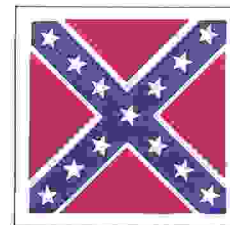


# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE.

Founded December 3, 1940



Volume LXII, Number 4

Chicago, Illinois

December 2001



## 606th REGULAR MEETING

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### WILLIAM McGRATH ON "INFERNAL MACHINES: THE SINKING OF THE USS CAIRO"

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Friday, DECEMBER 14

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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:

Roast Loain of Pork or  
Catch of the Day



#### PLEASE NOTE

Make your reservation by **MONDAY, DECEMBER 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.

**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 this inconvenience.

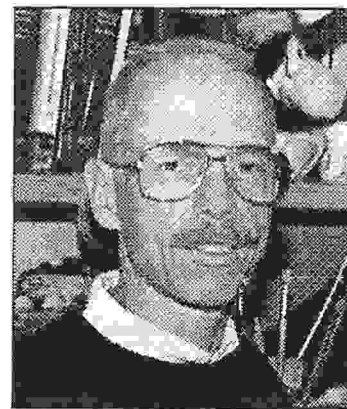
## WILLIAM McGRATH

- on -

### "Infernal Machines: The Sinking of the USS Cairo"

IT SANK IN  
SHALLOW WATER

BY BARBARA HUGHETT



William McGrath

Even before the emergence of the ironclad *Monitor*, the Union tried to gain control of the Mississippi River basin by building a set of less radical ironclad gunboats. These boats were 150 feet long with a six-foot draft and were driven by an interior paddle. They didn't have the *Monitor's* modern gun turret, and they presented a slightly higher profile. Outwardly, they looked more like the Confederate *Merrimac*.

One of these boats, the *Cairo*, was launched in January 1862. For eleven months it saw action up and down the rivers, but nothing of real military importance. Then it struck a Confederate mine in the Yazoo River, just above the Mississippi near Vicksburg.

It sank in shallow water, and its crew escaped. Since the boat's smokestacks stuck above the surface, the Union forces

tore them off so that the Confederates couldn't find the wreck and salvage it. River mud soon filled in what was left of it, and there it remained for a century.

William McGrath will address The Round Table on February 14; the title of his presentation is "Infernal Machines: The

Sinking of the USS *Cairo*." He will cover the development and construction of the ironclad, its crew, and its eventual sinking in the Yazoo River in December 1862.

Historical artist Bill McGrath's interest in marine subjects came from his service in the U.S. Coast Guard and from sailing on Lake Erie. He spent seventeen years as a freelance commercial artist. For the past twelve years, he has been painting marine scenes of the Great Lakes and Civil War naval subjects. He was elected a member of the Society of American Historical Artists (SAHA).

McGrath's work can be found in the permanent collections of many historical societies, including the Museum of the Confederacy, the Hampton Roads Naval Museum, the Naval War College Museum, the Museum of American History at the Smithsonian

Institution, and the National Civil War Naval Museum.

He is currently working on historical marine portraits of Southern cities, sculptures of Civil War ironclads, and a painting of the CSS *H. L. Hunley* for the Friends of the *Hunley* Commission.



## 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 ROGER E. BOHN

The Civil War News reported our latest CWRT battlefield preservation disbursements in the December issue. It's nice to have the acknowledgement that we are indeed doing something about the problem instead of just talking about it. One of the organizations mentioned was **Save the Franklin Battlefield, Inc.**, and a group of our members presented the check at a recent dinner in Franklin, Tennessee. The group went there for the dedication of an historical marker donated by the Salt Creek CWRT and to help with the fund-raising march being held to pay off the recent acquisition of the Collins Farm site. "Partners in Preservation" is a good concept, especially when there is communication, co-operation, and direct, hands-on involvement.

The Franklin group is working hard to get the local government agencies involved to become aware that such partnerships can bring more dollars into the area than a street full of pizza parlors. Frances Kennedy said something along those lines many years ago. Our little group had to eat, sleep, fuel-up and acquire a few mementos of the trip, all of which went into their economy...and we had fun!

On that same note: **Karen Hedelt, Fredericksburg, Virginia's tourism director**, reported that "Tourists typically spend from \$100 to \$250 each day on their trips." (...they must avoid the gift shops all together!) Fredericksburg, she reports, had about 750,000 visitors last reporting year, and that should be a figure worth noting. In addition, the *Columbus Dispatch* reports that nearly 400,00 went to Shiloh, Tennessee, and Gettysburg had more than 1.6 million visitors.

A report from the Civil War Preservation Trust regarding the Robert A. Carlson & Associates project with Keith Rocco: The sales of the *Kernstown* print have now netted over \$52,000.00 for battlefield preservation. Isn't it amazing what a few people can do when they put their time and energy into it? If you want one of these limited-availability prints, order forms will be available at our December meeting. The cost is a donation of \$160.00, payable to the CWPT.

The CWPT's *Hallowed Ground* reported a real "save" at Monocacy National Battlefield in Maryland, a site we visited on our annual spring tour. The 240-acre farm was an important part of the "Battle that saved Washington" when Jubal Early engaged Lew Wallace and threatened Washington City in July of 1864. The National Park Service (NPS) had negotiated the sale of the proper-

ty to within 2% of the agreed upon \$2,000,000 price but fell short of the last \$35,000 needed to close the deal. This meant that NPS stood to lose the entire \$2,000,000 appropriation for this purchase. An appeal to the CWPT resulted in the funds necessary to acquire the valuable site, which might have otherwise been lost. "The assistance provided in this acquisition is a prime example of why CWPT is so important to battlefield land protection, even where there is a National Park presence," quoted the article. We agree.

In another article in *Hallowed Ground*, we find reference to a comment allegedly made by Lee in McLean's parlor at Appomattox: "I am glad to see one real American here," as he was introduced to Ely Parker, Grant's military secretary, a Seneca Indian. Parker reportedly replied, "We are all Americans." Nearly 137 years later, we can still heartily agree to that statement, as well.

The article concludes with this quote: *Why preserve the battlefields? Because they are the places where the great turning point in our history was made manifest by blood and suffering. Because they are the places where Americans of all colors and creeds sacrificed themselves in the chaos of war for their respective causes.* •

## A note from the President...

A member of our Civil War Round Table of Chicago, **Mike McAdoo**, is the president of the San Francisco CWRT. We are all invited to attend their meetings which are held in historic Fort Mason every third Thursday of the month, except June through August. If you are traveling in the area, they would be happy to welcome you!



*Seasons' Greetings  
from the  
Officers of The  
Civil War  
Round Table  
and the  
Newsletter Staff!*



## NOVEMBER MEETING

BY LARRY GIBBS

On November 9, Kathleen Ernst presented a program entitled "Too Afraid to Cry: Civilians in the Antietam Campaign," before 71 members and guests at the 605th regular meeting of The Civil War Round Table of Chicago. She gave an interesting, stimulating presentation based on material from her book of the same title. The program featured a slide presentation of Sharpsburg civilians, which included a slide of D.R. Miller.

Sharpsburg, Maryland, a sleepy community on the Potomac River, was close to the scene of the bloodiest day of battle on American soil. Over 23,000 casualties—dead, wounded, missing—resulted from the Battle of Antietam on September 17, 1862. Maryland was a border state, caught in the vortex of the Civil War. Nearly four hundred slaveholders lived in the county where Sharpsburg is located, but many abolitionists also resided in that same region. Slavery may have been slowly dying out, but many slave owners were pro-Confederate and had rejected offers of compensation in return for the emancipation of their slaves.

Marylanders feared that they could not indicate support for either side for fear of recrimination from their neighbors. Many men in Sharpsburg, Ernst said, faced a terrible dilemma. Realizing the distinct possibility that their homes might be occupied by troops from one side or the other, they had to answer the question. "Do we go or stay?"

Some feared being impressed into military service. Slaveholders were worried about losing their slaves. Thus, though they were ambivalent about leaving their families to the mercy of soldiers, they left their homes and families reluctantly to hide in hilly areas until military operations ceased.

Sharpsburg citizens clashed over their responses to Confederate occupation. Rebel Generals D. H. Hill and James Longstreet were treated in a genial fashion by the Piper family. Meanwhile Union General George McClellan used the Pry House on the eastern side of Antietam Creek for his headquarters.

Many homesteads became famous as a result of this battle. Farms owned by the Miller, Mumma, Grove, Nicodemus, Roulette, Rohrback, Piper, and Pry families have become well known to Civil War students. Food and valuables were taken from every farmhouse by occupying armies on both sides. Many buildings were destroyed, but only the Mumma house was burned by an order from an officer.

At the Miller farm, every stalk of corn was cut as low as possible from the hail of bullets early in the morning. A daughter of D. R. Miller, Sevilla, gave water to thirsty Rebels throughout the battle. A Confederate officer

claimed that she was the only Sharpsburg resident who never retreated. The Roulette family did not flee, but hid in the cellar during the battle. Tension reigned when two Rebels sought shelter in the cellar. The soldiers soon left. As Union troops proceeded in front of the farmhouse, William Roulette cheered the Yankees.

Ernst noted, "The Battle of Antietam was one of the most picturesque battles in the conflict." Artist Edwin Forbes sketched actions near the Sunken Road, where 5,600 casualties resulted from intense fighting. Later, the road was renamed Bloody Lane. "During the evening of September 17th," Ernst related, "many homes were on fire. One citizen wrote in a diary, 'Everything is red, red, red with blood and fires in Sharpsburg.'"

The next day all involved expected a renewed contest. The Rebel held their lines and the Union did not attack. About 17,000 wounded soldiers needed assistance. Houses were ravaged, food was taken, and piles of amputated limbs were stacked outside homes used for temporary hospitals.

After the battle, the stench in Sharpsburg was sickening. Some citizens had to close their doors, drinking whisky to maintain their sanity. Many were left homeless and without food. Some citizens died from unexploded shells after the battle. Almost all the town's churches were turned into hospitals.

Ernst concluded, "Soldiers from both sides viewed civilians with admiration and suspicion. It is easy to be a patriot when everyone is considered patriotic. To the townspeople of Sharpsburg, the Civil War was confusing and stressful. To the South, their Army of Northern Virginia soldiers were idealistic and eager to liberate the North before the battle. With the Battle of Antietam, their hopes were dashed and this caused disillusionment. Maryland was indeed a border state and Sharpsburg was caught in the tragic whirlwind of a national fratricide—the American Civil War."

### Study the Iron Brigade Online!

You can earn a Certificate in Iron Brigade Studies over the Internet, under the instruction of historian Lance J. Herdegen, director of the Civil War Institute at Carroll College. Students must successfully complete eight units of study in order to obtain a Certificate. Classes run for one month and the number of students in each class may be limited. For information and to enroll, go to <http://marian.cc.edu/civilwar/> or call 262-524-7198.

Additional on-campus courses in Civil War Studies are offered at the Waukesha, Wisconsin, campus. Carroll College, Wisconsin's oldest college, was chartered in 1846.

The Midwest Conference of Civil War Round Tables will be held in Chicago on April 19-21, 2002. This year, the Conference is being hosted by The Civil War Round Table of Chicago and The Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, with assistance from the Institute for Civil War Studies at Carroll College. Among the speakers will be James I. (Bud) Robertson, John Marszalek, and Craig Symonds. Additional information will appear in future issues of this newsletter.

Major General George H. Thomas (aka Round Table Treasurer Jerome Kowalski) participated in the groundbreaking for Fort Anderson at Paducah, Kentucky, on November 6. Redoubts for this Mahon-styled earthen fortified structure will be placed in Bob Noble Park, a short distance from the waterfront.

Actor Tom Cruise has been chosen to play the lead role in an upcoming film about the American Civil War, "Cold Mountain." Renowned producer Sidney Pollack will produce the film based on the best-selling novel by Charles Frazier. Principal photography is set to begin in June. A crew is scouting locations in North Carolina and Canada.

### Burt Rovens 1930-2001

by Jerry Warshaw

On Tuesday, November 6, The Civil War Round Table of Chicago lost a long-time member (since 1969) with the death of Burt Rovens—a man of strong opinions and great generosity. In addition to being an ardent student of the Civil War, history, and current events, he was a gifted artist and photographer. Those who knew him enjoyed his wit and intellectual curiosity.

He was one of my best friends—and friends are too few and should be cherished and not forgotten. He will be missed.



## THE NEW BOOKS

Compiled by G. Robert Douglas



- Blackett, R.J.M. *Divided Hearts: Britain and the American Civil War*. LSU Press. 2001. \$49.95; pbk. \$24.95.
- Blair, William A. and William Pencak, eds. *Making and Remaking Pennsylvania's Civil War*. Penn State Press. 2001. \$35.00.
- Bowden, Scott and Bill Ward. *Last Chance for Victory: Robert E. Lee and the Gettysburg Campaign*, Savas Publ. Co. 2001. \$34.95.
- Brooks, Victor D. *Marye's Heights, Fredericksburg*. Combined Publishing. 2001. Pbk. \$16.95.
- Buckingham, Peter, ed. *All's For The Best: The Civil War Reminiscences and Letters of Daniel W. Sawtelle, Eighth Maine Volunteer Infantry*. U of Tennessee Press. 2001. \$34.00.
- Bunch, Jack A. *Military Justice in the Confederate States Armies*. White Mane Publ. Co. 2001. \$29.95.
- Byrne, Frank L., ed. *Uncommon Soldiers: Harvey Reid and the 2nd Wisconsin March With Sherman*. U. of Tennessee Press. 2001. \$32.00.
- Castel, Albert. *Articles of War: Winners, Losers and Some Who Were Both In The Civil War*. Stackpole Books. 2001. \$24.95.
- Cotton, Gordon A. *From the Pen of a She-Rebel: The Civil War Diary of Emilie Riley McKinley*. U. of S. Carolina Press. 2001. \$21.95.
- Cowley, Robert, ed., *With My Face to the Enemy: Perspectives of the Civil War* (Essays by David Herbert Donald, Gary Gallagher, James M. McPherson, Stephen W. Sears, et al). G.P. Putnam's Sons. 2001. \$30.00.
- Crawford, Kim. *The 16th Michigan Infantry, Vincent's Brigade, 5th Corps*. Morningside Bookshop. 2001. \$45.00.
- Dirck, Brian R. *Lincoln & Davis: Imagining America, 1809-1865*. U. Press of Kansas. 2001. \$34.95.
- Edwards, Laura F. *Scarlett Doesn't Live Here Anymore: Southern Women in the Civil War Era*. U. of Illinois Press. 2000. \$29.95.

### 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.

**Former President Daniel Weinberg (next month's speaker)** is the co-author (with James L. Swanson) of a recently released book, *Lincoln's Assassins—The Trial and Execution: An Illustrated History* (Arena Editions, 2001, \$45.00).

**Knob Creek Farm**, the site of the Abraham Lincoln Boyhood Home in Kentucky, has been officially transferred to the National Park System in a low-key ceremony. "My earliest recollection is of the Knob Creek place," Lincoln said on several occasions. A special ceremonial transfer of the deed is planned for Lincoln's Birthday, February 12, 2002, to honor the individuals and organizations that worked to acquire the property.

### 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.



## 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.

**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:** Jeffrey Wert, "Gettysburg: The Third Day"

**May 1-5:** Annual Battlefield Tour, Trans Mississippi

**May 10:** Ted Savas, "The Augusta Powder Works"

**June 14:** Eric Foner, "Reconstruction and Its Significance in U.S. History"

"GODS AND GENERALS," a movie based on the novel by Jeff Schaara, is currently filming on locations around Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. The film is planned for release in December 2002. The film "Gettysburg" was based on the novel *The Killer Angels*, written by Jeff's father, Michael Schaara.

"Gods and Generals" will feature some of the same cast members that appeared in "Gettysburg," with Jeff Daniels reprising his role as Union Colonel Joshua Chamberlain, but the leading Confederate characters have been recast. Robert Duvall will star as Robert E. Lee, a part played by Martin Sheen in "Gettysburg." Duvall, whose father was from Fairfax County and whose mother was a distant relative of the Lee family, said he "always thought it would be more than interesting" to play the famous Virginia general.