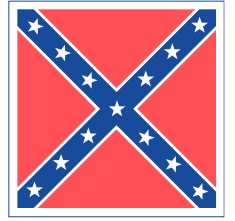


# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Founded December 3, 1940



Volume LXXVIII, Number 3

Chicago, Illinois

November 2017

*Tom Clemens:*

## *“Special Order 191 and the Maryland Campaign”*



When a stray copy of Order 191, which detailed the positions and intentions of Lee’s dispersed army, was picked up by two Indiana enlisted men in late 1862, Union General George McClellan was presented with a rare opportunity to destroy the Army of Northern Virginia piecemeal.

The famous Lost Order has been a unique aspect of Gen. R. E. Lee’s invasion in September 1862. Mystery still surrounds some aspects of this famous document, and no small amount of controversy too. A close examination of the facts and theories regarding it may yield some interesting conclusions, and will certainly provide stimulating discussion.

Dr. Thomas G. Clemens received his Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in history from Salisbury University, and his Doctorate in History Education from George Mason University, where he studied under noted Civil War historian Dr. Joseph L. Harsh. Tom came to Hagerstown in 1978 and spent most of his 34 year career at HCC teaching American History, retiring in 2012.

He has written many book reviews, magazine articles and appeared in several television shows focused on Civil War topics. He edited and annotated General Ezra A. Carman’s 1,800 page narrative of the Maryland Campaign of September 1862, which has received awards from the Army Heritage Foundation; the third and final volume was released in March. His monograph about General Joseph K. F. Mansfield was published in Corps Commanders in Blue in 2014. His latest article, published

in the June 2016 issue of Civil War Times, proved the Pry house at Antietam was never McClellan’s Headquarters.

Tom is a founding member and current president of Save Historic Antietam Foundation Inc., a non-profit historic preservation organization. In the past 2 years SHAF and the Civil War Trust have cooperated to purchase four properties and demolish six non-historic structures on the Antietam battlefield. More structures will be removed soon. He is also an NPS-approved Antietam Battlefield Guide, and a 30+ year volunteer there.



### **766th REGULAR MEETING**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Friday, November 10th

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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.**



## ROBERT GOULD SHAW'S FORT WAGNER SWORD FOUND

On July 18, 2017, 154 years to the day after he lost his life leading the 54th Massachusetts in a doomed assault against Fort Wagner in Charleston Harbor, Col. Robert Gould Shaw's personal sword was placed on display at the Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston. Long thought lost – possibly even buried in the mass grave Shaw shared with his African American troops – the sword was recently discovered in the attic of one of his descendants, having been forgotten for generations.

In reality, after Union forces failed to carry Fort Wagner, Confederate defenders looted the bodies of many of their fallen adversaries. Shaw's sword – an exceptionally fine custom-made English weapon he received as a gift from his uncle only a few weeks earlier – was probably sold to a Southern officer and made its way into North Carolina. In 1865, Brig. Gen. Charles Jackson Paine, commander of the Military District of New Berne and himself a commander of black troops, retrieved the sword and arranged for it to be returned to Shaw's sister, Susanna Shaw Minturn. Gradually, the sword was forgotten and resigned to dusty attics.

Then, in March of this year, several Minturn descendants were cleaning out their parents' suburban Boston home in preparation for its sale. In the attic they discovered several swords, including a particularly ornate one.

"We looked at it a little more closely and discovered that it was very nicely engraved with the American flag, and on the other side it had the initials 'R.G.S.," Mary Wood Minturn told the local NPR affiliate. "That's when we knew *this is a special sword.*"

Needless to say, the sword wasn't included in the pending tag sale; it was

donated to the Massachusetts Historical Society, which placed the "holy grail of Civil War swords" on display alongside other artifacts related to the 54th Massachusetts.

### Artifacts from Lee's Headquarters Find Permanent Homes

July 2014, when the Trust announced its national campaign to purchase and restore Robert E. Lee's headquarters at Gettysburg, the unprecedented scope of the project was immediately apparent. Not only would the organization perform by far its largest landscape rehabilitation and take ownership of an incredibly important building – hardly an everyday occurrence for a land trust – but it also would receive a remarkable donation in the form of nearly 200 artifacts that had been housed in a small private museum at the site.

The Trust took ownership of the collection, valued at nearly \$400,000, on January 7, 2015. As archival conservation and management of this type also fell outside the Trust's typical operating methods, staff quickly determined that our first priority would be to ensure the safekeeping of all items in the collection as they were evaluated and awaiting final disposition. We are exceptionally grateful to the staff of The Horse Soldier, Gettysburg's most highly regarded military antiques dealer, for its assistance storing these items in appropriate conditions free of charge as an in-kind donation to the Trust.

Next, working with the expert staff at The Horse Soldier, we sought to establish or confirm provenance – the record of ownership and authenticity – for each item. During this extensive and detailed process, discrepancies were uncovered in the records of some items, but many more had their integrity upheld or even

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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.



bolstered.

The inventory completed, the Trust next turned to the collections staff at Gettysburg National Military Park. With its state-of-the-art archival facilities and world-class museum, we knew the park to be the ideal permanent home for suitable artifacts from the Trust collection. Moreover, the Trust will later donate the Lee's Headquarters site itself to the park, making the entire package the property of the American people.

Park staff eagerly accepted all items connected to the Mary Thompson property – the building's original deed, bullet-ridden shutters from an outbuilding and numerous furnishings such as chairs and candlesticks, among others. Other artifacts transferred to Gettysburg National Military Park include the saddle, reins and horse blanket belonging to Maj. Gen. John Reynolds, who was killed nearby in fighting on July 1, 1863. The park also accepted many other items with verified connections to the Gettysburg Battlefield, but those found duplicative to the park's extant collection were considered for alternate disposition.

From *Hallowed Ground*, a publication of the Civil War Trust

## OCTOBER MEETING

By Mark Matranga

Dave Powell spoke to The Civil War Round Table at its 765th Regular Meeting on October 13, 2017, on *Chickamauga: Barren Victory*. Powell takes this title from General D.H. Hill who characterized a battle the Confederate army ostensibly won, but from which the Confederacy eventually gained nothing. The blame fell on many, including Hill. Powell tells his story, and that of the other main actors, within the broad outline of the campaign for Chattanooga and at the tactical level of the three-day battle at the 'River of Death' in September 1863.

The battle was the result Rosecrans' brilliant maneuvering during the Tullahoma Campaign, which forced Bragg out of Chattanooga into Georgia. Once across the Tennessee, he divided his army in a wide-ranging flanking movement intended to force the confederate army further. Bragg sensed an opportunity to attack isolated parts of the federal army, prompting Rosecrans to concentrate and move back toward Chattanooga. Bragg moved to block this movement and force battle. Bragg had received reinforcements from Mississippi and Virginia, making the armies evenly matched.

Powell's long-held position has been that Chickamauga was a three-day battle that developed on September 18th with initial actions at Alexander's and Reed's Bridges between Army of the Cumberland cavalry and Confederate cavalry and infantry. The following day, a confusing back and forth 'soldiers' battle' ensued, with senior commanders seemingly not controlling the battlefield. On September 20th, an early morning assault on the north end of the battle line designed to deny

access to the road back to occupied Chattanooga did not produce the desired result. Later, a massed assault commanded by General Longstreet broke through a gap in the Union line, routing one-third of the federal army. George Thomas rallied remnants of his XIV Corps and other scattered units in defense along Snodgrass Hill and held the battle line at Kelly Field and saved the army

There has been much discussion regarding why Bragg did not follow up on his victory. This stems from Forrest's claims that he could have taken Chattanooga with a relatively small force and that Rosecrans was evacuating the town on September 22nd. Powell states that this was not possible. First, wherever Forrest was on Missionary Ridge when he observed the 'evacuation,' he missed 35,000 union troops digging in at Rossville Gap, a position too strong for Bragg's army to breach. Also, the Confederate high command was unsure where the union army was at that time. When summoned to headquarters by Bragg on the 22nd, Longstreet declined, saying 'I cannot leave my command as I am expecting attack.' General Polk wrote his wife that morning that they had just learned the union army's location.

Most important, the Confederate army had been maneuvering and fighting for three weeks and lacked food and supplies, especially Longstreet's Corps whose wagons did not travel west with his divisions. Bragg's railhead at Ringgold was well removed from the battlefield, creating logistical problems. Considering these factors, the army was not fit to fight. Later, Rosecrans pulled in his lines into a new defensive perimeter at Chattanooga and

Bragg settled into a siege. Without pontoons he was unable to cross the Tennessee; cavalry raids across the river produced little. Bragg then saw his army dismembered: Longstreet moved to Knoxville and Bragg purged his generals. Meanwhile, Lincoln reinforced the Army of the Cumberland. Bragg's army shrank, union forces expanded, portending the debacle at Missionary Ridge.

Powell calls Chickamauga was a tactical defeat but an operational victory. In turn, Bragg lost despite tactical success. When Rosecrans moved on Bragg's line of communication, the confederate commander vacated Chattanooga and surrendered the key objective of the campaign. Rosecrans risked his army, but the once Army of the Cumberland occupied Chattanooga on September 9, 1863, it never left. Chickamauga was not a reversal of fortune as was commonly thought at the time. Rather, it was, as Hill ruefully observed, a victory devoid of fruit.



### 2018 BATTLEFIELD TOUR

The 68th tour dates are April 26th-April 29th for the Atlanta Campaign Tour. The website will be updated soon. Please direct all questions via email using [cwrt2018tour@chicagocwrt.org](mailto:cwrt2018tour@chicagocwrt.org). Randy Doler 219-921-9532 and Brian Seiter 708-513-1865 are the tour co-chairs. Ed Bearss and Jim Ogden are the guides.

The base hotel will be the Holiday Inn Express in Kennesaw, GA. The address to the hotel is 2485 George Bushee Parkway, NW, Kennesaw, GA 30144. The cost for the tour will be \$ 845.00 for double occupancy and \$ 1120.00 for single occupancy. The rest of the details will be published soon on the website. On to Atlanta!

## GRAPESHOT



On November 9 **Rob Girardi** will speak at the Bridgeview Library on "Chicago and the Memory of the Civil War." He'll present "The Murder of Maj. Gen. Bull Nelson" November 15th to the New Orleans CWRT, and November 16th to the Austin (Texas) CWRT.

The upcoming 2nd Friday lecture at the **Kenosha Civil War Museum** will be Friday, Nov. 10th at noon, with Allison Rainboth speaking on "Quilts and the Civil War." On November 13th the museum will present an exhibit, "From Civil War to Great War."

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

**Leslie Goddard** will present "Clara Barton" November 4th to the Calvary Commandery #25.

Veterans of all wars will be honored on Veterans Day at **Rosehill Cemetery** in Chicago.

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](mailto:editor@chicagocwrt.org) or (630) 297-8046.

### PLEASE NOTE

Make your reservations by Sunday, Nov 5, by emailing [dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org](mailto: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](mailto: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

- Nov. 1st, Kankakee Valley CWRT: Doug Peterson and Jenny Goran portray "Meet the Vanishing Woman"
- Nov. 3rd, Northern Illinois CWRT: Rob Girardi on "The GAR in Chicago"
- Nov. 9th, Milwaukee CWRT: Tom Clemens on "Special Order 191 and the Maryland Campaign"
- Nov. 14th, McHenry County CWRT: Doug Dammann on "Elmer Ellsworth and the Zouave Cadets"
- Nov. 16th, South Suburban CWRT: Dave Noe on "Merrimac-Virginia Naval Battle"
- Nov. 17th, Salt Creek CWRT: Don White on "Lincoln and the Gettysburg Address"
- Nov. 21st, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Steve Worsham on "Collecting the Civil War"

## Bulletin Board



### FUTURE MEETINGS

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

- Dec. 8th: David Dixon on "Lost Gettysburg Address"
- Jan. 12th: Bruce Allardice on "The Battle of Ezra Church"
- Feb. 9th: Larry Hewitt on "Confederate General Richard H. Anderson"
- Mar. 9th: Robert Jenkins on "Peach Tree Creek"
- Apr. 13th: John Marszalek, Nevins-Freeman Address
- May 11th: Joseph Rose on "Grant Under Fire"
- June 8th: Dennis Rasbach on "Joshua Chamberlain and the Petersburg Campaign"

### Abraham Lincoln Bookshop

Their next Civil War related "Author's Voice" is Nov. 1st. From 2-3 Ron Chernow will talk about his new biography Grant and from 3-4, Gordon Rhea will talk about his new book, On to Petersburg. On November 11th at noon Graham Peck will talk about his new book, Making an Anti-Slavery Nation.

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