

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XXVII, Number 4

Chicago, Illinois

December, 1966

Frank L. Klement - 'Vallandigham and the Civil War' - Thursday, Dec. 8

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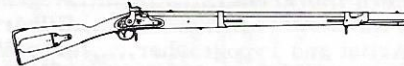
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256th REGULAR MEETING

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"Vallandigham and the Civil War."

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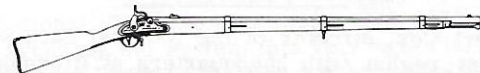
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FOUNDED DECEMBER 3, 1940

18 East Chestnut Street,
Chicago 11, Illinois
Phone: Whitehall 4-3085

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DAVID E. MEERSE, winner of the first CWRT Graduate History Fellowship award, is now an instructor of History at State University College, Fredonia, N. Y. 14063. One of Dave's first tasks was to help the college library fill out its set of Official Records. He is also in a position to add to the library's holdings of Civil War materials. He would appreciate hearing from anyone with such materials. Write him in care of the Department of History.

Elbert Cox, director of the National Park Service's southeast region with headquarters at Richmond, Va., has retired and has been succeeded by Jackson E. Price. It was Cox who corresponded with our CWRT and obtained Marshall Rissman's set of the Official Records for the newly established Pea Ridge Battlefield park.

THE SMALL, but closely knit and faithful CWRT of Colorado discussed the possibility of expanding the realm of interest for the group to include the American Revolution. After considerable discussion the group decided to remain the Civil War Round Table.

"Heinie" Bass and his "Bertie" of Enid, Okla., who are regulars on our battlefield tours, get in training for next spring's tour to Missouri and Arkansas by taking a jaunt to Hawaii, Japan, and Hong Kong.

IN RECOGNITION of twenty years as founder and sole president of the Milwaukee CWRT, W. Norman Fitzgerald, Jr., was honored by members with a sitting for a photograph by the renowned photographer, Karsch, of Ottawa, Canada.

from the Editor's pen



Col. Allen P. (Ned) Julian was welcomed as an old friend by eighty-nine members and guests when he spoke to our December 15 meeting on "Gallant John Hood."

Ned, director of Atlanta Historical Society and an Honorary Life Award member of our Round Table, had the misfortune of mislaying his script in Atlanta airport, but his many years of Civil War study came through when he delivered his address flawlessly "off the top of his head."

Ned traced Hood's career from an early promise of brilliance to one of deterioration and incompetence. "Hood was a tragic character, finally elevated to a position he was not qualified to hold," Ned said.

Hood's early military career began in California, then he was with a handpicked regiment stationed in Texas. He went to Montgomery, Alabama, commissioned as a first lieutenant. He was ordered to Virginia and there reported to Gen. Robert E. Lee. He was commissioned a brigadier general in the spring of 1861. In the early days of Confederate arms, he led in person and showed outstanding leadership qualities.

In October 1861, Hood was made a major general with command of a division. At the division level he had color, leadership ability, a commanding voice and fearlessness. At Gettysburg in 1863 Hood was wounded and lost the use of his left arm. Yet he was still a competent and inspiring leader when he went to Chattanooga and commanded one of Longstreet's corps in the battle of Chickamauga. He led the charge into a hole in the Union line. But he lost a leg in the battle. With that his physical and psychological deterioration began.

Recuperating at Richmond he was no longer the gay gallante, but he became the friend and confidante of Jefferson Davis, Braxton Bragg, and the Confederate secretary of war. The one day as a corps commander at Chickamauga had ruined him, but Davis made him a lieutenant general and sent him to Joseph E. Johnston's army in Georgia. Perhaps it was in Davis' mind then to replace Johnston with Hood.

While Johnston fought his fine delaying action ahead of William T. Sherman, Hood was writing letters to Davis and Bragg; he was resented by men of the Army of Tennessee. Then at a crucial moment in front of Atlanta, Davis put Hood in the place of Johnston. Thus, Johnston was not able to take advantage of the formidable defenses that had been prepared and that he was planning to use.

Hood was a fighter, and that was just what the Confederacy did not need at that point, Julian said. Sherman's army was larger and the Confederacy needed to conserve its manpower. Hood charged boldly and lost men. Sherman cut Atlanta's railroad connection and Hood was in trouble that he could not surmount.

As Ned assessed it, "Fighters destroyed the Confederacy; its strength and life died on battlefields.... God never intended to see the Confederacy prosper or he wouldn't have put Jefferson Davis in charge of it."

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At the opening, Balladeer Win Stracke led the audience in singing "Happy Birthday" to past president John Brooks Davis. President Michael Lerner called for introduction of guests. Among the audience were Henry W. McGee, Chicago's new postmaster; Dr. Carl Meyer, superintendent of Cook County hospital, and William McBride a member of the state commission on higher education. Lerner announced that Dec. 8th will be Gil Twiss night.

(Continued on Pg. 3 Col. 2)

Notes on Wilson's Creek

Springfield, Mo., which is one of the places to be visited on the 17th Annual Battlefield Tour, April 20-23, 1967, has the Civil War Round Table of the Ozarks, a group which has had a fine record of enthusiasm and good programs. Dr. H. Lee Hoover, one of the founders, is the editor of its newsletter, The Buck and Ball, which from time to time has printed stories and sidelights of the battles of Wilson's Creek and Springfield.

One speaker, Fred DeArmond, dwelt in curious parallels that mark the military history of the battles of Wilson's Creek and Shiloh. "Both are rated as among the bloodiest engagements of the war, "Wilson's Creek in its proportion of casualties to the numbers involved, and Shiloh by any standard," DeArmond said. "While one is recorded as a Confederate and the other as a Union victory, both were practically drawn battles. The Union forces were successful in the opening hours of their offensive movement at Wilson's Creek, but when the fighting subsided they withdrew from the field. At Shiloh on the first day, the Confederates surprised Grant's army and drove most of it back to the Tennessee river in a headlong and sustained series of charges. On the second day Grant took the offensive and threw back the Confederate forces across all the ground they had won, and beyond. But there was no real pursuit and the defeated army retired in good order.

"The losing commander in each battle was killed while leading his troops - Nathaniel Lyon at Wilson's Creek and Albert Sydney Johnston at Shiloh. Each was an untimely death, as both men had exhibited talents that might well have carried them to supreme command. It is perhaps worthy of note that neither of the officers who succeeded to command on the field - Sturgis or Beauregard - ever attained any conspicuous successes, although they went through the entire four years of war.

"A final parallel to be noted is that superior numbers, probably more than generalship, prevailed in each battle. Given at least equality in tactical command, a good big army is nearly always the winner over a good smaller army."

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Wilson's Creek is a battlefield of great interest to Americans of Hungarian descent because of Maj. Charles Zagonyi, Hungarian patriot who commanded Gen. John C. Fremont's colorful bodyguard. Editor Hoover has written of the scene of the cavalry charges of Maj. Zagonyi on Nov. 25, 1861: "The area covered by the fighting is bounded by West avenue, on the east along Mt. Vernon street to a point on Wilson's Creek just north of the road. From this point the first charge was made from the creek to the northwest up a (then) wooded hill to the vicinity of the Judge Farmer house which is still standing. From the summit of this hill, the second charge was made to the northeast into Springfield along the line of Wilson's Creek (Jordan) valley to a point near the Frisco station where a Zagonyi marker is located."

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The newsletter Buck and Ball is named for the only army newspaper published in the Ozarks region in the Civil War. Only one edition of the paper was published by the 11th Kansas Infantry. The issue was started on Dec. 6, 1862, but was delayed in delivery until Dec. 15. "The reason", Dr. Hoover wrote, "was that the 11th Kansas had to take time out on Dec. 7 to participate in the bloody battle of Prairie Grove against the Confederate forces of Generals Hindman, Marmaduke, and Shelby. Only one copy of the Buck and Ball is known to exist, in the archives of the Kansas State Historical society at Topeka. The name was taken from the cartridge that contained one large lead ball and three buck-shot, and which was standard ammunition in the old muskets used in the trans-Mississippi area during the earlier years of the war."

TO THE LADIES -

The Camp Followers on December 8 at 18 East Chestnut street, will hear Rosemary Walker discuss "Robert E. Lee, using his own words and those of his contemporaries as to why he did not remain in the United States Army and the why of his post-war role."

Mrs. Walker of Fort Wayne, Ind., is a veritable historical dynamo! She and her husband, Charles N. (Fort Wayne CWRT), have their talented hands in scores of exciting projects in history. They together edited the recently published Civil War Diary of Robert S. Robertson. Rosemary is a real friend of history. You'll enjoy meeting her and sharing her enthusiasm for the noble, yet enigmatic, commander of the Army of Northern Virginia. If you can attend the meeting, call Betsy Davis for details at 944-5082.

--Barbara Long, program chairman

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At the December 15 meeting of twenty-three Camp Followers, Bobette Burhans of Peoria read two delightful and moving stories of reminiscences by Elizabeth Harrison Binford. She preserved in her writings recollections and stories of the war she had heard as a child in New Orleans. Through Victorian eyes she gave a nostalgic glimpse of life in the 1860s and in post-war years.

Among the 1,200 hikers taking part in the Perryville (Ky.) Pilgrimage Trek there were some from the Kentucky School for the Blind. "Best trail I ever hiked," some were heard to say.

THE FINAL REPORT of the Wisconsin Civil War Centennial commission has been issued. It details the activities of the commission in public observances and in publications. The booklet is dedicated to William B. Hesseltine and Allan E. Oakey, two members of the commission who passed away during the centennial years. Don Gerlinger of Milwaukee was chairman of the commission. Copies of the booklet may be obtained for \$1 from the commission secretary, Leslie H. Fishel, Jr., Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 816 State St., Madison, Wis. 53706.

National Park Service estimated that visits to the 250 areas of the system this year would be 134,872,000 as compared with 61,602,000 ten years ago.

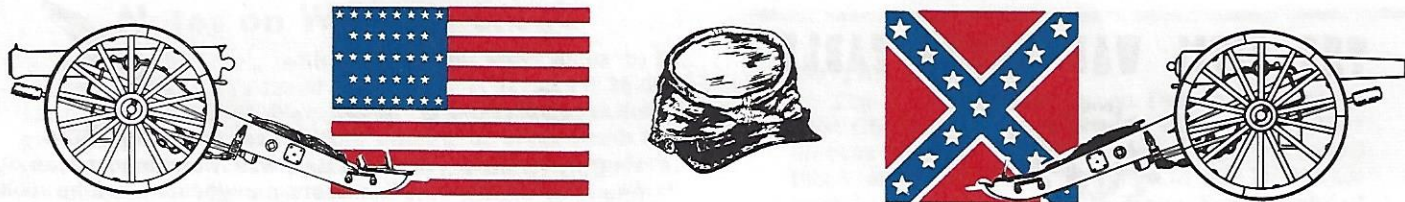
When "Pete" Long spoke at the Oct. 21st meeting of the Louisville CWRT he was presented with a commission as a Kentucky Colonel. "Pete" spoke at Decatur, Nov. 10.

THE WORST GENERAL IN THE CIVIL WAR - Union and/or Confederate has become a popular subject among Civil War Round Tables. Alan Nolen, James Spears, William Parker, and Harry Grube discussed it at Indianapolis CWRT.

from the Editor's pen
(Continued from Pg. 2)

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Treasurer Marshall Krolick announced that a new supply of CWRT lapel pins will be available in time for the next meeting. He also displayed a new key chain with the CWRT emblem on a plastic disc. These will be sold at 50 cents for benefit of the Graduate Fellowship Award fund. At the board of directors meeting prior to the regular meeting, "Pete" Long announced that Louisville CWRT had contributed \$50 to the fellowship fund.



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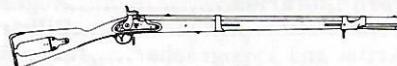
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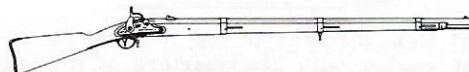
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