ed Bearss addressed 142 members and guests at the 578th regular meeting of The Civil War Round Table. His topic was "John Wilkes Booth and His Attempted Escape"—appropriate on Abraham Lincoln's 190th birthday. A Montana native, Bearss has been a National Park Service historian at Vicksburg and Washington, D.C. He served as NPS chief historian from 1981 till 1994. Bearss, the author of twenty Civil War books, was the 1980 recipient of the Nevins-Freeman Award.

The original intent of Booth and his comrades was to kidnap President Lincoln, take him to Richmond, and hope to exchange him for many Confederate prisoners. When Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox on April 9, 1865, Booth abruptly altered his plans. Assignments in what had become a murder plot were given by Booth to his co-conspirators at 8:30 p.m. on April 14. These included the assassinations of Lincoln by Booth; Vice President Andrew Johnson by George Atzerodt; and Secretary of State William Seward by Lewis Powell (aka Lewis Payne). Atzerodt, Powell, and another conspirator, David Herold, were described as dissolute personalities who were Confederate sympathizers.

The 27-year-old Booth, a famous and prosperous actor, felt that the Confederacy's only salvation was the death of Lincoln. Booth knew in the afternoon of April 14 that Lincoln and his wife Mary would attend Ford's Theatre to see a performance of "Our American Cousin." Booth fatally shot Lincoln in the back of the head at 10:15 p.m. and then jumped down onto the stage, shouting, "sic semper tyrannis"—thus always to tyrants. Meanwhile, Lewis Powell badly wounded Seward, but failed to kill him. Atzerodt lost his nerve and did not assault Johnson. About twenty minutes after the assassination, Herold rode through Washington, following the previously planned escape route.

Herold followed Booth past the guard post at the Anacostia Bridge, southeast of Washington. The guards stopped both men, but allowed their passage if each man would promise not to return before morning. Their escape route followed the road to Surratsville, Maryland (now known as Clinton). In a possible revision of history, Bearss claimed, "Somewhere between the bridge and Surratsville is where Booth probably broke his left leg,

not when he jumped from the balcony at Ford's Theatre. No eyewitnesses to Lincoln's murder talked about a broken leg until after Booth's death." Eventually, Herold caught up with Booth as they proceeded toward the Potomac River.

Before Booth and Herold crossed the river, they stopped at Dr. Samuel Mudd's house where Mudd took care of Booth's leg. Mudd and Booth were not strangers; they had met three times previously. According to Bearss, Mudd almost certainly knew of the kidnapping plot. Mudd had introduced Booth to John Surratt, another conspirator. When questioned about his involvement during his trial, Mudd gave two conflicting versions; this damaged his credibility.

Once across the Potomac, Booth and Herold headed south about twenty miles to the Garrett Farm. The Union army was closing in on the conspirators on the morning of April 16, when they surrounded Booth and Herold who were hiding in a tobacco barn. Herold wanted to surrender when a fire was started. Boston Corbett fired at Booth, striking him in the neck. The paralyzed Booth asked that his hands be placed in front of him. He said, "Useless! Useless!" He died shortly thereafter.

Four of the alleged conspirators—Mary Surratt, Atzerodt, Powell, and Herold—were executed in Washington on July 8, 1865, after being convicted by a military tribunal. Four others, including Dr. Mudd, were given lesser sentences and sent to Fort Jefferson in the Dry Tortugas.

Bearss stated, "There have been several conspiracy theories about the assassination of Lincoln beyond Booth and his comrades. Immediately after the Civil War, the Confederate government was blamed for this heinous crime. In the 1930s, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton was accused of being the man behind the plot to kill Lincoln. Missing pages of Booth's diary and fallen telegraph lines on the evening of the murder were part of the circumstantial case against Stanton. In the last few years, Jefferson Davis and the Confederate government are again accused of Lincoln's murder. The rebel government knew and perhaps promoted the kidnap plot, but not the assassination plot, which was developed by Booth only two-and-one-half hours before Lincoln was shot." Bearss added that no "smoking gun" exists to conclusively prove any of the larger conspiracy theories about the assassination.

Preservation Update (continued from page 2)

this funding are Antietam, Monocacy, Stones River, Fredericksburg, and Gettysburg.

Superintendent Don Campbell of Harpers Ferry has been quoted as indicating his hope that the grant involving his site will "jump start" contributions from private groups to meet the *two-for-one match in the required two years*. His statement of "hope" is a wake-up call to all of us in the private sector who tour battlefields and/or belong to preservation organizations—or who don't belong but should—to put up or shut up. The ball's in our court—now are we going to do anything about it?

Silent Auction

A silent auction is held at each monthly dinner meeting, for books donated by late Round Table founding member Ralph G. Newman. The minimum bid is \$5 per book, with a minimum rise of \$1 per bid. Write your name on the first available line, indicating your dollar bid. If you wish to raise the bid, place your name on the next available line along with the amount of your bid. Five minutes after the conclusion of the speaker's presentation, bidding will close and the last highest bid is the winner of each book. Proceeds go to benefit battlefield preservation.

The New Books

Compiled by C. Robert Douglas



- Spencer, Warren F. *Raphael Semmes: The Philosophical Mariner*. U. of Alabama Press. 1997. \$37.95.
- Starr, Stephen Z. *Colonel Grenfell's War: The Life of a Soldier of Fortune*. LSU Press. 1995. Pbk. \$14.95. Original of 1971.
- Styple, William, ed.-in-chief. *Andersonville: Giving Up the Ghost*. Belle Grove Publ. Co. 1996. Pbk. \$16.95.
- Styple, William, ed. *Our Noble Blood — The Civil War Letters of Major General Regis de Trobriand*. Belle Grove Publ. Co. 1997. \$27.95.
- Sutherland, Daniel E., ed. *A Very Violent Rebel: The Civil War Diary of Ellen R. House*. U. of Tennessee Press. 1996. \$34.00.
- Sutherland, Daniel E. *The Confederate Carpetbaggers*. LSU Press. 1997. \$16.95. Original of 1988.
- Swisher, James K. *Prince of Edisto: Brig. Gen. Micah Jenkins, CSA*. Rockbridge Publ. Co. 1996. \$25.00.
- Symonds, Craig L. *Stonewall of the West: Patrick Cleburne and the Civil War*. U. Press of Kansas. 1997. \$34.95.

The Eighth Annual Civil War Symposium in Kankakee, Illinois, will be held on Saturday, March 27. Speakers are John Y. Simon, John Marsziek, and Stacey Allen. Fee for the all-day event is \$40 and includes a luncheon. For information, contact Wayne Carlson, at 815-939-1551.

We learn from Jerry Russell that the newly-formed Patrick Cleburne Society will celebrate the birthday of General Cleburne on March 21 with a ceremony at Cleburne's grave in Helena, Arkansas. The ceremony will be followed by a reception at the St. John's Episcopal Church in Helena, a church Cleburne helped to build and which he served as a vestryman. For more information, contact the society at Box 130817, Birmingham, Alabama 35213, or by e-mail at:

members@patrickcleburne.com

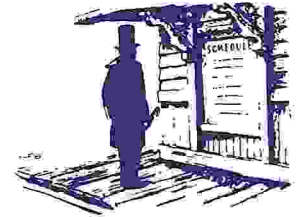
Schimmelfennig Boutique

The history of The Round Table, *The Civil War Round Table: Fifty Years of Scholarship and Fellowship*, by Barbara Hughett, is available for \$30 per copy. You may purchase the book at the monthly meeting or order it from Morningside Bookshop, 260 Oak Street, Dayton, Ohio 45401 (1-800-648-9710). Add \$2.50 for postage and handling.

In addition to The Round Table history and *The Continuing Civil War*, the essays from the Fiftieth Anniversary Proceedings, the following items are available at each monthly meeting: Lapel pins, Mugs, Meeting Tapes, Civil War Buff posters and T-Shirts, CWRT T-shirts, polos, and sweatshirts.

Proceeds from the sale of these items go to support the programs of The Civil War Round Table.

BULLETIN BOARD



FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held at the Union League Club, 65 West Jackson Boulevard, the second Friday in each month, except as noted.

March 12: Peter Cozzens on "My Poor Little Ninth: The Ninth Illinois Infantry at Shiloh"

April 9: Lance J. Herdegen on "How the Iron Brigade Won Its Name" (plus a special surprise, to be announced later)

April 29–May 2: Annual Battlefield Tour, Fredericksburg

May 14: Michael Andrus on "The Confederate Cover-up at Seven Pines"

June 11: Thomas P. Sweeney on "General 'Fightin' Tom Sweeney"

NEW MEMBERS

James Cunningham 10612 S. Claremont Ave., Chicago, IL 60643, 773-445-3503

Sean Dail and Maryann Dulick, 1405 Wake Forest Rd., Raleigh, NC 27604, 919-832-0646

Steven Haddad, 1827 Waterbury Circle, Glenview, IL 60025, 847-657-6339

David Powell, 522 Cheyenne, Lake In The Hills, IL 60102, 847-658-7539

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Paul Feiss, 3387 Polly Jones Ct., Rocky Mount, NC 27804-8195

Nominating Committee Meeting

- Robert Girardi, chair of the Nominating Committee, ■
- has announced that the annual meeting of the Com- ■
- mittee will be held on Tuesday, March 23, at 8:00 p.m., ■
- at the home of Carole Cierniak, 8417 Johanna in ■
- Niles. **The Nominating Committee is comprised ■**
- **of the current president and all past presidents ■**
- **who are current active members.** For additional ■
- information, Call Rob at 773-625-7225. ■

The Union League Club Civil War Round Table's luncheon meeting will be held on Monday, March 29. Marshall Krolick and Frank Patton are presenting a program on "The Overland Campaign: From Cold Harbor to the Election of 1864." A reception begins at 11:30 a.m.; lunch is served at noon. The cost is \$15 per person. For reservations, call 312-435-5000.

Former President Mary Abroe delivered an address, entitled "Veterans and Victorians: Commemorating and Preserving Civil War Battlefields, 1863-1900," to the Friends of American Writers on January 13. Mary's article, "Observing the Civil War Centennial: Rhetoric, Reality, and the Bounds of Selective Memory," appeared in the November 1998 edition (Volume 21, Number 11) of *Cultural Resource Management (CRM)*, a National Park Service technical journal.