



# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

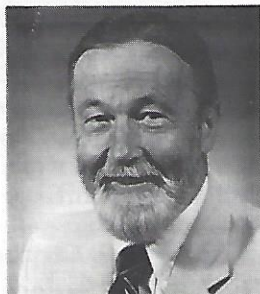
Volume XLVII, Number 4

Chicago, Illinois

December, 1986

## Alan T. Nolan on A Historic View of Robert E. Lee

On April 20, 1861, Lee wrote to his sister, Ann Marshall of Baltimore: "The whole South is in a state of revolution, into which Virginia, after a long struggle, has been drawn; and though I recognise no necessity for this state of things, and would have forborne and pleaded to the end for redress of grievances, real or supposed, yet in my own person I had to meet the question whether I should take part against my native State. With all my devotion to the Union and the feeling of loyalty and duty of an American citizen, I have not been able to make up my mind to raise my hand against my relatives, my children, my home. I have therefore resigned my commission in the army, and save in defense of my native State, with the sincere hope that my poor services may never be needed, I hope I may never be called on to draw my sword..."



Alan T. Nolan

The onset of the Civil War represented a time of personal crisis for Robert E. Lee, as it did for many other Americans who saw the nation pulling apart. On December 12th, Alan T. Nolan, an Indianapolis, Indiana attorney and Civil War scholar, will address the Round Table and review several times in the career of Robert E. Lee that he faced critical decisions.

Another period when Lee faced a time of crisis arose during the Gettysburg campaign and its aftermath. The initial fault for the failure of Confederate arms in this climactic battle focused on J.E.B. Stuart through his failure to alert Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia of the movements of the Union Army of the Potomac and his tardy arrival at Gettysburg after the battle had begun. In the early 1870s, Lee advocates such as Jubal A. Early, a division commander in Richard S. Ewell's corps at Gettysburg, and William N. Pendleton, chief of artillery of the Army of Northern Virginia, began to criticize James Longstreet for his failure to attack the Union left wing at an earlier hour on the second day of the battle. In Longstreet's defense, it must be countered that he was in sharp disagreement with Lee on his commander's intention to press the fighting on that field. Longstreet strongly recommended that instead of doing battle at Gettysburg, Lee should move the army south along the base of the South Mountain range and essentially recapture the tactical advantage yielded when A.P. Hill moved his corps from Cashtown to Gettysburg. However, Lee promptly rejected this recommendation, and



456th Regular Meeting

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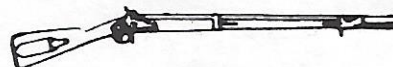
Alan T. Nolan  
on  
A Historic View of  
Robert E. Lee

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Friday, December 12, 1986

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Quality Inn  
Halsted and Madison  
Cocktails at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.  
\$13.00 per person  
Entree: London Broil, Fish, or Fruit Plate



the Confederacy would suffer its most costly strategic loss of the entire war.

Forums such as newspapers and the pages of the *Southern Historical Society Papers* would be filled in the 1870s with the 'Gettysburg controversy', with the initial salvo fired by Jubal Early in Volume IV of the SHSP. Shortly after the battle, Lee himself offered to resign the command of the Army of Northern Virginia, but President Davis refused to accept Lee's resignation.

Although it became popular after the war to assign the blame for defeat at Gettysburg to Longstreet after he committed the unpardonable sin of joining the Republican party, Lee himself could be assigned no part of this effort. During the retreat from Pennsylvania after the battle, Major John W. Fairfax, Inspector General on Longstreet's staff, informed Lee that Longstreet was being castigated by Lee's own staff officers, among others, for the loss of the battle. Lee responded, "General Longstreet is in no wise to blame. It all rests upon me. My shoulders are broad and I can bear the blame."

An Indiana native, Alan Nolan is a graduate of the University of Indiana and the Harvard Law School. He is a frequent speaker on the Round Table circuit and has con-

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# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940  
18 East Chestnut Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60611  
Phone: (312) 944-3085

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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 Dan Weinberg, 18 E. Chestnut St., Chicago, Illinois 60611.



A thirty-minute documentary, "Mr. Lincoln of Illinois," has been produced by Sangamon State University and the Illinois Office of Tourism. It presents an analysis of Lincoln's role in 19th century American politics, focusing on his involvement in the emerging Republican party and his personal and political stances on race relations. It is available in 3/4, VHS or Beta for \$40. Make checks payable to Bursar, Account #2-31146, Sangamon State University, Springfield, Illinois 62708.

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tributed articles to *Civil War Times Illustrated*, *Virginia Country*, the *Indiana Magazine of History*, as well as other periodicals. He has also contributed editorial and prefatory materials to several books: *Service with the Sixth Wisconsin Volunteers*, by Rufus R. Dawes, reprinted by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin; *The Twenty-fourth Michigan Volunteers*, by O.B. Curtis; and *The Sauk County Riflemen*, by Philip Creek and Mair Pointon, both recently reprinted by Butternut Press; and *Brave Men's Tears: The Iron Brigade at Brawner Farm*, by Alan R. Gaff, recently published by Morningside Press. He is best known for his book, *The Iron Brigade*, originally published in 1961 by the MacMillan Company. A new and revised edition of this book was published by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in 1975. A third new edition was published by the Historical Society of Michigan and Hardscrabble Books. *Civil War Times Illustrated* has identified *The Iron Brigade* as one of the 100 best books on the Civil War.

Alan is Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Indiana Historical Society, a Fellow of the Company of Military Historians and a founder and former president of the Indianapolis Civil War Round Table. He currently practices law with the Indianapolis law firm of Ice Miller Donadio & Ryan.

The U.S. Garrison flag believed to have been flying over Fort Sumter when the Confederate bombardment began on April 12, 1861, has been placed on display there following restoration work by the National Park Service at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. Another flag, the garrison's ceremonial flag which was raised in salute after the surrender in 1861 and again when Federal troops returned in 1865, is still being restored.

A New York City ophthalmologist, Dr. Stanley Burns, recently paid \$20,000 for a photographic album of Civil War surgeon Dr. Reed Brockway Bontecou. Bontecou was director of Harewood Hospital in Washington, D.C. from 1863-1866. Dr. Burns, who owns over 12,000 original medical photographs from the Civil War, already owns many other photos by Bontecou. His recent acquisition consists of about 600 photos, mainly of Petersburg casualties. He also secured Bontecou's cane, nameplate, and some of his medical instruments.

*The Forty-Seventh Pennsylvania Regiment* by Lewis G. Schmidt has been privately printed by the author and is available for \$40. The 47th was from eastern Pennsylvania and spent time in South Carolina, Virginia, Florida and Louisiana. For further information, or to order, write Lewis G. Schmidt, 124 N. West St. Side, Allentown, PA 18102.

After trying for about 25 years, Maryland Senator Charles McC. Mathias, Jr., has finally managed to get Congress to act on legislation that would compensate Frederick, Maryland for a Civil War debt. The Senate has approved a Mathias-sponsored amendment to the \$550 billion fiscal 1987 appropriations bill which will authorize Frederick to be paid \$200,000, the amount of the ransom paid to Jubal Early during his 1864 invasion of the north. However, the amendment must survive a House-Senate conference, be approved by both the House and Senate, and be signed by the president.



**Editor's note:** Due to an Army reserve commitment, Wayne Anderson, who ordinarily prepares the summary of the previous month's meeting, was unable to complete the article about the November meeting. It will appear in the January newsletter.

**Developers in Fairfax County, Virginia,** want to pave over the last vestiges of land on which the brief but vicious Battle of Chantilly was fought on September 1, 1862. More than 1,500 soldiers were killed or wounded in fierce hand-to-hand fighting there. Already Stonewall Jackson's and John Pope's battle lines are obscured by the Fair Oaks Mall. Now the developers want the spot where Union generals Isaac I. Stevens and Philip Kerney were killed. They have offered to move the markers to another site, where they would sit between an office tower and a 200-room hotel. Those who went on the 1984 Battlefield Tour to Washington, D.C. and Northern Virginia will remember visiting Chantilly and seeing the markers under the guidance of our good friend John Divine.

Letters opposing moving the monuments should be sent to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, attn. John F. Herrity, Chairman, 4100 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax, Virginia 22030, and Peter Scamardo, President, Centennial Development Corporation, 8391 Old Courthouse Rd., Vienna, Virginia 22180.

**Fort Stevens, one of 68 forts protecting Washington, D.C.** during the Civil War and the place where Lincoln came under fire during Early's 1864 raid on the city, faces serious preservation and maintenance problems. The fort was named for General Isaac Stevens who was killed at the Battle of Chantilly (see above). According to the Washington Round Table newsletter, the gun platforms, revetments, embrasures, walls, walkways, and flagstaff base are all disintegrating. Further, there is a lack of interpretive and visitor contact facilities at the site. The Washington Round Table is working with the superintendent of Rock Creek Park, who administers the site, to try to solve the problems. The goal is to have the area restored by the 125th anniversary of the raid, July 11-12, 1989.

**Members of Company E, 17th Michigan Volunteer Infantry** (reactivated) dedicated a Michigan state historical marker at Fox's Gap near South Mountain on September 13. It commemorates the original unit's first battle during the Civil War. The marker is the fourth of its type to be placed outside the state, and one of many that will be erected during Michigan's sesquicentennial celebration.

**The body of a Confederate soldier** who died in a Kentucky war prison 123 years ago was returned to Tennessee in October and buried beside the grave of his wife. The family of Cyrus Graham Clarke was never informed of his death in 1863 and they searched on and off for more than a century before finding his grave in Louisville in 1972. This year they decided to bring him home. (From an article in *New York Newsday*, October 14, 1986)

**For a donation of \$15 or more,** you can receive an 11x14 full color portrait of General W.S. Hancock. The money will be used to maintain the general's tomb in Montgomery Cemetery, Norristown, Pennsylvania. Send your contribution to: General W.S. Hancock Gravesite Fund, P.O. Box 15432, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19149.

### A preservation victory

The historic Grove Farm, south of Sharpsburg, where Lincoln met McClellan following the Battle of Antietam, has been saved. It will not become a shopping center. In August, 1985, the Washington County commissioners rezoned a parcel of the Grove Farm from agricultural to business-general, thus opening the door for construction of a shopping center. Local preservationists, including members of the Harpers Ferry and Hagerstown Round Tables, organized the Save Historic Antietam Foundation (SHAF) to reverse the rezoning.

Although 5000 people signed petitions asking the commissioners to rescind the rezoning, and despite letters from all over the country, the commissioners refused to budge, and SHAF filed a lawsuit. On October 27, 1986, circuit court judge John Corderman ruled the Washington County commissioners had violated the law by not following proper procedures when rezoning, and declared the business-general zoning null and void.

Unfortunately, the victory did not come cheaply. The legal battle cost SHAF about \$9000, and funds are urgently needed to pay this debt. You can send your tax-deductible contribution to the Save Historic Antietam Foundation, P.O. Box 550, Sharpsburg, Maryland 21782. Make checks payable to Save Historic Antietam Foundation.

You should note that at its meeting October 25, the Chicago Round Table executive committee voted to contribute \$500 to SHAF. The money comes from the Battlefield Preservation Fund, which is supported by the book raffle held at each meeting.



*Pictured above is the recently erected monument to General Stephen Augustus Hurlbut in Big Thunder Park in Belvidere, Illinois. The inscription on the other side reads "Erected by the Belvidere High School Civil War Round Table A portion of the funds was donated in memory of Dr. Gerhardt P. Clausius." "Doc" Clausius was an honorary award life member of the Chicago Round Table. He, like his "hero" Hurlbut, was from Belvidere. "Doc" joined The Round Table in 1954 and served as president in 1961-62. He passed away in March of this year.*



## The New Books compiled by Dick Clark



## BULLETIN BOARD



Allan, William. *History of the Campaign of Gen. T.J. (Stonewall) Jackson in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia*. From November 4, 1861, to June 17, 1862. With full maps of the Region and of the Battlefields by Jed. Hotchkiss. Introduction by Gary W. Gallagher. Dayton, Ohio: Morningside, 1986. \$20.00. Original of 1880.

Ballard, Michael B. *A Long Shadow: Jefferson Davis and the Final Days of the Confederacy*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1986. \$22.00.

Bevier, Robert S. *The Confederate First and Second Missouri Brigades from Wakarusa to Appomattox, 1861-1865*. Florissant, MO: Inland Printer Ltd., 1985. \$24.50. Original of 1879.

Boothe, F. Norton. *Great Generals of the Civil War and their Battles*. New York: Gallery Books, 1986. \$12.95.

Bradford, James C., editor. *Captains of the Old Steam Navy. Makers of the American Naval Tradition, 1840-1880*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1986. \$24.95.

Bull, Rice C. *Soldiering: The Civil War Diary of Rice C. Bull, 123rd New York Volunteer Infantry*. Edited by Jack Bauer. Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1986. pbk \$9.95. Original hard-cover 1977.

Chamberlin, Thomas. *History of the One Hundred and Fiftieth Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers*. Baltimore, MD: Butternut and Blue, 1986. \$26.50.

Coulling, Mary. *The Lee Girls*. Winston-Salem, NC: John F. Blair, 1986. On the four daughters of R.E. Lee.

Dilts, Bryan Lee. *1890 Missouri Census Index of Civil War Veterans or their Widows*. Salt Lake City, UT: Index Pub., 1985. \$87.00; pbk \$19.00.

Farmer, James Oscar, Jr. *The Metaphysical Confederacy: James Henley Thornwell and the Synthesis of Southern Values*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986. \$28.95.

Faust, Patricia L., editor. *Historical Times Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Civil War*. New York: Harper & Row, 1986. \$39.95.

Fermer, Douglas. *James Gordon Bennett and the New York Herald: A Study of Editorial Opinion in the Civil War Era, 1854-1867*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986. \$29.95.

Hill, Frederick Trevor. *Lincoln the Lawyer*. Littleton, CO: F.B. Rothman, 1986. \$32.50. Original of 1906.

Koch, Freda Postle. *Colonel Coggeshall: The Man who Saved Lincoln*. Columbus, OH: Poko Press, 1986. pbk \$11.95.

Livermore, Thomas L. *Numbers and Losses in the Civil War in America, 1861-1865*. Dayton, OH: Morningside, 1986. \$15.00.

### Future meetings

Regular meetings are held at the Quality Inn, Halsted and Madison, the second Friday in each month, except as noted.

December 12: Alan T. Nolan on "A Historic View of Robert E. Lee."

January 9, 1987: Marshall D. Krolick on "Captain to Brigadier: The Promotions of Custer, Farnsworth and Merritt."

February 20: Ralph G. Newman on "Robert Todd Lincoln in the Civil War." **Note:** This is the third Friday of the month.

March 13: Howard McManus on "The Battle of Cloyd's Mountain."

April 10: Mike Chesson on "The Bread Riots in Richmond."

April 30-May 3: Annual Battlefield Tour—The Trans-Mississippi.

May 8: Betty Otto on "Maryland Campaign, September 1862."

June 5: Mark Boatner on "How the Civil War Dictionary Came Into Being." **Note:** This is the first Friday of the month.

### New members

Michael T. Brennan, 10148 S. Oakley, Chicago, Illinois 60643 (312) 881-1239.

Joan Carlson, 1636 Wadham Pl., Wheaton, Illinois 60187 (312) 462-0056.

Hugh K. Field, 1146 Raleigh Rd., Glenview, Illinois 60025 (312) 729-5089.

### Changes of address

Jim Carlisle, 2530 W. Wilson, Chicago, Illinois 60625 (312) 583-7365.

Ira Kaplan, 260 E. Chestnut, Apt. 407, Chicago, Illinois 60611.

Rev. Matthias E. Lorenz, 5531 East Lake Drive, Apt. 31C, Lisle, Illinois 60532.

Mark L. Schwarz, 4170 N. Marine Drive, Apt. 13C, Chicago, Illinois 60613.

**Fellow member James Vlazny** will address the Salt Creek Round Table on January 2. His topic will be the "Battle of New Market." In February, our president, Pat Sumner, will speak to the Northern Illinois Round Table on "Women in the Civil War." The Northern Illinois Round Table newsletter has initiated a Perspectives column to which Jim Vlazny contributed an article on Robert Barnwell Rhett, Sr., the so-called Father of Secession. The same article also appeared in the newsletter of The American Civil War Round Table of the United Kingdom.

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A thirty-minute documentary on Wisconsin in the Civil War, titled "Battle Cry of Freedom," was recently shown on public television in Wisconsin. It was produced by the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Telecommunications Network for the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs.

On behalf of the newsletter staff and the officers of The Round Table, we wish all members and their families a joyous holiday season and a healthy and prosperous new year.

