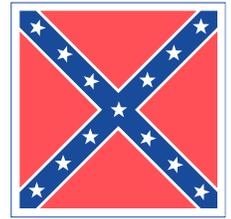


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Founded December 3, 1940



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John F. Marszalek:
*“The Nevins-Freeman Award Address:
The History of the Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant”*



Named after famed historians Allen Nevins and Douglas Southall Freeman, the Nevins-Freeman Award is the highest honor the Civil War Round Table of Chicago can bestow. It is awarded for an individual’s contributions to Civil War scholarship, and their dedication to the Round Table movement. Past award winners include Bruce Catton, James McPherson and Wiley Sword. This year we are proud to give this award to a distinguished author and historian, John Marszalek.

lecture widely throughout the nation and has appeared on the major television networks. He serves on the board of advisors of the Lincoln Forum, the Lincoln Prize, the national Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, and the Monitor Museum (Newport News, Virginia). After John Y. Simon’s death in July 2008, Marszalek was asked to serve as the Executive Director and Managing Editor of the Ulysses S. Grant Association and The

Papers of Ulysses S. Grant project. These papers are now located at Mississippi State University.



John F. Marszalek retired in 2002 as a Giles Distinguished Professor Emeritus at Mississippi State University. He taught courses in the Civil War, Jacksonian America, and Race Relations. He is the author or editor of thirteen books and over two hundred fifty articles and book reviews. Sherman, A Soldier’s Passion for Order was a finalist for the Lincoln Prize, and his first book Court Martial, A Black Man in America was made into a Showtime motion picture. He continues to

On April 13th Professor Marszalek will talk about how Grant’s memoirs came to be written, and its history up to and including the Belknap Press of Harvard University Press publication of (eds) John F. Marszalek with David S. Nolen and Louis P. Gallo: The Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant, the Complete Annotated Edition. The edition was published in October 2017.



771st REGULAR MEETING

★★★★★

Friday, April 13th

★★★★★

HOLIDAY INN O’HARE
5615 N. CUMBERLAND, CHICAGO

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$40 - Members/Non-members

**ENTRÉE
BUFFET STYLE.**

PRESERVATION NEWS - PRESERVATION VICTORY AT NEW MARKET BATTLEFIELD

13.5 Acres of Core Battlefield Preserved

NEW MARKET, Va.— Today the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation announced the preservation of 13.5 acres of core battlefield at New Market – the first step of a multi-stage preservation project at the New Market Battlefield. The newly-preserved land lies within the Town of New Market, just two blocks from the Foundation’s headquarters at the Strayer House in the center of town. With this success, the SVBF has now preserved a total of 220 acres of the New Market Battlefield.

The preservation of the 13.5-acre “River Road” property was made possible through the generosity of SVBF Board Treasurer Harry Ridgeway and his wife Trish, both of Winchester. “Battlefield preservation is important to us,” said the Ridgeways. “And this was an especially worthwhile project, providing a connection between two other preserved sites, and the opportunity to lay the ground for a new walking trail.”

The purchase of this 13.5-acre tract kicks off the preservation of multiple battlefield properties that lie on the east side of Interstate 81. The Battlefields Foundation is in the midst of preserving properties within the Town of New Market, with the intention of creating a 1-mile greenway walking trail. The trail will help connect battlefield visitation with the downtown and help tell the story of the oft-forgotten part of the battle in town.

The VMI-operated Virginia Museum of the Civil War, which includes the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park, is one of the finest battlefield parks in the state, and does an outstanding job

of telling the story of the battle, but most of the park’s land lies west of the highway. The bisection of the historic battlefield by the Interstate prevents visitors from understanding the full scope and scale of the fighting. The SVBF’s preservation and trail plans east of the Interstate aim to change that, and will benefit VMI’s existing battlefield park, the town of New Market, and the cause of historic preservation.

“Preserving this, and other parcels within the town of New Market, will allow visitors to experience the battlefield like never before,” said Keven Walker, CEO of the Battlefields Foundation. “And it will encourage an understanding of how that terrible conflict tore through our towns and cities.”

The newly preserved site played a key role in the Battle of New Market on May 15, 1864. The original road trace for the “River Road” ran across the property and was the first defensive line used by the Union army during the opening portion of the battle, and from where they exchanged rifle and artillery fire with the Confederates located to the southwest on Williamson’s Hill.

The position was commanded by Union Colonel August Moor, a German-born Mexican War veteran from Cincinnati, whose troops included those from the 1st West Virginia and the 123rd Ohio. Moor’s position had to be abandoned when it was overwhelmed by the advance of Confederate forces under Generals Gabriel Wharton and John Echols, which consisted of the 62nd and 23rd Virginia regiments. After capturing the position, the Confederates used the roadbed to launch their next offensive, which played a key role in their startling

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The only requirement for membership in The Civil War Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Membership Committee, 1039 Hinswood, Darien, Illinois 60561, or editor@chicagocwrt.org.

victory.

At the time of the battle, the River Road branched off the Valley Pike, ran just to the south of historic St. Matthews Lutheran Church located at the north end of the town of New Market, crossed westward over Manor Hill and ran to and beyond the North Fork of the Shenandoah River. The road ceased being functional when it was effectively divided with the construction of I-81 in the early 1960’s.

The Battlefields Foundation will develop and install interpretive signage on the new 1-mile greenway trail. The signage will not only tell the story of the battle on the property; it will also connect that history to the battle stories in the center of town and at the Virginia Museum of the Civil War’s signature battlefield park.

“Creating new battlefield parks and augmenting existing ones will be a major focus of the Foundation in the coming years,” said Walker. “From one end of the National Historic District to the other, we will be working to improve battlefield access in ways that serve visitors and help drive heritage tourism to local communities.”

MARCH MEETING

By Mark Matranga

Bob Jenkins gave a lively and informative talk to The Civil War Round Table at its 770th Regular Meeting on March 9, 2018, on "The Battle of Peach Tree Creek." By mid-July 1864, Confederate forces under John Bell Hood confronted three armies commanded by W.T. Sherman. Sherman's army group was perched outside Atlanta, having marched and fought from outside Chattanooga and over the last river barrier before the city in some 75 days. Hood's predecessor, Joseph Johnston, had abandoned the formidable Chattahoochee line after the first week of July, when Federal forces began crossing the river above the Confederate position, and Georgia, which had seen few Yankee troops during three years of war, now found a huge host about to assault the "Gate City."

Johnston's withdrawal behind Peach Tree Creek prompted Jefferson Davis, dissatisfied with Johnston's timid leadership, to replace him with the more aggressive Hood, one of his corps commanders, as commander of the Army of the Tennessee. The South was faced with the classic dilemma of the outnumbered foe (almost 2-1 in this case): aggressive attack versus a Fabian strategy causing one's opponent to dissipate his forces with fruitless and costly offensives. Johnston favored the latter approach; this conflicted with Davis's desires and led to Johnston's demise.

Only two days after his appointment, Hood planned an attack on elements of the Army of the Cumberland, George Thomas' army. Hood determined to strike Thomas on July 20th while his divisions crossed Peach Tree Creek and

were vulnerable to attack. This plan had features similar to one Johnston had devised but did not communicate to Davis. Peach Tree, while not a deep stream, was forty feet wide with steep banks; Thomas would need bridging before artillery and trains could cross it. The overarching strategy was to drive a wedge between Thomas and the Army of Ohio under Schofield and McPherson's Army of the Tennessee. Those armies were maneuvering south and east around Atlanta which created a gap between them and Thomas which Hood could exploit. If successful, Hood's plan would push Thomas against or over the Chattahoochee to the north and west, and place the southern army between Thomas and Schofield's right flank. This would force Sherman to move his forces away from Atlanta and thwart northern strategy to take Atlanta and enhance the administration's chances for victory in the November election.

The Army of the Tennessee had moved around Atlanta, cut the Georgia railroad, and now threatened Atlanta to the east. Hood sent his former corps under Gen. Ben Cheatham east to meet the threat from the Decatur Road, and moved the axis of advance by Hardee's Corps, which moved to fill Cheatham's former place in line; Hardee would now advance to the right of Stewart's Corps and assault elements of Howard's IV Corps while Stewart took on Hooker's XX Corps. This re-alignment reduced Confederate strength albeit Hardee had concentrated forces on the weak Union left; more important, it delayed the attack three hours. Hood had envisioned surprise, but Thomas' units were now across the creek, fortified on a low ridge. The tactical scheme

called for an attack en echelon whereby Hardee's and Stewart's divisions would step out and wheel to the left, forcing the Federals into the pocket between Peach Tree Creek and the Chattahoochee. But the plan was not executed according to orders, and made piecemeal, with further blunders: units attacking out of order, Bate's Division wandering lost in heavily wooded terrain instead of flanking the union left, a division being diverted by Hood to support Cheatham. Despite superior numbers, the attack failed.

Jenkins attributes the result to Hardee for failing to reconnoiter or to consider the terrain; he wasted time in advancing and failed to emphasize to his commanders Hood's orders for an 'all-out' assault. In fairness, Hardee was prepared to renew the assault when Hood diverted Cleburne's Division. Nonetheless, Jenkins questions Hardee's enthusiasm for Hood's plan and whether he was 'wanting in boldness' when aggressiveness was required. Thus Peach Tree Creek earned its ironic epitaph, "a negative victory plainly won."



2018 ED BEARSS AWARD

Once again the CWRT is soliciting donations to its Ed Bearss Fund. At the end of our 2018 Battlefield Tour the money raised will be donated in Ed's name to the battlefields and preservation agencies that Ed designates. And who knows more than Ed which projects are the most worthy? As in the past, anyone who donates to this fund will be acknowledged by having his/her name published in the newsletter.

GRAPESHOT



In April the **Civil War Museum in Kenosha** will feature the following fine events:

April 7th: Home Front Seminar.

April 13th: 2nd Friday Lunch Box series: Blaise J. Arena will speak on "Private John C. Fleming of the Chicago Board of Trade Battery."

Information on all Civil War Museum programs is available at (262) 653-4140 or www.thecivilwarmuseum.org.

A friend of many of us, **Harold Edward Howard**, died March 11th. H. E. Howard was not only a fine historian and reenactor: he published the Virginia Regimental Series of books on every regiment from that state. The complete set of over 200 volumes has proven invaluable to the understanding of that state and the Confederacy.

Leslie Goddard will present "Louisa May Alcott" April 23rd at the North Shore Senior Center, Northfield.

For more information, visit her website at www.lesliegoddard.info.

Check the **Announcements** section of the CWRT's website for additional coming events.

Know of any upcoming talks, events, or publications? All members are welcome to contribute items to the newsletter. Contact the editor at editor@chicagocwrt.org or (630) 297-8046.

PLEASE NOTE

Make your reservations by Sunday, April 8, by emailing dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org, or calling 630 460-1865 with the names of your party.

If a cancellation becomes necessary after dinner reservations have been made, please email us at dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org and/or call us at 630-460-1865.

We are offering the option of choosing not to have dinner and coming only for the address at 7:15 p.m., for a charge of \$10 per person.

Parking at the Holiday Inn is FREE.

More Upcoming Civil War Events

- Apr. 4th, Kankakee Valley CWRT: Ray Guttendorf on "The Colorado and New Mexico Territories in the Civil War"
- Apr. 6th, Northern Illinois CWRT: Dan Weinberg on "Facts About Abraham Lincoln"
- Apr. 6th, Joliet Area Historical Museum: Bob Kuzma on "Will County in the Civil War"
- Apr. 10th, McHenry County CWRT: Rob Girardi on "Rank and File in the Civil War"
- Apr. 12th, Milwaukee CWRT: John Marszalek, Nevins-Freeman Address: "The Grant Memoirs"
- Apr. 15th, Lincoln Death Day Ceremony in Springfield, with an address by Jerry Kowalski
- Apr. 17th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Dave Schultz on "The Union Artillery at Pickett's Charge"
- Apr. 19/22, Association of Lincoln Presenters Convention in Freeport
- Apr. 20th, Salt Creek CWRT: Fred and Carole Miller on "The Clank of Arms to be Heard No More"
- Apr. 26th, South Suburban CWRT: Dennis Doyle on "Colorado and the Western Territories during the Civil War"
- Apr. 28th, DuPage County Fairgrounds: Civil War and Militaria Show

Bulletin Board



FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held at the Holiday Inn O'Hare, the second Friday of each month, *unless otherwise indicated*.

May 11th: Joseph Rose on "Grant Under Fire"

June 8th: Dennis Rasbach on "Joshua Chamberlain and the Petersburg Campaign"

Sept. 14th: Tim Smith, "U. S. Grant and the Vicksburg Campaign"

Oct. 12th: Ted Karamanski, "The Civil War as an Indian War"

Nov. 9th: Ethan Rafuse, "The Valley Campaign"

Dec. 14th: David Hirsch and Dan Van Haften on "Abraham Lincoln and the Structure of Reason"

2018 BATTLEFIELD TOUR

The 68th tour dates are April 26th-April 29th for the Atlanta Campaign Tour. A few spots are still open. Please direct all questions via email using cwrt2018tour@chicagocwrt.org.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN BOOKSHOP

The next Author's Voice event starts at noon, April 14, with Bjorn Skaptasen interviewing Frank Cicero on his new book, *Creating the Land of Lincoln*.

Visit <http://alincolinbookshop.com/> for more information.