



THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE.



Founded December 3, 1940

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Chicago, Illinois

June 2001



602nd REGULAR MEETING

**LESLEY J. GORDON ON
"GENERAL GEORGE PICKETT
IN LIFE AND LEGEND"**

Friday, June 8

**HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA
350 NORTH ORLEANS STREET**

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

\$30 - Members \$35 - Nonmembers

Entrée:

*London Broil with
Shitake Mushroom Sauce
or Catch of the Day*



PLEASE NOTE

Make your reservation by **MONDAY, June 4**, 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.

PARKING: If you are driving and coming from the south, turn left into the Mart Plaza lot just after crossing the river on Orleans. From the north, turn right from Orleans on Hubbard, left on Kingsbury, right on Kinzie, and left into the Mart Plaza lot. **Parking is \$7** with a validated parking sticker.

Over the next few months, due to street renovations, the bridge south of the hotel will be closed. We apologize for the inconvenience.

LESLEY J. GORDON

~ on ~

"General George Pickett In Life and Legend"

A DISAPPOINTING CAREER

BY BARBARA HUGHETT



Major General George Pickett, because he gave his name to the greatest failed frontal attack in American military history, is one of the most famous Confederate Generals of the Civil War. Yet even today he remains somewhat of a mystery, a figure shrouded in Lost Cause mythology.

Pickett's association with that fatal charge, an action he held little responsibility for, totally obscured his rather disappointing military career. Son of a Virginia planter family, he graduated last (59th) in the class of 1846 at West Point. He fought in the Mexican War and on the western frontier, and resigned to join the Confederate army at the start of the Civil War. His widow, La Salle (Sallie) Corbett Pickett, outlived him by five de-

cadecades and spent the rest of her life as an author and lecturer, with the purpose of establishing a favorable image of her husband. This image was often at odds with the facts.

Leslie J. Gordon will address The Round Table on June 8; her topic, which is also the title of her 1998 book, will be "General George E. Pickett in Life and Legend." She will present an overview of Pickett's life from his Virginia boyhood to his death (in 1875), highlighting his troubled wartime career and the charge that made him so famous. Dr. Gordon will also provide a fascinating look at his widow,

LaSalle Pickett, and the legends he perpetuated about her husband, herself, and the Old South.

Currently an associate professor of history at the University of Akron, Gordon received her B.A. degree from the College of William and Mary and her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Georgia. In addition to her biography of Pickett, she has written numerous articles and book reviews for historical magazines and professional journals. She is

the co-editor of the forthcoming *Intimate Strategies of the Civil War: Military commanders and Their Wives*, and is currently working on *The*

16th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers in History and Memory, to be published by Louisiana State University.

Leslie Gordon has participated in numerous panels and workshops and has made presentations to colleges and historical associations throughout the country. Among her many professional affiliations, she serves on the Advisory Board of The Civil War Institute of the Ohio Historical Society, the Committee on Women of the Southern Historical Association, and served in 1999 on the Advisory Council for the Lincoln Prize at Gettysburg College.

Call by June 4th

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

Officers

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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 LaSalle Building, Suite C-817, Chicago, Illinois 60605.

BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION UPDATE

BY MARY MUNSELL ABROE

NPCA Names Douglass Home and Stones River Battlefield As Two of Ten Most Endangered Parks: The May/June 2001 issue of *National Parks*, the magazine of the National Parks and Conservation Association (NPCA), recently released its annual list of the ten national parks (out of 384) most immediately threatened by under funding, commercial/industrial development, environmental pollution, and/or improper usage. Two of the ten have Civil War connections: Frederick Douglass National Historic Site and Stones River National Battlefield. Abolitionist Frederick Douglass's home in Washington, D.C., memorializes the life of this most prominent African American spokesman of the Civil War era. A persistent shortage of funds, however, means that the site lacks \$2 million required to repair the structure and its furnishings as well as to restore Douglass's books, textiles, and photos.

As Roger Bohn reported in last month's newsletter, Stones River made the Civil War Preservation Trust's first annual roll of "Ten Most Endangered Civil War Sites." Unfortunately, it also has the dubious distinction of being a holdover from the NPCA's "most endangered" list of last year. Of the four thousand acres on which combat action occurred, only ten percent is preserved by the National Park Service. The NPS has pinpointed four hundred key acres at Stones River that should be safeguarded. But with the battlefield's location in central Tennessee's rapidly expanding Rutherford County, that acreage costs an infeasible \$20 million. A planned interstate highway exchange through the heart of the battlefield about which we heard during last year's battlefield tour still is in the offing. Finally, unlike the governments of Maryland and Georgia, the state of Tennessee does not have a pro-preservation outlook and appears to be doing little to help moderate the problems related to preserving Stones River.

For suggested action and/or for additional information about the sites on the current "most endangered" list, access the NPCA's web page at www.npca.org — or call 1-888-TENMOST.

Raffle for Rocco Print Will Benefit CWRT Battlefield Preservation Fund: Member Robert Carlson's desire to commemorate his Civil War ancestor led him to commission a Keith Rocco painting of the Union breakthrough at the battle of First Kernstown. As we learned on the recent battlefield tour, a limited edition of five hundred prints of that painting has been made available to those who contribute a set amount to the Civil War Pres-

ervation Trust (CWPT). One of those prints, in turn, has been donated by its recipient to the Civil War Round Table to benefit our own Battlefield Preservation Fund; it will be raffled at our October 2001 regular meeting. Raffle tickets will be available at the upcoming July board meeting, the Wheaton Civil War show on September 15, and our September and October dinner meetings. Tickets are priced at one for \$5 and three for \$10. Members of the CWRT who also belong to the CWPT have received renderings of the print, and those on the battlefield tour saw the print itself; it also will be available for viewing where raffle tickets are sold, as noted above.

The painting, whose brief was written by former Round Table president Robert Girardi, is entitled "We Have Got Them Started. Come on! Come on! The Union Breakthrough at Kernstown: March 23, 1862." It depicts the climactic event of Stonewall Jackson's only tactical defeat in his famous Shenandoah Valley Campaign of spring 1862. For additional information, contact any member(s) of the Battlefield Preservation Fund committee: Mary Abroe, Roger Bohn, Larry Gibbs, Rob Girardi, Nancy Jacobs, Marshall Krolick, Steve Stewart.



President Bruce Allardice and a group of Round Table members went to the May 10 meeting of The Milwaukee Civil War Round Table to present an award to General (retired) Robert Erffmeyer of the Milwaukee Round Table. He was the recipient of our sterling silver "For Gallant Service" medallion in recognition of his contribution to the design and manufacture of our tour pins and presentation medallions. Erffmeyer's ongoing efforts to promote American history have been very much appreciated.

A REMINDER: MONDAY LUNCHES

At least since the 1960s (and maybe earlier), a group of Round Table members have regularly gathered for lunch, seasoned with informal Civil War discussions, on Mondays at various downtown restaurants. The group now meets at 12:15 on Mondays at, appropriately, Monday's restaurant (on the mezzanine level) at 203 North LaSalle Street. Everyone is welcome. No reservation is necessary, as a regular table is reserved for the lunch group each week. For more information, contact Paul Klekner (office: 312-540-2482; e-mail: paul.klekner@us.pwcglobal.com).

MAY MEETING

BY ROGER E. BOHN

"After Atlanta: How the Confederacy Self-Destructed in the Western Theater" was Dr. Anne J. Bailey's topic when she addressed 65 members and guests at the 601st regular meeting of The Civil War Round Table of Chicago. Anne Bailey has authored five books on the Civil War, numerous book chapters, and 140 articles and reviews. She is general editor of "Great Campaigns of the Civil War" and "The Civil War in the West." A graduate of the University of Texas, Bailey is now teaching at Georgia College & State University and is currently under contract to produce a book about the "March to the Sea."

Bailey finds teaching about the Civil War in Georgia is interesting in that the students are still living the *Gone With The Wind* of fiction as if it were *real* today. W.T. Sherman is still considered by her students in Atlanta to be the same evil person he was in 1864. The question ever-present is why did the Confederacy allow something like the "March to the Sea" to happen? Answering this question was the topic for the presentation.

Once Atlanta had fallen to the North, the rest of the Western Theater seems to have lost general interest, except for the Battle of Franklin, Tennessee, and the Nashville campaign. The fall of Atlanta helped Lincoln win reelection; it had been perceived by some that Lincoln was losing the war. He was not a popular man due to the high casualty reports, the draft, the use of African American soldiers, and his reconstruction policy. The Democratic election convention made much of this ... until Atlanta fell.

Lincoln had opposed Sherman's march across Georgia, at first, but relented under persuasion from Grant. It could go ahead, but *after* the election. Sherman had been in the Atlanta area when he was in the Army in the 1840s, and he knew the wealth of the region. He wanted to bring the war to the people in order to pressure the Confederate government into capitulation. Bailey cited letters from Confederate soldiers that wanted the war to be "over by Christmas," or at least before the spring planting, and this was a widespread view across the South.

Even Grant was quoted as believing that the desertion rate indicated that the Southern soldiers wanted peace. Jefferson Davis, and even J.B. Hood, did not hold with the idea of a "peaceful settlement." Davis even took a swing through the Western Theater

to boost civilian morale, but his program of a "scorched earth" policy to deter the Union march through Georgia did not receive any serious endorsement from the local farmers.

Bailey wondered, at this point, what *could* Davis or Hood have done to stop the Sherman-Lincoln onslaught? Even with the benefit of hindsight, by September 1864, "the handwriting was on the wall." Hood's moving his army back across his own territory was about the only thing he *could* do. Sherman, on the other hand, had so many troops that he could split them up and move in any direction he saw fit. He also saw no point in just chasing Hood across the country, especially when the "march across Georgia" held so much more promise.

Sherman might be diagnosed as a manic-depressive today, in Bailey's opinion. In his men's letters, however, they say they will "go with Crazy Bill wherever he leads." She also feels that if Sherman did not say, "war is hell," he did say something similar in a

speech made after the war. Also noted was the reaction of her students and fellow faculty when they saw the poster of Sherman on her wall, advertising the book, *War is Hell*.

Bailey feels that Sherman is, indeed, an interesting character and worthy of study. His letters to his wife, for instance, are very personal and reflect the almost "brother-sister" relationship they had. In fact, they did grow up in the same household. The letters include many observations that Sherman made during his campaigns, such as his desire to bring ruin to the people of Georgia.

General orders to his men spelled out, fairly clearly, just what his men could and could not do. Corps commanders could determine if Confederate resistance dictated destruction of homes and property, but the destruction of homes was not at all widespread across Georgia. The Southern myth that there is nothing left from Atlanta to Savannah is just that: a myth.

Milledgeville was the capital of Georgia early on, and Bailey noted to her students there that Hood had burned much of Atlanta when he pulled out and *before* Sherman even got there. The State House and the Governor's Mansion were in the line of march when Sherman's troops came through; and yet these were not touched, nor were any of

the many ante-bellum homes along the way. So much for "Sherman burned everything."

Farm produce and animals, however, were fair game in this march to "make Georgia howl." Leaving families hungry was the point, in order to make the soldiers give up and return home to provide for their families, instead of continuing to fight the war. Sherman did note that he thought it strange that the two opposing armies were now marching off in separate directions. Each felt they were doing the right thing. Georgians today feel that the Confederacy simply abandoned them.

Sherman sent George H. Thomas to Nashville to await Hood's army. On the way, the battle at Franklin, Tennessee was the beginning of the end for Hood and the Army of Tennessee. Bailey feels that Hood, suffering pain from his wounds and the loss of a leg, did take "something" for the relief of his pain. Just what that "something" might have been is the subject of much speculation, but she feels that there would have been no more attention paid to that pain-reliever then, than we would today in noting the use of aspirin. How much this did, or did not, affect Hood's battlefield decisions is the subject of even more debate. The fact remains, Hood was defeated and the Army of Tennessee was virtually destroyed. It's interesting to note that Hood later married and fathered eleven children, so his "disability" was not *total*.

Sherman's march, however, was a much easier road than Hood's in many ways, and Georgia did indeed "howl." The point was "to make war terrible beyond endurance" and so to shorten the war. William T. Sherman was successful.

SUMMER EXECUTIVE

COMMITTEE MEETING

President-elect Roger Bohn has announced that the summer Executive Committee Meeting will be held on Saturday, July 28, at Notre Dame High School, 7655 Dempster, in Niles, beginning at 9:30 a.m. and lasting until around noon. Light refreshments will be served. *All Executive Committee members are urged to attend this important annual planning meeting. The Executive Committee is comprised of all former presidents who are current active members, and all officers and committee chairs for the upcoming (2001-2002) term. Committee members will receive further notification and agendas in the mail or via e-mail.*

THE NEW BOOKS

Compiled by C. Robert Douglas



Gallman, J. Matthew, ed. *The Civil War Chronicle—The Only Day-by-day Portrait of America's Tragic Conflict as told by Soldiers, Journalists, Politicians, Farmers, Nurses, Slaves and Other Eyewitnesses.* Crown Publishers. 2000. \$39.95.

Garrison, Webb. *Mutiny in the Civil War.* White Mane Publ. Co. 2001. \$29.95.

Grimsley, Mark and Brooks D. Simpson. *The Collapse of the Confederacy.* U. of Nebraska Press. 2001. \$47.50.

Hafendorfer, Kenneth A. *Mill Springs—Campaign and Battle of Mill Springs, Kentucky.* KH Press. 2001. \$45.00.

Herrmann, E. C., ed. *Yeoman in Farragut's Fleet—The Civil War Diary of Josiah Parker Higgins.* Guy Victor Publications. 1999. \$21.95.

Jordan, David M. *"Happiness Is Not My Companion"—The Life of General G. K. Warren.* Indiana U. Press. 2001. \$35.00.

STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL

LUNCHEON ON JUNE 9

The annual luncheon will be held on Saturday, June 9, in the Brio Lounge of the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, at 11:30 a.m.

David Long will speak on "Stephen A. Douglas: Catalyst for Lincoln's Greatness." The luncheon will be preceded by a ceremony at the Douglas Tomb at 10:00 a.m., and will be followed by an optional tour of Chicago Civil War sites. The cost is \$35 per person.

Contact Brooks Davis (312-944-5082) or David Richert (drichert@ajs.org).

Assistant Treasurer (and Treasurer-elect) Jerry Kowalski, recreating the character of Major General George H. Thomas, has given presentations to school children in Montgomery, Wheaton, Romeoville, and Elmhurst, Illinois, and Keokuk, Iowa; to senior citizens at Mather Lifeways in Chicago; and to the Lombard Historical Society. He will be involved in Civil War reenactments this summer at Naperville, Worth, Wauconda, Union, Glenview, and Galena, Illinois. This fall, he will make presentations at the Chicago Historical Society, as well as serving on the Committee for Events at Lockport, Marengo, and Minooka.

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.

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. 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.

MEETINGS & TOURS

The destination of the 2002 Annual Spring Battlefield Tour of The Civil War Round Table of Chicago will be the Trans-Mississippi area. Ted Birmdorf will chair the tour and Larry Gibbs will be his co-chair. The dates to remember are May 1-5, 2002. Look for more information in upcoming issues of this newsletter.

The Round Table is sponsoring a special Fall Tour to The Lincoln Museum in Fort Wayne, Indiana, with a side trip to the Studebaker Museum in South Bend. The Lincoln Museum is featuring a new major exhibit on the Lincoln Assassination, in addition to its many other inter-active exhibits. The tour will leave Chicago, by bus, on Saturday morning, September 22, and return on Sunday night, September 23. It will be chaired by Brooks Davis. Look for more information over the summer, or call Brooks at 312-944-5082.

The Ninth Annual Conference on Civil War Medicine, sponsored by the National Museum of Civil War Medicine, will be held in Frederick, Maryland, on August 3-5. Topics include a presentation about Dr. Jonathan Letterman, chief surgeon of the Army of the Potomac under McClellan's leadership) by Dr. Gordon Dammann. The cost is \$250 for members of the Museum, and \$275 for non-members. For more information, call 301-695-1864 or 800-564-1864.

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.

June 8: Lesley Gordon, "General George Pickett In Life and Legend"

July 28: Annual Executive Committee Meeting, Notre Dame High School

September 14: Gary Gallagher, "Jubal Early & the Myth of the Lost Cause"

September 22-23: Special Fall Tour to The Lincoln Museum, Fort Wayne

October 12: Brooks Davis, Nevins-Freeman Address: "Stephen A. Douglas & Abraham Lincoln: Friendly Enemies?"

November 9: Kathleen Ernst, "Too Afraid to Cry: Civilians at Antietam"

December 14: William McGrath, "Infernal Machines: The Sinking of the USS Cairo"

January 11, 2002: Daniel Weinberg, "Tattlings of a Collecting Voyeur"

February 8: Joe Davis, "The Battle at Shiloh"

March 8: Stephen Wise, "The United States Navy and the Confederate States Navy"

April 12: Jeffry Wert, "Gettysburg: The Third Day"

May 1-5: Spring Battlefield Tour, Trans-Mississippi

May 10: Eric Foner, "Reconstruction and its Significance in U.S. History"

June 14: Ted Savas, "The Augusta Powder Works"

NEW MEMBER

Robert Balzekas, 5021 Woodlawn, Chicago, Illinois, 60615, 773-536-6371



We are very sad to report the death of member Norman Bannor on May 3. Norm had a long and distinguished career as a high school teacher and football coach in Chicago, most of it at Lane Tech. He had been fighting Parkinson's disease and diabetes for many years. Our deepest, most heartfelt condolences go to his widow Betty, also a Round Table member and their family.