

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XXXVIII, Number 8

Chicago, Illinois

April 1978

MARSHALL D. KROLICK ON THE BATTLE OF BRANDY STATION

by David R. Richert

Many authorities have termed the Battle of Brandy Station the largest cavalry action ever fought on the North American continent. This battle, and the impact it had on the future conduct of the Civil War, will be the subject of remarks by our Past President and Newsletter editor, Marshall D. Krolick, when he addresses The Round Table on April 14.

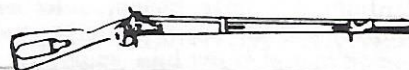
After Chancellorsville, the initiative in the East had shifted to the Confederates. The two armies lay opposing each other along the banks of the Rappahannock. In early June, Lee directed his forces to move northwest from their positions near Fredericksburg, thus beginning the invasion of the North that was to end at Gettysburg. At the same time, the Federal Cavalry Corps, under its newly appointed leader, Alfred Pleasonton, also left its camps.

Moving through Warrenton on June 8, 1863, the Union troopers and the two infantry brigades which accompanied them camped north of the river for the night. The next morning they crossed in two columns at Beverly Ford and Kelly's Ford. In the meantime, their unsuspecting Southern counterparts, under their famed commander, J.E.B. Stuart, were resting in camps scattered around the tiny railroad hamlet of Brandy Station. Misinformed as to the actual location of the Confederates, Pleasonton came upon them before he expected to, causing his plans to become inoperable. As the double surprise developed, the combat spread until almost all of the troops on both sides were engaged. On many parts of the field the fighting was in the classic cavalry style, a type of conflict which had not often been seen before in the American woodlands. Mounted charge met mounted countercharge, with sabers and pistols the weapons of the day. The combat lasted over twelve hours until finally the Federals withdrew back across the river. They were unpursued by the equally exhausted Confederates.

In his remarks, Marshall will not only discuss the tactics of the battle, but will also attempt to examine in depth the myths and controversies which have surrounded Brandy Station, many of which arose because of the subsequent writings of the participants. Among these questions are the purpose for which Pleasonton crossed the river, the presence of Southern infantry on the field, the reasons for



Marshall D. Krolick



370th REGULAR MEETING

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MARSHALL D. KROLICK

on

The Battle of Brandy Station

Friday, April 14, 1978

* * *

Chicago Bar Association

29 South LaSalle Street

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.



the Confederate cavalry concentration in the days before the battle, and the alleged Federal capture of important documents which disclosed Lee's plans. Also to be discussed will be the major effect which Marshall feels that this oft-times neglected battle had upon the future conduct of the War.

Active in the Round Table since 1961, Marshall has served as Treasurer, Vice-President, Tour Chairman, and, in 1971-72, as President. In January, 1974, he assumed the duties of editor of this Newsletter. Prior to that, he had been the Round Table's quizmaster for many years. That task led to his authorship of the "Civil War Quiz," a column which has appeared in *Civil War Times Illustrated* on a regular basis since 1970.

Marshall received his B.A. degree from Drake University in 1959 and a J.D. from Northwestern University School of Law in 1962. He is a partner in the Chicago law firm of Panter, Nelson & Bernfield, which he joined in 1965 after serving as an Assistant State's Attorney of Cook County, Illinois. He speaks regularly on Civil War topics to civic organizations and schools, and has addressed Round Tables in St. Louis, Kansas City, Louisville, Madison, and Milwaukee. Marshall spoke to our Round Table in 1974 on "Lee and Longstreet at Gettysburg" and also, in April, 1976, participated in the 350th Regular Meeting symposium panel which considered the question, "Where Goes the Civil War?"

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



FOUNDED DECEMBER 3, 1940

18 East Chestnut Street
Chicago Illinois 60611
312 WH. 4-3085

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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 Ward C. Smidl, 1104 Whippoorwill Lane, Palatine, Illinois 60067.



Alexander Schimmelfennig Headstone.

from the Editor's pen



History records few moments more majestic as when a man suddenly appears before the people and they, with that flash of instant recognition, realize that he is their leader, the brilliant star that will lead them on to even greater glory. In their thoughts and their hearts he immediately ascends to the very pinnacle, from there to beckon them upward to share his lofty perch. They unite under his banner, joyous in their coming together.

Such is the way it must have been with Moses and the Israelites, Alexander and the Macedonians, Hannibal and the Carthaginians, Napoleon and the French, Schimmelfennig and The Civil War Round Table. Ah yes, Schimmelfennig, he who has been truly called the second Alexander The Great. Think back to that glorious instant when his spirit first moved among us to illuminate our paths forevermore. Recall that initial moment, there in La Grange, Tennessee, when we gazed upward to dwell upon that noble countenance posted in the side window of Bus No. 2. Can anyone forget the radiance of heavenly brilliance that was reflected in our eyes? It was then, in that instant of pious joy, that our own sage, Dan Lapinski, spoke the immortal phrase "Alexander WHO?"

Since that day the dashing Schimmelfennig, whose deeds of derring-do have thrilled every new recruit into our ranks, has been our paragon, our knight errant waving our banner onward. Moreover, he is more than just a spirit, an ideal to set before us, for each of us knows, deep inside, the true meaning, the watchword that we share—He Lives. The Great Schimmelfennig is, not was. He is here, he is with us, he is not dead.

And yet, as in the case of every champion of the just, there are the non-believers, the decriers who wish to smash the idols of man. There has come before us one of these debasers to deny that The Savior of Gettysburg breathes the air of life. It would be easy to dismiss this false claimant as merely one who has failed to see the light. But alas we cannot, for he is one of our own members. And who, you ask, is this heretic, who is this despoiler? Well, do to him what you will for we can no longer conceal his identity. His perfidy must be exposed to mankind. His name is Lowell Reidenbaugh.

Yes, it is Reidenbaugh, the bard of St. Louis. Sad it is to relate that beneath that subtle guise of a mild mannered sports editor, there beats the heart of a denier. Why, you ask, would he lay before us these untruths. Why would he contradict the immortality of Schimmelfennig? The answer is all too obvious. We must only look to the very heritage of the foul Reidenbaugh, for he was born a Pennsylvanian, a Pennsylvanian not of the noble stripe of Reynolds and Hancock, but a Pennsylvanian of the cult of Pemberton. Mark it well, comrades, Reidenbaugh is a Confederate pretender and so he mocks Pater Alexander.

But what proof does he offer to establish his allegation that Schimmelfennig is not with us in body as well as spirit. Only a picture, that picture which accompanies this column. It purports to show the headstone over the grave of the Guru Schimmelfennig. What proof is this, what claim does this verify? Only that Reidenbaugh, like all disbelievers, is an assumer, but not a producer of facts. Has he dug down beneath the marker to expose the Beloved's mortal remains? No, he has not, for he cannot. There are no bones there to be found. The shaft stands only to lead astray those who will not accept what we, in truth, know. Go from us, Reidenbaugh, for your averments are unfounded. Our faith is unbroken, our voice is united as we proclaim before the world "Schimmelfennig Forever—He Lives."

March Meeting

Civil War chaplains, who they were and the role they played, were the subject of remarks by Dr. James I. (Bud) Robertson, Jr., when he addressed 79 members and guests at The Round Table meeting on March 10. Using numerous anecdotes, Dr. Robertson vividly described this largely unknown group of men, as well as their problems and contributions.

In May, 1861, both the North and the South made provisions for chaplains in their armies. No qualifications were established then except the requirement on the Union side that they had to be ordained Christians. This provision of the Volunteer Act of 1861 was later amended to permit Jewish chaplains. In the Federal armies, chaplains were named by field officers; Confederate chaplains were appointed at the discretion of the President.

Union chaplains received \$100 per month plus provisions. Those on the Confederate side initially received \$85 per month, but this was later reduced to \$50 because, as one official put it, "they only have to work one day a week." Their pay was subsequently increased to a more reasonable \$80 a month. Southern chaplains had officer status, but the situation in the North was less clear. Although Union chaplains were recruited as officers, they were often listed on regimental rosters under miscellaneous along with the musicians.

According to Dr. Robertson, Methodists were the most numerous in the chaplaincy service, followed by the Baptists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians. There were few Catholic chaplains, although one, Father Corby, wrote what Dr. Robertson called the best memoirs of any chaplain.

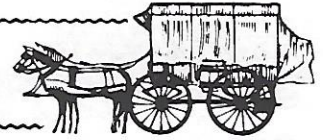
There was always a shortage of chaplains on both sides, and many men went months without seeing a minister. In fact, during the last three years of the War, only 60 percent of all Confederate regiments had a chaplain. As Dr. Robertson explained, the better class of minister stayed at home, or only served on a visiting basis. Thus, many chaplains, particularly in the early years of the War, were what he called, "ministerial ne'er-do-wells" and mediocrities. Often these were unqualified educationally, as well as being cowards and alcoholics. Several chaplains on both sides were accused of being AWOL, but spiritual neglect was the main complaint against them. Many failed to maintain high moral standards, were hypocrites, and were ridiculed by the men for the quality of their sermons. In some cases, because of the failings of the chaplains, pressure had to be exerted in order to obtain a congregation—it was either Sunday services or a trip to the guardhouse.

The dress of chaplains was often sloppy, and their general appearance filthy. (There was no official uniform for chaplains, although those in the Federal service usually wore black suits.) Chaplains were often given colorful nicknames by the men—"Holy Joe" being the most common. Other designations reflected the characteristics of the man. "The Great Thunderer," for instance, referred to a preacher whose sermons were filled with fire and brimstone. "One Cent By God" was the nickname for a chaplain who charged the men one cent for mailing their letters.

By the last half of the War, Dr. Robertson pointed out, there was a definite improvement in the quality of chaplains—the bad ones were either weeded out or left the army on their own accord. These men preached whenever they could, but typically, services were held on Sunday afternoon. Sermons were generally simple, and often had military overtones ("Put on the armour of God", for instance). Ministers on both sides emphasized that theirs was the cause of righteousness. Chaplains also spent time

Continued

The SUTLER'S WAGON



WANTED: Civil War History-Vol. I, No. 1,2,3; Vol. II, No. 3,4; Vol. III, No. 1,2,3,4; Vol. IV, No. 2,3,4; Vol. V, No. 1,2,3,4. Civil War Times Illustrated-Vol. II, No. 2 through No. 10 inclusive; Vol. III, No. 1,2,4,5,6. Contact Charles Wesselhoeft, 624 Prospect Avenue, Lake Bluff, Illinois 60044.

WANTED: A listing of the members and a Regimental History of The Chicago Light Artillery (three month state battery), which later became Battery A, 1st Illinois Light Artillery. Contact Oak Lawn Historical Society, 9526 South Cook Avenue, Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453.

March Meeting Continued

counseling the men, looked after the mail, conducted prayer meetings, visited those in the hospital, wrote messages of condolence, and wrote letters home for those who were illiterate or incapacitated. The competent ones shared the hardships and dangers of the men, all the while seeking to promote their spiritual well-being.

Chaplains were not considered participants in the War, and most were unarmed. Nevertheless, several won Medals of Honor for heroism. Chaplains often stayed on the field of battle encouraging the men and caring for the wounded. At least 11 Union chaplains were killed in action, while approximately 40 Confederate chaplains were killed in action or died in service. Many others on both sides were wounded. The average length of service of chaplains was 18 months. Most resigned because of age and health (chaplaincy was usually older men).

According to Dr. Robertson, men of the chaplaincy service were zealous, self-sacrificing angels of life who had considerable influence in keeping up the spirits of the men. They had to cope with many problems and contradictions, as they were subject to weaknesses of the flesh, but had to preach against them; they had to sustain morale even though there was no one to keep up their own; and in the midst of hate, they were supposed to preach love.

Overall, Dr. Robertson concluded, they succeeded in their tasks and their accomplishments far exceeded their shortcomings. In his opinion, for every bad chaplain there were five good ones who served unselfishly, bringing spiritual well-being to soldiers on both sides.

1978 Nevins-Freeman Award

The Nevins-Freeman Award Committee has announced that the recipient of the 1978 Award will be Dr. Bell I. Wiley, noted Civil War author and former Charles Howard Candler Professor of History at Emory University. The ceremonies honoring Dr. Wiley will be held on June 9, 1978. The exact details of the program, which will also include the installation of the new officers of The Round Table, and the location of the festivities will be announced by the Committee in the near future.

Probably the most unique employee of the National Park Service is Chuck Dennis, a blind 24 year old guide at Harper's Ferry National Historical Park. Dennis' work has been uniformly praised by his superiors, who state that the only concession they have made to his handicap is the installation of an electronic device to count visitors. He acknowledges that he was hindered in learning the historiography of the Harper's Ferry area, because of the few tape recordings or braille books on the subject, but he overcame this problem by listening and learning when the other guides made their presentations.

THE NEW BOOKS



(Compiled by Dick Clark)

Anderson, Bern. *By Sea and by River: The Naval History of the Civil War*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977. \$19.75 Reprint of the Knopf publication of 1962

Calhoun, W.L. *History of the 42nd Regiment, Georgia Volunteers, Confederate States Army, Infantry*. University, Alabama: Confederate Publishing Co., 1977. \$6.25. Facsimile reprint of 1900 issue.

Gibson, Ronald, editor. *Jefferson Davis and the Confederacy and Treaties concluded by the Confederate States with Indian Tribes*. Dobbs Ferry, NY: Oceana Publications, 1977. \$12.50.

Moorhead, James H. *American Apocalypse. Yankee Protestants and the Civil War, 1860-1869*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978. \$17.50

Nichols, David A. *Lincoln and the Indians: Civil War Policy and Politics*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1978. \$16.00

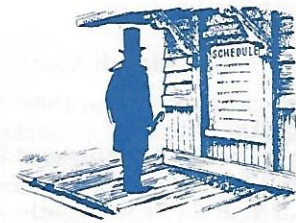
Robertson, James I., Jr. *The Stonewall Brigade*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977. Paper, \$4.95. Hardcover of 1963 still available at \$11.95.

Williams, George Washington. *A History of the Negro Troops in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865*. Preceded by a Review of the Military Services of Negroes in Ancient and Modern Times. Millwood, NY: Kraus Reprint. \$29.00. Original of 1888.

North Carolina officials have stepped-up their plans to raise and preserve the sunken Civil War iron-clad Monitor, a move that may intensify a struggle with the neighboring State of Virginia over where the Nation's first National Marine Sanctuary ultimately will be berthed. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has granted North Carolina authority to develop a master plan for research, preservation and possible recovery of the ship, which is now lying on the ocean bottom off Cape Hatteras. This plan is to include recommendations on where the Monitor should be displayed if it is successfully raised. The plan is expected to be completed by the end of the Summer of 1978. However, in the meantime, the Monitor Research and Recovery Foundation, a private organization, has received an offer from Norfolk, Virginia of a water-front site for the Civil War vessel. It would appear that a possible renewed Civil War may be in the offing, this time between two states of the old Confederacy fighting over a former Union ship.

Among those members of The Round Table who will be on the speaking trail in the next few months are Gordon Whitney discussing "General George Thomas and the Battle of Mill Springs" for the Louisville Civil Round Table on April 21st, Dr. Gerhard Clausius describing "Lincoln Goes to Gettysburg" before the Madison Civil War Round Table on April 13th, and Marshall Krolick repeating the "Battle of Brandy Station" for the Battle Creek Civil War Round Table on May 15th. Gordon's presentation will be one of the highlights of the Louisville Round Table's Spring trip to the Mill Springs battlefield.

Joint Congressional Resolution 16, the resolution to posthumously restore citizenship to Confederate President Jefferson Davis, has recently been passed by the Senate and has now been referred to the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives. Those wishing to urge support for this resolution should write to their Congressman or other influential members of the House.



BULLETIN BOARD

FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular Meetings are held at the Chicago Bar Association, 29 South LaSalle, second Friday in each month except as noted.

April 14: Marshall D. Krolick on "Brandy Station".

May 3-7: Annual Battlefield Tour to Chancellorsville, Wilderness, Fredericksburg, etc.

May 12: Kenneth Carley on "The Sioux Uprising of 1862".

June 9: Nevins-Freeman Award Dinner and Installation of Officers.

Every Monday: Informal noon luncheon meetings at Wieboldt's Men's Grill, 9th Floor, State and Madison; all members welcome.

Last Tuesday of each month: Informal noon luncheon meetings at Caravelle Motel, River Road and Bryn Mawr Avenue, Rosemont; all members welcome.

NEW MEMBERS

Herman M. Lazerson, 222 E. Chestnut Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

Marie Gurrie Rhoads, 4224 Grand Avenue, Western Springs, Illinois 60558.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS

Peter J. Roche, Wilner Road, Somers, New York 105
Daniel A. Vetter, 11032 N. 28 Drive, Unit 102, Phoenix, Arizona 85029.

Terry Hatch, 886 Fairway, Libertyville, Illinois 60048.

For the seventh consecutive year, Virginia Tech will offer a Summer Civil War Institute. Director and chief lecturer for the session, which will be held in Fredericksburg, Virginia from June 19th through July 7th, will be our old friend and March speaker Dr. James I. "Bud" Robertson, Jr., Miles Professor of History at Virginia Tech. Assisting Dr. Robertson will be the staff of the Fredericksburg-Spotsylvania National Military Park, headed by Chief Historian Robert Krick. Classes will be held all day Monday through Thursday, and during the morning on Friday. Included in the curriculum will be specially guided tours of nearby battlefields, guest lecturers, and a trip to the battlefield sites in the Richmond-Petersburg area. Successful completion of the Summer Institute will result in five quarter-hours of graduate credit. Tuition for the course will be \$112.50, and lodging is available at Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg at an additional charge. Those desiring further information or admittance forms should write to Dr. Fred W. Bull, Dean of the Graduate School, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061.

A visit to a Nashville flea market proved most interesting and profitable to Dr. Roland Hill, Memphis dentist and Civil War student. Dr. Hill paid \$2.00 for a picture of a familiar looking civilian dressed in the garb of the 1860's. He has recently resold his purchase for \$30,000 to the Smithsonian Institution, which verified that it is, in fact, a rare daguerreotype of Confederate President Jefferson Davis.