

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Volume XLIX, Number 7

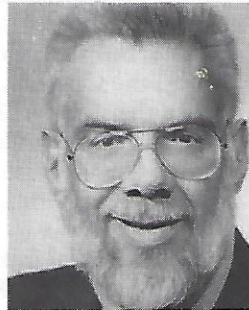
Chicago, Illinois

March, 1989

Jerry L. Russell on "The Battle of Pea Ridge"

by Barbara Hughett

The border states were crucial to both sides in the American Civil War. Though Missouri remained in the Union, large numbers of its population were very sympathetic to the Confederate cause. President Lincoln viewed Illinois' neighbor state to the west as a buffer against Southern sympathizers in Kansas and the Confederate states of Arkansas and Texas. President Davis, on the other hand, viewed with hope the possibility that Missouri might come into the Confederate fold, paving the way for Kentucky and Maryland to follow suit. Missouri State Guard General Sterling Price, a former governor, capitalized on the ill will created by the St. Louis riots in May, 1861 to create an army and, aided by regular Confederate troops and Arkansas state troops, defeated the Federal force in August at Oak Hills, along Wilson's Creek near Springfield, in the extreme southwest corner of the state, just above the Arkansas border. He and his Guard then moved north of the Missouri River to Lexington, successfully besieging the Union garrison there, before retreating back to southwest Missouri in the face of advancing Federal troops.



Jerry L. Russell

On Christmas day, 1861, Union Brigadier General Samuel Curtis was named field commander of the recently established Department of Missouri. Curtis' army, a patched-together 12,000-man force, many of whom were German immigrants from the St. Louis area who spoke little, if any, English, set out from the railhead at Rolla, southwest of St. Louis, in search of Price's forces. The army that Curtis eventually faced was also patched-together, consisting of State Guardsmen, Confederate regulars (the Confederate Provisional Army), and Indian troops from the Territory, led by Brigadier General Albert Pike. Problems of rank and authority among Confederate forces in the area, which seriously hampered their progress, were supposedly solved in mid-January when Major General Earl Van Dorn, a nephew of Andrew Jackson, was appointed commander of the newly created Confederate Trans-Mississippi Department. Van Dorn, though possessed of sweeping, ambitious plans to capture St. Louis, arrived in northwest Arkansas without a single staff officer. He fought the Battle of Pea Ridge, from March 6-8, 1862, with an improvised staff which was even less efficient, by today's standards, than Civil War generals' staffs usually were.



479th Regular Meeting

Jerry L. Russell
on
The Battle of Pea Ridge

Friday, March 10, 1989

Quality Inn
Halsted and Madison
Cocktails at 5:30 p.m. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.
\$15.00 per person
Entree: Chicken Vesuvio, Fish, or Fruit Plate



Executive Committee Meeting

President Bill Sullivan has announced there will be an Executive Committee meeting at 5 p.m. on March 10 at the Quality Inn. On the agenda is discussion of The Round Table history and other items relating to the 50th anniversary, and the status of The Round Table archives at the Chicago Public Library. All officers, executive committee members, and past presidents are encouraged to attend.

On March 10th, Jerry L. Russell will speak to The Civil War Round Table about "The Battle of Pea Ridge." Mr. Russell, who has a degree in journalism from the University of Arkansas, owns a public relations and communications firm in Little Rock. His firm's work includes advising political candidates in local and state elections. Mr. Russell's already active interest in the Civil War was heightened during the Civil War Centennial years, and he helped found the Arkansas Round Table. He later discovered that his great grandfather had been a "Yankee soldier." One of the foremost activists in the fight to preserve our Civil War battlefield sites, he is the founder and national chairman of Civil War Round Table Associates. CWRT Associates publishes a newsletter, lobbies for battlefield preservation, and,

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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, IL 60611.



The historic preservation community in Illinois has been given a unique opportunity with the creation of the Heritage Preservation Fund and Tax Checkoff. The chief vehicle for donating to the Fund is the Heritage Preservation Tax Checkoff on the Illinois income tax form. Anyone receiving a refund may donate up to \$10 (\$20, if filing jointly) to the Fund by checking 11d, for history, on the IL-1040 form. The donation can be reported as tax deductible on next year's federal tax form. Additional tax deductible donations may also be made by writing a check and sending it directly to the Heritage Preservation Fund, Old State Capitol, Springfield, IL 62701.

Battlefield Preservation Report

by Daniel J. Josephs

In the February, 1989 issue of *Blue & Gray* magazine, Mr. Brian Pohanka, Secretary of the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites, (APCWS), highlighted, in the Response section of the magazine, another battlefield in Virginia that is being threatened. Mr. Pohanka said that "an historic portion of the battlefield of Brandy Station—scene of one of the greatest cavalry fights in history—is being bulldozed."

According to Mr. Bud Hall, member of the Board of Directors of the APCWS, Mr. Lee Sammis of the Sammis Company of Irvine, California, started quietly purchasing parcels of the Brandy Station battlefield area in November, 1987. This developer now owns in excess of 5000 acres of the battlefield area, making him the principal landowner in the area of Brandy Station. A representative of APCWS met with Mr. Sammis and his Director of Acquisition in May, 1988 concerning the future of the battlefield. The APCWS sent the developer documentation on the historical significance of the property. According to Mr. Hall, Mr. Sammis never responded. Mr. Hall indicated that the developer has never shown a predisposition to working with the APCWS. On January 26, 1989, the developer announced plans for the construction of a community on the Brandy Station battlefield which would involve commercial, industrial, and residential construction.

Areas of the Brandy Station battlefield owned by the developer include: the area from Beverly Ford to St. James Church; the area of the approach of the Union right flank toward the Confederate left flank on the Hazel River; the area of the stone wall which was the scene of the attack by the Eighth Illinois Cavalry upon the Confederate artillery site; the Green house site; the Cunningham farm, the site of Union General Buford's headquarters; the ground surrounding St. James Church; and the Eastern slopes of Fleetwood Hill. Until recently, this land was in the agricultural district; but the developer has petitioned the county for removal from this status. In October of 1988, Mr. Hall of APCWS desired to give a tour of the Brandy Station battlefield but was denied permission to do so by the developer. At that time it was discovered that the developer was in the process of building a road one-mile long across a portion of the battlefield. According to Mr. Hall, APCWS is working with local land owners and interest groups as well as Culpepper County government officials to create a historic district at Brandy Station. This historic district, if created, would denote for all the historical significance of the battlefield. APCWS is also working with the state of Virginia to apply for National Historic Landmark Status to be given to the south end of Fleetwood Hill and to the ruins of St. James Church.

According to the developer's representative, Mr. Scott Gayner, Mr. Sammis has shown in the past a sensitivity toward environmental and historical concerns. Mr. Gayner said that the developer saved and restored the Hutchison Home on Route 50, near Middleburg, Virginia. Mr. Gayner said that Mr. Sammis has hired a historian named Gene Scheel to survey the developer's property at Elkwood, Virginia, near Brandy Station. Mr. Scheel has designed the Culpepper and Facquirer County historic maps. The developer, according to Mr. Gayner, blacked a farm road for better access from one tenant house to another and has shown this road to the county officials.

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February Meeting

by Barbara Hughett

"The world," Abraham Lincoln said in an 1864 speech to the Baltimore Sanitary Commission, "has never had a good definition of the word liberty, and the American people, just now, are much in need of one. We all declare for liberty, but, in using the same word, we do not all mean the same thing." Illustrating his point with a parable, he said: "The shepherd drives the sheep from the wolf's throat, for which the sheep thanks the shepherd as a liberator, while the wolf denounces him for the same act as the destroyer of liberty, especially as the sheep was a black one. Plainly, the sheep and the wolf are not agreed upon a definition of the word liberty; and precisely the same difference prevails today among us human creatures...and all professing to love liberty. Hence we behold the processes by which thousands are daily passing from under the yoke of bondage, hailed by some as the advance of liberty, and bewailed by others as the destruction of all liberty." On February 10th, noted Civil War scholar and author Dr. James M. McPherson addressed 165 members and guests at the 478th regular meeting of The Civil War Round Table. His topic was "Lincoln and Liberty."

"Lincoln's complaint that the world had never had a good definition of liberty," Dr. McPherson observed, "was well founded. The problem," he continued, "is, and was then, that there are too many definitions. One historian of ideas has listed 200 definitions." The classic statement of American liberty, the Declaration of Independence, says that "all men are created equal." The question of which men were included in the "all men" and whether the generic term "men" included women would later become significant. Lincoln believed that Jefferson and the other founders had meant to include blacks in the "all men," even though some of them had owned slaves. He felt they were stating a principle which they hoped would eventually become a reality. It was his contention that, while they were unable to immediately uproot the institution of slavery, they thought it was wrong and that its abolition would be gradually accomplished. On this point, most Southerners, and most members of the Democratic Party of that day, disagreed with him. They believed that black people were intended to be the property of the white race and, indeed, that all other races were inferior to the white race. This fed the prejudices of many working class whites who clung to the "mudsill" philosophy, which said that the equality of whites was dependent on the mudsill of black slavery below them. Their real fear, of course, was that thousands of black slaves would be freed and compete for the jobs of white men.

Slavery was not the only problem involving the question of liberty during the Civil War. In any war, civil liberties of citizens are likely to become victims of the passions or necessities of the conflict. By its nature, a civil war produces more intense concern for internal security. Lincoln's suspension of the writ of habeas corpus and subsequent arrests and detentions of Confederate sympathizers has been criticized. Yet, constitutional lawyers then and since have supported Lincoln's position that this is an emergency power of the president "when in cases of rebellion or invasion, the public safety does require it." Lincoln, Dr. McPherson maintained, considered this "a small price to pay for the preservation of that larger framework of liberty—the nation itself." He also pointed out that, "compared with the harassment and imprisonment of the dissidents during World War I or the internment of Japanese-

Americans during World War II, the Lincoln administration's violation of civil liberties during the much greater crisis of the Civil War seems quite mild indeed."

Dr. McPherson discussed two concepts of liberty, defined by British philosopher Isaiah Berlin as positive liberty and negative liberty. Negative liberty, or freedom *from* is illustrated in the Bill of Rights. Nearly all of the first ten amendments use the phrase "shall not" in reference to the federal government. Beginning with the 13th Amendment in 1865, which abolished slavery, six of the next seven amendments strengthened the powers of the government in expanding the rights of individuals, shifting the emphasis toward positive liberty, or freedom *to*. Four of these amendments define into the population enjoying certain liberties groups which had previously been defined out—blacks and women. "Lincoln," Dr. McPherson maintained, "played a crucial role in this historical shift of emphasis from negative to positive liberty."

"With the new birth of freedom proclaimed in the Gettysburg Address, and backed by a powerful army," Dr. McPherson asserted, "Lincoln hoped to move the nation toward an expanded and open-ended concept of positive liberty." In closing, he quoted Lincoln who said that, on the side of the Union, "this Civil War is a struggle for maintaining in the world that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men; to lift artificial weights from all shoulders; to clear the path of laudable pursuits by all, black as well as white; to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life." Thus, "in giving freedom to the slave," he declared, "we assure freedom to the free."

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for the past fourteen years, has sponsored an annual Congress, with leading Civil War historians and preservationists as participants.

Over the years, Mr. Russell's work has been recognized with numerous awards. These awards include the New York Round Table's first award for preservation, the annual award of the Kansas City Round Table (which former President Harry Truman helped found), an award from the Council on America's Military Past, and one of the first Take Pride in America Awards of the Department of the Interior. He was instrumental in the formation of the Society of Civil War Historians and the Confederate Historical Institute. In addition to the CWRT Associates newsletter, Mr. Russell publishes the Order of Indian Wars newsletter; "Hog Call," a fan letter on University of Arkansas Razorback sports; and "Grassroots," a newsletter about political campaigning.

The A. Lincoln Freedom Collection Exhibit, featuring the Gettysburg Address, written in Lincoln's own hand, is now on display at The Newberry Library, 60 W. Walton, Chicago. The exhibit runs through March 15.

The Indianapolis CWRT is hosting the Eighth Annual Midwest Conference of Civil War Round Tables, on April 21-23, at the Sheraton Northwest Hotel in Indianapolis. Speakers include Dr. Gerald Linderman, Dr. Gary Gallagher, and Alan Nolan. For more information, contact Maynard Shrock, president of the Indianapolis CWRT, P.O. Box 26, Nappanee, IN 46550, (219) 773-7728.

The New Books

compiled by C. Robert Douglas




BULLETIN BOARD

Black, Robert C. *The Railroads of the Confederacy*. Wilmington, NC: Broadfoot Publ. Co. 1988. \$30.00. Original of 1952.

Blue, Frederick J. *Salmon P. Chase: A Life in Politics*. Kent, OH: Kent State University Press. 1987. \$28.00.

Boritt, Gabor, ed. *The Historian's Lincoln-Pseudohistory, Psychohistory, and History*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press. 1988. \$24.95.

Burton, William L. *Melting Pot Soldiers: The Union's Ethnic Regiments*. Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press. 1988. \$26.95.

Busey, John W. *These Honored Dead: The Union Casualties at Gettysburg*. Longstreet House, P.O. Box 730, Hightstown, NJ 08520. 1988. \$24.00.

Cannon, Devereaux D. Jr. *The Flags of the Confederacy, An Illustrated History*. Wilmington, NC: Broadfoot Publ. Co. 1988. \$29.95 pbk \$9.95.

Carroll, John M. ed. *The Civil War Campaign Medal*. The Frontier Military Research & Preservation Society, P.O. Box 44, Bryan, TX 77806. 1987. \$15.00.

Cauble, Frank P. *Biography of Wilmer McLean*. H.E. Howard, Inc., Box 4161, Lynchburg, VA 24502. 1987. \$10.00.

Cunningham, Horace H. *Field Medical Services at the Battle of Manassas*. Baltimore, MD: Butternut and Blue. Pbk \$12.50. Original of 1968.

Heartsill, W. W. *1491 Days in the Confederate Army*. Wilmington, NC: Broadfoot Publ. Co. 1987. \$35.00. Original of 1876.

Johannsen, Robert W., ed. *Democracy on Trial: A Documentary History of American Life, 1845-1877*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press. \$34.95 pbk \$17.95.

Marshall, Francis. *The Battle of Gettysburg*. Gaithersburg, MD: Olde Soldier Books. 1988. \$30. Original of 1914.

Simpson, Brooks D., Leroy P. Graf, and John Muldowny, eds. *Advice After Appomattox: Letters to Andrew Johnson, 1865-1866*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press. 1988. \$29.95 pbk \$14.95.

Arming the Suckers, 1861-1865, A Compilation of Illinois Civil War Weapons by Ken Baumann, will be released in the autumn of 1989. The 260-page book documents the constantly changing arms used by Illinois soldiers and contains 27 photographs, many never before published. For a prepublication copy of the book, at \$19.95 (\$29.95 after publication), contact Morningside Bookshop, P.O. Box 1087, Dayton, OH 45401, 1-800-648-9710.

The 11th annual conference of the Confederate Historical Institute will be held in Manassas, Virginia from April 6-9. The conference will feature tours of Manassas and Brandy Station, led by Ed Bearss, as well as speakers such as Dr. Herman Hattaway and Dennis Frye. For additional information, contact CWRT Associates, P.O. Box 7388, Little Rock, AK 72217.

Future meetings

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

March 10: Jerry Russell on "The Battle of Pea Ridge."

April 14: Charles Wesselhoeft on "The Army of the Tennessee Under Grant."

May 4-7: Annual Battlefield Tour—The Atlanta Campaign and Andersonville.

May 12: Brig. Gen. Edwin Simmons, USMC (Ret.) on "The Assault on Fort Fisher."

June 9: John Y. Simon, topic to be announced.

New Members

Patricia Hall, 4941 N. Troy, Chicago, IL 60625, (312) 478-7883.

Adrienne Hanrahan, 155 N. Harvey Ave., Oak Park, IL 60302, (312) 848-2573.

Louise Johnson, 4941 N. Troy, Chicago, IL 60625, (312) 478-7883.

Vincent J. Kasper, 6016 W. 29th St., Cicero, IL 60650, (312) 652-3562.

Charlie Madigan, 955 N. Topanga Dr., Palatine, IL 60067, (312) 358-3130.

Diane Oppenheim, 4139 Wolf Rd., Western Springs, IL 60558, (312) 246-5683.

Norman L. Poteshman, 2507 Woodlawn Rd., Northbrook, IL 60062 (312) 564-2998.

William Smetak, 4154 N. Meade Ave., Chicago, IL 60634, (312) 283-5910.

Founder and former president Ralph G. Newman, representing an anonymous buyer, recently purchased a letter signed by Caesar Rodney, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, for \$440,000, at an auction in New York. This breaks all records for the amount of purchase for a single letter.

Former president Merlin Sumner spoke to the Richmond CWRT on February 14, on "Some Observations on Grant and His Staff."

The New York CWRT's Bell I. Wiley Award was recently presented to Annie Snyder, of the Save The Battlefield Coalition.

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Mr. Gayner claimed that Mr. Sammis has presented his projects and plans, which show the quality of his work, to the county officials and that the county is at this time revising its comprehensive plan. Mr. Gayner stated that Mr. Sammis intends to work with all interested groups, including Mr. Hall and APCWS, and hopes that all parties can work together for a solution.