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THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume LIX, Number 9

Chicago, Illinois

May 1999

Michael J. Andrus on "The Confederate Cover-up at Seven Pines"

by Barbara Hughett

IN HIS history of the Battle of Seven Pines, Confederate General Gustavus W. Smith summarized, "The facts now established show, beyond doubt, that General Longstreet should be held responsible, under General Johnston, for the failure of the Confederates to destroy Keyes's Corps at Seven Pines."

As it turned out, General Smith had plenty of reason to want the events of May 31, 1862, set straight. That morning, General Joseph E. Johnston sent his army to destroy isolated elements of the Army of the Potomac. Johnston's battle plan soured almost immediately. Chief culprit in the day's many misunderstandings was Johnston's trusted subordinate, James Longstreet. "Old Pete" took it upon himself to alter the plan without advising the commanding officer. Confusion and chaos ruled the day and the battle ended in a bloody stalemate.

Within days, both Johnston and Longstreet conspired to present their versions of events. In doing so, they brought into question the conduct of both General Gustavus W. Smith and General Benjamin Huger. The "misunderstandings" between these four officers led to decades of explanations, accusations, and denials.

Michael J. Andrus will address The Round Table on May 14; the topic of his presentation will be "The Confederate Cover-up at Seven Pines." In his program, he will detail the aftermath of Seven Pines and discuss how each of the four principals dealt with the cover-up.

A native of Syracuse, New York, Andrus received his B.A. in history from the State University of New York at Cortland. A nineteen-year veteran of the National Park Service, he served for five years as a park ranger at Manassas National Battlefield Park and for a year at the Fredericksburg/Spotsylvania National Military Park before assuming his current position. Since 1986, he has been a supervisory park ranger at Richmond National Military Park.



Michael J. Andrus

He is the co-author of *The Brooke, Fauquier, Loudoun, and Alexandria Artillery*, a book in the Virginia Regimental Histories series, and the author of the chapter on the Battle of Gaines' Mill for the

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
581st Regular Meeting

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**MICHAEL ANDRUS ON
"THE CONFEDERATE COVER-UP AT
SEVEN PINES"**

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Friday, May 14

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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 Teriyaki or
Catch of the Day*



PLEASE NOTE

Make your reservation by Wednesday, May 12, 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.

(continued on page 2)

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



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

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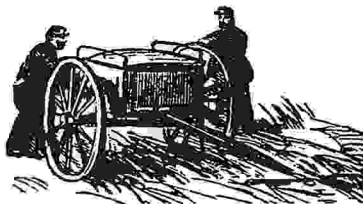
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The only requirement for membership in The Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Membership Committee, 601 South La Salle Building, Suite C-817, Chicago, Illinois 60605.



BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION

☆ UPDATE ☆

by Mary Munsell Abroe

For those who are having "Antietam withdrawal," this report is for you. The following article, by our friend and fellow preservationist Tom Clemens, is excerpted from the March 1999 newsletter of the Save Historic Antietam Foundation (SHAF); Tom is the president of SHAF's board of directors. SHAF was born in the mid-1980s in direct response to a threat to the historic Grove Farm near Sharpsburg, scene of the well-known photograph of Abraham Lincoln and entourage visiting the Army of the Potomac and its commander, George B. McClellan, in October 1862, soon after the battle of Antietam. Tom reports to us a successful climax of this crucial project:

"A long time has passed since we purchased the Grove Farm in 1991. We paid \$325,000 for the 40 acres and today we owe less than \$20,000. We are currently very near completion of a deal to sell the land to a local person. The land is protected by easements; it will never be subdivided and buildings will never appear there. We plan to settle on or before April 30.

"Other property in the area is owned by the state of Maryland and it too will soon be sold for agricultural purposes. The Grove house, called Mt. Airy, is likewise covered by easements and is being restored by private landowners. Most of the principal fields surrounding the house are under easement.

"What all of this means is that the original farm where President Lincoln and General George McClellan were captured in the famous photograph taken by Alexander Gardner is now fully preserved and protected. Future plans include some sort of interpretive wayside exhibit featuring the famous photograph, and perhaps even a monument to Civil War photographers.

"We should look at all of our progress as the fulfillment of a dream that began in 1986 when we formed SHAF to rescue the threatened Grove Farm. We have done that with your help, and we are very grateful. But, we have discovered other challenges and other threats along the way. We are finished with the Grove Farm; we want to interpret and show off what we have saved. We want to preserve other land and other buildings around the battlefield. We have come a long way and we have more to do. With your help we can accomplish this."

MICHAEL J. ANDRUS (continued from page 1)

Conservation Fund's *Guide to Civil War Battlefields*. He has written numerous articles for professional publications and articles in the *Encyclopedia of the Confederacy*. A popular speaker on the lecture circuit, he also regularly guides tours of Virginia's battlefields.

Mike Andrus last addressed a regular meeting of this Round Table in March 1990, when his topic was "General Edward (Allegheny) Johnson." He served as a guide during our 1997 battlefield tour to Richmond.

Round Table founder Elmer Gertz will receive an honorary doctorate from Lincoln College, which will be awarded at the college's 132nd annual commencement ceremonies on May 8 at the campus in Lincoln, Illinois.

☪ APRIL MEETING ☪

by Larry Gibbs

On April 9, Lance J. Herdegen made a spirited and engaging presentation to 102 members and guests at the 580th regular meeting of The Civil War Round Table. He spoke on "How the Iron Brigade Won Its Name." Herdegen, founder and director of the Institute of Civil War Studies at Carroll College in Waukesha, Wisconsin, is the author of several books, including *The Men Who Stood Like Iron: How the Iron Brigade Won Its Name* (1997).

Shortly after the Union surrender of Fort Sumter (April 13, 1861), President Abraham Lincoln requested 75,000 volunteers. The creation of one unit consisted of three regiments from Wisconsin, one regiment from Indiana, and a battery of artillery. The soon-to-be legendary Civil War unit, which came to be known as the Iron Brigade, had been formed by August of 1861. It was sent east to protect Washington, D.C. for the first year of the war.

The brigade was composed of the 2nd, 6th, and 7th Wisconsin Regiments, the 19th Indiana Regiment, and Battery B of the 4th U.S. Artillery. The soldiers were well-prepared for war, instilled with proper discipline and training. "Once the brigade was ordered to fight, the fighting was almost more than they could manage," explained Herdegen. In the late afternoon of August 28, 1862, at the onset of the Battle of Second Bull Run, the unsupported regiments of the Iron Brigade stood up to Confederate General Stonewall Jackson's division at Brauner Farm. This brigade refused to yield for 90 minutes, until darkness set in. Two days later, the brigade fought a rearguard action to protect Union forces from further losses after the Union debacle at Second Bull Run.

In a precursor to the Battle of Antietam, the Iron Brigade earned its sobriquet at the Battle of South Mountain (September 14, 1862). Union General George B. McClellan, after watching the brigade perform gallantly, shouted, "Those western men must be made of iron!"

Three days later, the Iron Brigade drove off the Stonewall Brigade at Miller's cornfield during the initial fighting at Antietam (September 17, 1862). The Battle of Antietam was the fourth major action for the Iron Brigade in twenty-one days. These battles took a serious toll on the brigade. As one 2nd Wisconsin soldier put it, "Our splendid regiment has been destroyed!"

The 24th Michigan Regiment joined the brigade in late 1862. The brigade saw limited action at the Battles of Fredericksburg (December 13, 1862), and Chancellorsville (May 1-4, 1863). The brigade's reputation was greatly enhanced on the first day of the Battle of Gettysburg (July 1, 1863). Facing an overwhelming Rebel force, the Iron Brigade fought valiantly at McPherson Ridge, Herr Ridge, and the railroad cut before making a significant stand at Seminary Ridge. In this action, the brigade fought gallantly while surrounded on three sides and sometimes outnumbered four to one. Their fighting spirit and heroism during these battle sequences were costly in causing a few minutes' delay for the continuation of the Confederate attack. Out of 1,183 soldiers in the Iron Brigade at Gettysburg, only 491 were still in the ranks after the battle. However, the Iron Brigade's place

in Civil War annals was ensured.

After Gettysburg, the Iron Brigade was not given a significant role. Two other regiments were added, then dropped. Their assignments in the Overland Campaign in 1864 in Virginia were unimportant. Soldiers were added by the Union draft and bounties. The Iron Brigade participated in the siege of Petersburg and was at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865, when Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered to Union General Ulysses S. Grant.

"The Iron Brigade had the highest casualty rate of the Union army during the Civil War. The 2nd Wisconsin had the highest casualty rate of any Union regiment," proclaimed Herdegen, a proud Wisconsin citizen. He said that the Iron Brigade should be remembered today because these soldiers possessed unusual valor. Their commanding officer—from May, 1862, until the end of the conflict—was General John Gibbon. He played a key role in the professionalism and training for this volunteer unit. The black hats, the symbol of the Iron Brigade, were worn as badges of honor.

Herdegen concluded, "The Iron Brigade is an American story; we remind ourselves that these soldiers made up a volunteer army that could compete with fighting spirit and determination. The reasons for fighting the Civil War—race relations and federal-state relations—are still being debated today. The fame and glory of the Iron Brigade came at a great cost that amazes us today."

After his presentation, Herdegen introduced a son of one of the members of the Iron Brigade, William Upham II, a former president, like Herdegen, of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee. Upham's father, Private Willie Upham of the 2nd Wisconsin Regiment, was wounded at the Battle of Second Bull Run. Upham shared some reminiscences of his father. The senior Upham was privileged to have had the acquaintance of both Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis. It was due to Lincoln that he received an appointment to West Point; following the war, he served as one of the guards to Jefferson Davis at Fortress Monroe.

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 NOMINATING COMMITTEE
 REPORT

Robert Girardi, chair of the Nominating Committee, has announced the following proposed slate of officers for the 1999-2000 term.

- President Charles Bednar
- Senior Vice President Bruce Allardice
- Vice President Roger Bohn
- Vice President Janet Linhart
- Treasurer Ted Birndorf
- Secretary Norman Poteshman
- Assistant Treasurer Marge Smogor
- Assistant Secretary Jerry Schur

Trustees (terms expiring in 2001): Richard Farmer, David Jackowski, Jerome Kowalski, David Zucker
 (Four trustees—Paul Eastes, Larry Hewitt, Nancy Jacobs, and Jerri-Jennifer Smart—remain in office as they complete their two-year terms.)

The election will be held at the May meeting. At that time, additional nominations may be made from the floor for all the offices listed above.

The New Books

Compiled by C. Robert Douglas



Woolsey, Jane S. *Hospital Days — Reminiscences of a Civil War Nurse*. Edinborough Press, P.O. Box 13790, Rossville, MN 55113. 1996. Pbk. \$12.95.

Zall, Paul, ed. *Blue and Gray Laughing: A Collection of Civil War Soldiers' Humor*. Rank and File Publications. 1996. pbk. \$10.00.

Andrews, Eliza F. *The War-time Journal of a Georgia Girl, 1864-1865*. U. of Nebraska Press. 1997. Pbk. \$16.95. Original of 1908.

Bacon, Benjamin W. *Sinews of War: How Technology, Industry and Transportation Won the War*. Presidio Press. 1997. \$24.95.

Douglas L. Wilson won the 1999 Lincoln Prize, the largest national award presented in the field of history, for his book *Honor's Voice: The Transformation of Abraham Lincoln*. The groundbreaking study examines Lincoln's early adulthood years. The Prize is \$35,000 and a bronze bust of Abraham Lincoln. Second place prize (\$15,000) was won by J. Tracy Power for his book *Lee's Miserables: Life in the Army of Northern Virginia from the Wilderness to Appomattox*. Both books were published in 1998.

The Stephen A. Douglas Association will hold its annual luncheon meeting at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 5, at the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza. Christopher Schnell, research associate for the Lincoln Legal Papers Project, will speak on "At the Bar and on the Stump: The Legal Relationship of Douglas and Lincoln." The cost is \$30 per person. To make reservations or for further information, contact David Richert, 6959A Hamilton Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60645, 312-558-6900, drichert@ajs.org.

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.

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

The May and June, 1999, meetings will be held at the Union League Club, 65 West Jackson Boulevard. Starting in September, 1999 (see enclosed memo from President Nethery), all regular meetings will be held at the Holiday Inn Chicago Mart Plaza, 350 North Orleans Street, the second Friday of each month, unless otherwise indicated.

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

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

September 17: Kenneth J. Winkle on "The Village on the Bluff: New Salem's Role in the Rise of Abraham Lincoln"

October 8: David Herbert Donald, Nevins-Freeman Address

October 22-24: Fall Tour to Springfield, Illinois

November 12: To be announced

December 10: Cullom Davis on "From Court House to White House: The Law Practice of Abraham Lincoln"

January 14: To be announced

February 11: Thomas Cartwright on "Stone's River"

March 10: Mark Bradley on "The Surrender of Joe Johnston"

April 14: Herbert Mitgang, topic to be announced

May 12: Robert Zeller on "The Civil War in Depth: Stereoptic Views of the Conflict"

June 9: John Y. Simon, topic to be announced

The Civil War Round Table of Chicago has begun making plans for a 60th Anniversary Celebration. An all-day symposium and gala evening banquet will be held on Saturday, November 11, 2000. At the January Executive Committee meeting, a 60th Anniversary Committee was formed, with Marvin Sanderman as its chairman. An all-star cast of speakers and other special events are being planned. Look for further announcements in upcoming issues of this newsletter.

Former President Jerry Warshaw will present a program at the Evanston Public Library on Wednesday, May 12, at 7:30 p.m. "The Specials of the Civil War" is a talk, with slides and music, about the special artists/correspondents for the weekly newspapers and how they pictured the war before newspapers were able to reproduce photographs. For more information, call Jerry at 847-866-6667.

Member Charles Ten Brink spoke to the Cincinnati Civil War Round Table on April 15. His topic was "John Gibbon and the Art of the Artilleryman."

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THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE of Chicago

Date: April 26, 1999

To: Members of the Civil War Round Table

From: Jim Nethery, President

Subject: Relocation of our dinner meetings

I want to bring you up to date on an important decision made by the Executive Committee at its mid-year meeting. Beginning next September, we will return to the Holiday Inn Chicago Mart Plaza.

This decision was made only after considerable study and discussion beginning with the Executive Committee meeting in the summer of 1997. At that meeting the subject of future meeting sites was raised because of an increase in the costs of both dinners and parking at the Union League Club and because there had been a scheduling problem which resulted in our having to find another location for 1997 December meeting.

A committee was appointed to research alternative meeting sites. While there were some other issues, the primary objective of this committee was to find a lower cost facility which could still provide reasonable ambiance and a meeting room of adequate size every month.

In order to assist the committee in making the best choice for the majority of members, Paul Feiss distributed an extensive two page survey in the winter of 1997/98. Over 60% of our members completed and returned their survey. Paul presented a detailed analysis of the survey results at the summer 1998 Executive Committee meeting. Using this information as a guide, the committee investigated a number of possible meeting sites.

While this work was in progress, I met with the Union League Club to discuss pricing and scheduling for our 1999/2000 year. The result was a 10% increase in the cost of our meals. In addition, there were again scheduling problems for November and December which would have resulted in our relocating to another facility or being accommodated at the ULC in a room intended for a maximum of 70 people. Finally, the garage where we park has recently changed hands and there is no guarantee that the new owner will maintain our present \$8.00 price.

After reviewing this information and the results of the site committee's research, the Executive Committee voted to relocate our meeting to the Holiday Inn Chicago Mart Plaza which clearly had the best combination of economics, ambiance, and location.

Therefore, effective with the September 1999 meeting, we will return to the Holiday Inn, Chicago Mart Plaza, which is located at 350 North Orleans Street in Chicago.