

# The Outpost

The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Roundtable  
Vol. XLV No. 8 April 2008



## 410th Regular Meeting

DATE: 4<sup>th</sup> April 2008

PLACE: Fairview Village, 200 Village Dr., Downers Grove, Il.

TIME: 8:00 PM

SPEAKER: Phil Angelo

TOPIC: "Alan Pinkerton, Civil War Spymaster"

We get only occasional accounts of the work of the intelligence-gathering services in the war. Thanks to Mary Lord, the Salt Creek Civil War Roundtable has a particular connection to Ms. Belle Boyd. This night we receive a perspective from the other side of the conflict. The presentation Mr. Angelo proposes is a brief account of the life of Alan Pinkerton, founder of the famous detective agency. This will include: his Illinois connections, his role in the Peninsular Campaign, the part he played in guarding the president, and his interaction with Timothy Webster.

Phil Angelo is a newspaper editor and editorial writer. He has been a frequent speaker on Civil War topics and also on the subject of Sherlock Holmes. He conducts game shows for audiences and volunteers for the United Way, the YMCA, and the Arthritis Foundation. He has been a long-time youth soccer coach. The SCCWRT extends a warm welcome to Mr. Angelo and looks forward with great anticipation to an exciting and enlightening account of a fascinating and colorful individual.



## MARCH MEETING

BY

CINDY INTRAVARTOLO

On March 7, Eric Girardi presented, "The 69<sup>th</sup> New York State Volunteers of the Irish Brigade", before 58 members and guests of the Salt Creek Civil War Roundtable. Eric is a junior at the Rolling Meadows High School and the son of Vice-President Robert Girardi. This month, he earned the distinction of becoming the youngest presenter in the 46-year history of the roundtable. Civil War author and historian, Peter Cozzens, who was 17 when he spoke to the group, previously held that distinction.

Mr. Girardi provided an overview of the career of the 69<sup>th</sup> New York from First Bull Run to Appomattox and beyond. The regiment is considered by some to be one of the best regiments in the Army of the Potomac. They lost more men and saw more service than most entire *brigades*, (italics mine-Ed.) on either side, in the war. In addition, Girardi noted that they never lost a regimental or national flag. The regimental history dates back to 1851 when it was created as the 69<sup>th</sup> New State Militia, Second Regiment of Irish Volunteers. In 1861, at First Bull Run, the regiment served in the Second Corps but they saw little action and formed the rear-guard of

the army as it made its retreat toward Washington. Its leader, Michael Corcoran, was captured by the Confederates and replaced by Thomas Meagher. Meagher implemented some changes and created a brigade entirely of Irishmen. Thus was formed the Irish Brigade including the 63<sup>rd</sup> and 88<sup>th</sup> New York along with the 69<sup>th</sup>. They participated in most of the engagements of the Army of the Potomac including heavy fighting during the Seven Days battles. At Malvern Hill, the 69<sup>th</sup> forced the retreat of the famed Louisiana Tigers and was given the nickname, "The Fighting 69<sup>th</sup>" by Robert E. Lee. At Antietam, the 69<sup>th</sup> suffered more casualties on the Sunken Road than any other regiment. At Fredericksburg, on Marye's Heights, identified by their green flags and green sprigs in their caps, they repeated that grisly performance. During the Union defeat at Chancellorsville, the 69<sup>th</sup> and 88<sup>th</sup> again served as rear guard. The Union defeat, and high casualties, caused Meagher to resign as brigade commander and Major General George G. Meade became the new commander of the Army of the Potomac. The 69<sup>th</sup> fought in the

heart of the battle in the Wheatfield at Gettysburg and went on to participate at Cold Harbor, Petersburg, Deep Bottom, Ream's Station, Hatcher's Run, and Sailor's Creek. They were present at the surrender of Lee at Appomattox and participated in the Grand Review in Washington, D.C. in May of 1865. During the course of the war the 69<sup>th</sup> suffered 998 casualties.

After the war, the 69<sup>th</sup> returned to New York and remained part of the New York National Guard. They were called again to active duty in March of 1898 during the Spanish-American War. In 1916 they saw service in the Mexican Border Campaign. They engaged in heavy combat during World War I with the 42<sup>nd</sup> "Rainbow" Division and, during World War II, they battled the Japanese on Makin, Saipan, and Okinawa Islands. During its military career, the 69<sup>th</sup> New York earned more Medals of Honor than any other National Guard unit: three during the Civil War, three during WWI, and one during WWII.

After the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, the 69<sup>th</sup> served at Ground Zero sifting through rubble. In May of 2004 they were called back to service and, 5 months later, were in Iraq. They returned in September of 2005 and are presently waiting in New York for the next call to serve their country.

The SCCWRT extends a hearty THANK YOU! to Eric Girardi for his excellent overview on the history and campaigns of the 69<sup>th</sup> New York State Volunteers. We hope this is just one of the many presentations to

follow in the coming years. I predict that, some day in the future, the young Mr. Girardi will be on the podium of The Civil War Roundtable. (Which one Cindy? - Ed.)



PRESERVATION REPORT BY  
LEN OVERCASH, SR.

MS- Two parties are working on an agreement for the National Park Service to begin managing 800 acres of Civil War battlefield property even before a formal property transfer is concluded. The Siege and Battle of Corinth Commission and Shiloh National Military Park want park rangers to begin maintenance at the properties right away.

"Our five member commission welcomes the National Park Service assuming management of the land and providing ranger services to protect all the work we've done at the battlefield sites and keep up the property," said Commission Chairwoman Rosemary Williams. The budget appropriation for the U.S. Department of the Interior in December approved transfer of the battlefields which the commission worked to acquire, preserve, promote, and interpret.

However, the transition is likely to take as long as a year, and there are still hurdles to cross in the process. Details of the property transfer that must be completed

before the National Park Service will accept the donation from the Siege and Battle Commission include: environmental assessments, surveys, title searches of the properties, and other matters that will take a number of months.

The appropriations bill is for authorizing the National Park Service to add up to 950 acres at the Corinth Unit, which is 22 miles southwest of Shiloh. Shiloh's budget was increased by about \$400,000 for the added management responsibilities.

Source: Civil War Interactive "The Daily Newspaper of the Civil War"



#### ALL FOR THE UNION

Attention! Take a well-deserved break after rushing to the Post Office on the 15<sup>th</sup>! The spring Du Page County Civil War Memorabilia Show is April 19<sup>th</sup> at the county fairgrounds and we will be sharing a table with the Chicago and Northern Illinois RT's as per usual. We will be passing around a sign-up sheet to person the table. Hope to see you there!

We need donations in the shape of books, memorabilia, artwork, etc. for the annual auction. Our inventory is perilously short!



#### EDITOR'S NOTES

The next board meeting will be held at Fairview Village Community Room. 7:30 PM, 4/15/08. Questions? Phone Jan Rasmussen at 630-830-7614

#### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 2- General Book Discussion

June 20-Cricket Bauer Pohanka-The 5<sup>th</sup> New York and the Artifacts They Left Behind.

September 5-Maryann Oblak-Lt. Col. Arthur J. Fremantle-Coldstream Guards

October 3-Tony Cichantk-Civilians of Gettysburg

November 7-Annual Battlefield Preservation Auction.

December 5-'Show and Tell'-Memorabilia Night-We need presenters!

2009-C'mon You Volunteers!

THE SALT CREEK CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

[www.saltcreekcwrt.org](http://www.saltcreekcwrt.org)

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