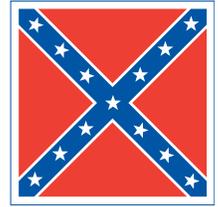


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

Volume LXIX, Number 9

Chicago, Illinois

May, 2009



671st REGULAR MEETING

Jim Ogden

on

“Chickamauga—Rescue at Horseshoe Ridge”

★★★★★

Friday, May 8

★★★★★

HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA

350 NORTH ORLEANS STREET

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$40 - Members/Non-members

*Entrée: Chicken Casserole,
Catch of the Day, Vegetarian
Plate or Fruit Plate*

please note

Make your reservations by Monday, May 4 by calling 630 460-1865, or emailing chicagocwrttdinner@earthlink.net, with the names of your party and choice of entrée.

If a cancellation becomes necessary after dinner reservations have been made, please call the number before 9 a.m. Thursday.

We are offering the option of choosing not to have dinner and coming only for the address at 7:30 p.m., for a charge of \$5 per person.

Parking at the Holiday Inn is \$10 with a validated parking sticker.

Jim Ogden

on

Chickamauga—Rescue at Horseshoe Ridge

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

On the afternoon of September 20, 1863, the mostly wooded hill mass of Horseshoe Ridge had acted as a breakwater, collecting the flotsam and jetsam of several Federal divisions. It had allowed those soldier-fragments to solidify and to repulse the first attacks of the ebullient, surging Confederates. But then, a large column was seen to the north. A few minutes observation indicated that the men who raised that cloud were getting nearer. Was it an enemy force closing to now roll up the Union left and perhaps spell utter doom for much of the Army of the Cumberland? Or, was it a force of Union troops? Could it be Gordon Granger and the Reserve Corps?

On May 8th, historian Jim Ogden will address the role of the Army of the Cumberland Reserve Corps troops on the often overlooked portion of the Snodgrass Hill - Horseshoe Ridge line on September 20, 1863. The fight that ensued, for the majority of these Reserve Corps men, was their first big battle and their baptism by fire was bloody and costly. Ogden will explain how their success and sacrifice, in the end, prevented a bad day for the Army of the Cumberland from being worse.

James (Jim) Ogden, III is a native of St. Mary's County, Maryland. Interested in the Civil War since childhood, he obtained a degree in American History through the Civil War period and American Military History from Frostburg State College. During college, he worked sum-



Jim Ogden

mers for the Maryland Park Service at Point Lookout State Park, Maryland, site of the largest Civil War prison, where historical interpretation and research were among the many position he held.

Beginning work with the National Park Service in 1982, he has been stationed at Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park, Georgia and Tennessee, Russell Cave National Monument, Alabama, and Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, Virginia. In November, 1988, he returned to Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park as the Historian, the position he presently holds. Since 1986, he has been an instructor for over four hundred groups of officers of the U. S. Army conducting Staff Rides (an in-depth analysis of a historical military event) at Chickamauga and Chattanooga.

Jim, his wife Lora, and their son Jamie (born on the 133rd anniversary of the Battle of Fredericksburg) live in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia.



Battlefield Preservation

BY DAVID ZUCKER

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



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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, 9670 N. Dee #205 Des Plaines, Illinois 60016, or contact bsallardice1@earthlink.net.

Sites threatened by mining, erosion, commercial and residential development and road widening lead the Civil War Preservation Trust's 2009 edition of "History Under Siege," the annual report on the most endangered Civil War battlefields.

In addition to the country's 10 "most endangered" battlefields, another 15 are cited as "at risk." They face threats from the usual development, as well as airport expansion, wind energy development, artificial wetland, railroad switching yard and a race track.

The report was released at a March 18 Washington press conference at which actor and history student Richard Dreyfuss and Dr. Libby O'Connell, chief historian at History, formerly The History Channel, spoke.

Dreyfuss and Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) president James Lighthizer and others then laid a wreath at Washington's African American Civil War Memorial.

The report will be mailed to Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) members in April. It includes the history of each site and its ranking in terms of historical significance and state of preservation. The report, along with pictures, videos, maps and other material, is at www.civilwar.org/historyundersiege.

The battlefield preservation story is far from being all bad news. CWPT has protected more than 25,000 acres of battlefield land in 19 states during its two decades. As the "History Under Siege" report notes, there were success stories in the last year, at Morris Island, Charleston (S.C.), Natural Bridge (Fla.) and Perryville and Richmond (Ky.), among others.

The most endangered sites, in alphabetical order, are:

Cedar Creek, Virginia: site of an Oct. 19, 1864, Union victory that ended Confederate offensives in the Shenandoah Valley, now faced with expansion of a limestone mining operation already visible from the battlefield.

Cedar Creek is also one of 15 battlefields in four states that are threatened by a proposed network of high-voltage electric transmission lines.

Fort Gaines, Alabama: The Dauphin island fort guarded Mobile Bay, but fell to the U.S. naval fleet after a three-day attack Aug. 5-8, 1864. The fort now is under assault from the Gulf of Mexico.

Four hundred feet of battlefield at Fort Gaines Historic Site have been lost, at the rate of 10 feet of land a year, due to erosion that also threatens the island's freshwater lake. If unchecked, the island could be split and the fort stranded. Congress has been asked to support study of an engineered beach to stabilize the shoreline.

Gettysburg, Pennsylvania: Many significant sites of the July 1-3, 1863, battle are outside National Park service boundaries and vulnerable to residential or commercial development.

A Comfort Suites hotel is being built adjacent to Evergreen Cemetery. Preservationists are concerned that development will follow the route to the new visitor center. An "astronomical" price is being asked for the bankrupt Gettysburg Country Club site on Route 30.

Monocacy, Maryland: The July 9, 1864, battlefield where Gen. Lew Wallace's troops delayed Lt. Gen. Jubal Early's march on Washington by a crucial day, faces the threat of a waste-to-energy incinerator on the opposite bank on the Monocacy River.

Despite county officials saying they favored other available sites for the facility and its 350-foot smokestack, CWPT says "in February 2009, it became apparent that all other sites under consideration had been abandoned."

New Market Heights, Virginia: Three thousand U.S. Colored Troops attacked the New Market Heights position on Sept. 29, 1864, part of the defenses north of the James River. Medals of honor were

awarded to 16 of the soldiers.

Despite the site's historic significance, no preservation organization has protected any of the battlefield. Henrico County owns some core battle land and one roadside marker notes the battle. Housing development has destroyed some of the battlefield and more development threatens.

Port Gibson, Mississippi: Union forces under Gen. U.S. Grant forced back Confederates at Port Gibson on May 1, 1863, giving them the beachhead that led to the capture of Vicksburg.

The quaint town was spared by U.S. troops and now faces threats from a Mississippi Department of Transportation plan to widen U.S. Highway 61 that goes through town. Local officials want a bypass that would avoid the battlefield and historic neighborhoods.

(From the April 2009 Civil War News)

April Meeting

BY LARRY GIBBS

On Friday, April 17, Stephen R. Wise gave an interesting and informative presentation on "Gate of Hell: The 1863 Campaign for Battery Wagner and Charleston." Wise, historian at the Parris Island Museum, has spoken to this Round Table twice before. The thesis of his presentation was that many important aspects of the 1863 Charleston campaign have been overshadowed by the attack on Battery Wagner, made famous in the movie "Glory."

Charleston, South Carolina, had been a major target of the Union forces ever since the firing on Fort Sumter in April of 1861. This "birthplace of secession" was also a haven for blockade runners. Wise proclaimed, "one of the greatest operations in the Civil War was the federal attack on Charleston in 1863. Charleston was the South's second largest city. The clamor for Charleston's capture would symbolize a moral victory." As one officer insisted, "Justice demands capture of the city as part of fate."

Initially, the federal navy attempted a direct attack on Fort Sumter. Sumter, located 3.3 miles from the city on an island in the harbor, mounted heavy guns and dominated the harbor entrance. However, the harbor obstructions prevented the federal ironclads from getting close, and in the resulting long-range cannon fight Sumter's gunners drove back the ironclads, sinking one (the Keokuk) and damaging the rest.

In July, 1863, another strategy evolved. The main assault now centered on Morris Island, south of the city and harbor, where the Confederates had erected a strong earthwork named Battery Wagner. The Union plan was to take Morris Island and Wagner, then attack and take Sumter. With Sumter in Union hands, the harbor obstructions could be cleared and the navy could steam through to the city.

The new assault was a combined army-navy affair. While the navy bombarded Wagner, 11,000 Union soldiers landed and inched forward on Morris Island. Among the Union forces were three black regiments, including Robert Gould Shaw's 54th Massachusetts. Wise claimed, "At this juncture of the conflict Union officers felt that blacks had to be observed closely to see if they could or

would fight as well as white regiments." Soldiers on both sides suffered from the fleas, rats, and terrible heat of Morris Island.

Battery Wagner, a strong well-constructed sand fort, had a large bombproof that could protect 1,000 Confederate troops. The Battery was located at a point where a swamp narrowed the island to 30 yards of dry land. An initial Union assault failed, with 300 casualties. On July 18th the navy, under the cover of darkness, fired 27 cannon shells per minute at the fort. However, little damage was done. The garrison merely hid in the bombproof, while the sand walls could be easily repaired.

The Union army decided that with Wagner softened up by the bombardment, a direct night assault could succeed fairly easily. Shaw volunteered to lead the assault with his 54th. As the Union troops charged at the double quick, a continuous streak of fire erupted from the Confederate positions. Colonel Shaw was killed on the ramparts. Sergeant William Carney seized the flag, and while encouraging his men was shot four times. Carney earned the Medal of Honor for his valor. The Union army retreated, repulsed and battered. The 5,000 troops in the assault suffered 1,500 casualties. Dr. Wise emphasized that several other regiments deserved credit for the tremendous fight, not just the 54th Massachusetts.

The Charleston campaign continued. The army and navy bombarded Morris Island and Sumter. In less than 10 days, Fort Sumter was reduced to rubble. A brick fort such as Sumter was vulnerable to rifled cannon fire, while a sand fort such as Wagner could absorb the shelling. The Confederates eventually evacuated the Wagner garrison and left Morris Island in Union hands. On August 22, 1863, the most publicized cannon of the campaign—nicknamed the "Swamp Angel"—fired the first of 36 rounds into Charleston, 8000 yards away. While the random fire terrorized some civilians, only 5 citizens were killed. During the entire campaign, Union casualties numbered 2,318 while Confederate losses were 1,022.

Wise concluded, "From Morris Island Union raids could be launched.

Finally, in February, 1865, Charleston fell, primarily due to General Sherman's assault from the north. When writing about his experiences during the siege of Charleston, one soldier explained, "Hell can't be any worse than Morris Island."

A recording of this (and every) meeting is available from Hal Ardell, audio librarian. Contact Hal at (773) 774-6781 or hal229@ameritech.net



Bearss Award

The contributors to the 2009 "Ed Bearss Award" include Mike & Mary Abroe, Chuck Adams, Ellen & Jerry Allen, Marilyn and Chuck Bednar, Ruth & Roger Bohn, Kurt Carlson, Terri Carr, Jim Cunningham, Marybeth Foley, Larry Gibbs, Rob Girardi, Cindy Heckler, Cindy Intra-vartolo, Tom Jaros, Millie Jarvis, Marshal Krolick, Kathy Levy, Janet Linhart, Mark Matranga, Bob Miller, Gale Pewitt, Rae Radovich, Jim Rasmussen, Brian Seiter, Donna Tuohy, Muriel Underwood, Paula Walker, Maggie Wildman and Jackie Wilson.

GRAPESHOT



From April 6th to May 25, the **Civil War Museum in Kenosha** will display an exhibit on Robert E. Lee and U. S. Grant. The exhibit, on loan from the NEH, will include the Bible General Lee carried with him throughout the war, and General Grant's field glasses. The museum will sponsor several special events in connection with this exhibit. Phone 262-653-4140 for more information.

Dave Corbett's "**Battlefield Balladeers**" will perform their musical magic at the Orland Park "Times of the Civil War" May 2 and 3, and at the Civil War encampment at the Lombard Historical Society May 25th.

"Chicago's Irish Legion: The 90th Illinois Volunteers in the Civil War," is the title of a new book by James B. Swan, published by Southern Illinois University Press.

Purdue University North Central is offering a **summer travel course to Gettysburg**. There will be 4 evening class sessions in mid-May, followed by a three-day trip to Gettysburg. The course may be taken for undergraduate academic credit, or on a non-credit basis by interested parties. Contact James Pula at PUNC for more details.

Everyone enjoyed the **battlefield tour, "Lincoln and Kentucky"**. Clear skies and warm breezes greeted us tourists, who enjoyed the great commentary by Ed Bearss and Wil Greene. A fuller report on the tour will be in the next newsletter.

Know of any upcoming talks, events, or publications? All members are welcome to contribute items to the newsletter. Contact the editor at bsallardice1@earthlink.net or (847) 375-8305.

SCHIMMELFENNIG BOUTIQUE

Fifty-seven years of audio recordings of CWRT lectures by distinguished historians are available and can be purchased in either audio cassette or CD format. For lecture lists, contact Hal Ardell at hal229@ameritech.net or phone him at (773) 774-6781.

Each meeting features a book raffle, with proceeds going to battlefield preservation. There is also a silent auction for books donated by Ralph Newman and others, again with proceeds benefiting battlefield preservation.

Upcoming Civil War Events

May 1, Northern Illinois CWRT: Jenny Weber on "Copperheads"

May 1, Salt Creek CWRT: Len Overcash on "The 45th Mississippi"

May 2, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Raymond P. Taffora talks on "Lincoln, Habeas Corpus, and the Wisconsin Supreme Court".

May 2, 3: Orland Park: "Times of the Civil War" event

May 5, Union League Club CWRT: Bruce Allardice and Larry Hewitt discuss "Abraham Lincoln"

May 6, Lake County CWRT: Dr. Douglass Dammann on "Kenosha Civil War Museum and Elmer Ellsworth"

May 6, Kankakee CWRT: Ray Glick on "Horses and Mules During the Civil War"

May 9, Glen Ellyn Public Library: Kathryn Harris as "Harriet Tubman"

May 9, Kenosha Civil War Museum: "Vintage Clothing Workshop"

May 12, McHenry Co. CWRT: Bob Frenz on "The GAR"

May 12, Madison IN CWRT: JoEllen Kowalski as "Francis Kellogg Thomas".

May 12, Pritzker Military Library: Mort Kunstler discusses his Civil War artwork

May 14, Mather Center in Chicago: General George H. Thomas (Jerry Kowalski) on "Abraham Lincoln".

May 16, 17: "Civil War Days" at Naper Settlement

May 19, Blue Island CWRT: Tom Campbell on "Fighting Slavery in Chicago"

May 25: Civil War encampment at the Lombard Historical Society

May 28, South Suburban CWRT: **Bruce Allardice** on "Lincoln as a War Leader"

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*.

May 8: **James Ogden**, "Rescue at Horseshoe Ridge"

June 12: **Thomas Cartwright**, "Cleburne and Sherman at Missionary Ridge"

Aug 22: **CWRT of Chicago's Lincoln Seminar**, at the Lisle Hilton

Sept. 11: **Tom Chaffin**, "H.L. Hunley"

Oct. 9: Nevins-Freeman Address. **Craig Symonds**, TBD

Nov. 13: **Patrick Schroeder**, TBD

Dec. 11: **Brooks Davis**, "Lincoln and Davis as War Leaders"

Bjorn Skaptason at the **Abraham Lincoln Book Shop** reminds us that the next "Virtual Book Signing" will be noon, May 16th. **Larry Tagg** will talk about his new book, The Unpopular Mr. Lincoln. Registration is required. For more information on this and upcoming events, visit www.alincolnbookshop.com.

CWRT Nominating Committee

The CWRT Nominating Committee, composed of the past presidents of the CWRT, has nominated the following slate of officers for the 2009-2010 year: President, Tom Trescott; Senior VP, Rae Radovich; 1st VP, Bob Stoller; 2nd VP, Brian Seiter; Treasurer, Mark Matrangola; Asst. Treasurer, Jim Cunningham; Secretary, Donna Tuohy; Asst. Secretary, John Kociolko. Trustees, terms to expire in 2011: Fred Johanson, Cindy Heckler, David Zucker and Eric Girardi. Trustee, term to expire 2010: Bjorn Skaptason. The election of the 2009-2010 officers will be held at the May meeting. Any CWRT member can make a nomination from the floor at that meeting.