

The Outpost

The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Roundtable
Vol. XLV No. 1 September 2007



403rd Regular Meeting

DATE: 7th September 2007

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

TIME: 8:00 P.M.

SPEAKER: Marshall Krolick

TOPIC: "Council of War, July 2, 1863"

On the night of July 2, 1863, after two days of battle at Gettysburg, George Gordon Meade, newly appointed commander of the Army of the Potomac, held a meeting of his corps commanders at his headquarters. Meade's purpose in calling the meeting was to determine the positions and condition of his army after the intense fighting on the 2nd. However, as a result of the machinations of Joseph Hooker's Chief of Staff, Daniel Butterfield, who had been retained in that position by Meade on an interim basis, the purpose of the meeting changed. The result has been a controversy, as to Meade's intended battle plan, that severely damaged Meade's reputation. That controversy, how it was created, and the facts which led to its resolution, will be the subject of Mr. Krolick's remarks.

A native Chicagoan, Marshall D. Krolick, received his B.A. degree from Drake University in 1959 and J.D. degree from Northwestern University School of Law in 1962. He is OF Counsel to the Chicago firm of Deutsch, Levy, and Engel, Chtd. and resides in Northbrook, Illinois. In the practice of law, Mr. Krolick specializes in commercial and industrial real estate and the legal aspects of construction projects.

Mr. Krolick has been a member of the Civil War Roundtable of Chicago since 1961, serving that organization in several capacities including President 1971-72, and Editor of its Newsletter, 1974-79. In 1985, he was awarded Honorary Life membership in the Roundtable and was the 1990 recipient of the Nevins - Freeman Award for distinguished scholarship and dedication to Civil War study.

His published works on the Civil War include articles which have appeared in Blue and Gray Magazine, DuPage Magazine, Virginia Country Magazine's Civil War Quarterly, Civil War Magazine and Gettysburg Magazine. He also wrote the Introduction to Morningside Bookshop's reprint edition of the History of the Eighth Cavalry regiment, Illinois Volunteers and, for several years, a regular column in Civil War Times Illustrated. The SCCWRT takes particular pleasure in welcoming this distinguished scholar, and long-time friend, to its podium.



JUNE MEETING

BY

CINDY INTRAVARTOLO

On June 1, 2007, Patrick Brennan presented, "The Battle of Nashville", before 72 members and guests of the Salt Creek Civil War Roundtable. Brennan is the Associate Editor of *North and South* magazine, as well as, the author of two major works on the Civil War, Secessionville: Assault on Charleston and To Die Game: Major General James Ewell Brown Stuart.

Prior to Brennan's presentation, President Richard Zarr recognized two of the roundtable's members, Daniel McCarthy and Jerry Feinstein, for their outstanding efforts in raising funds during the annual battlefield auction. Since the roundtable began an auction in 1991, specifically to raise funds for battlefield preservation, Dan and Jerry have served as auctioneers, and have helped collect over \$30,000, money that has been donated to various battlefield sites. Each man was awarded a plaque for a job well done.

Brennan began by summarizing Hood's defeat at the Battle of Atlanta and the grand scheme he developed with Jefferson Davis to follow the movement of Sherman's army. That scheme eventually led to the Battle of Nashville and the ultimate defeat of Hood's Army.

Following the Confederate defeat at the Battle of Franklin on November 30, Hood ordered his men to follow Schofield's Federal force to Nashville. In the meantime, George Thomas arrived in Nashville with his troops on December 1st, before Hood. Grant ordered Thomas to attack Hood sooner rather than later, but Thomas had too many excuses why he could not. His cavalry wasn't ready, he hadn't developed communication lines with his other officers, etc. In spite of that, Grant wanted Thomas to finish Hood and prevent the Confederates from traveling further north, into Kentucky. On December 7th, Nashville was hit with a severe

winter storm and, as a result, the war in that area came to a halt. Grant still insisted that Thomas attack Hood and even considered replacing him with a different commander he felt could get the job done. However, the snow and ice made any attempt to move men, horses, and equipment on either side impossible. Thomas called for a council of war, and all of his officers agreed that the attack should be delayed until the weather was better. On December 13, the weather finally improved and Thomas informed Grant that he would be able to launch an attack against Hood on December 15.

On the early morning of the 15th, a dense fog blanketed the area and, once again, battle plans were delayed until the fog lifted. Once the battle began, the Union army thoroughly defeated the Confederate forces and, by the end of the day on the 16th, Hood's army was routed. As a result, the Army of Tennessee was finished as a fighting force and the war in the west was nearly over. Hood asked to be relieved of command on January 13, 1865 and Jefferson Davis approved his request 10 days later.

A sincere Thank You goes from the SCCWRT to Patrick Brennan for an enthralling presentation.

BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION BY

LEN OVERCASH, SR.

VA.- The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation and Shenandoah County announced the final transfer of 194 acres of county-owned battlefield land to the foundation. The land-dubbed "Ramseur's Hill" - lies at the western end of the Fisher's Hill battlefield and is the site of the battle's turning point, where Union troops overwhelmed Gen. Stephen Dodson Ramseur's entrenched Confederate units, ultimately forcing the Southerners from nearby Fisher's Hill. (press release)

GETTYSBURG, PA.-Sitting down in the auditorium of the Gettysburg National Military Park visitors center is a trip back in time to 1963, not 1863. The "Electric Map" experience includes Kennedy-era gray metal chairs, the droning voice of a middle-school health class film narrator, and tiny light bulbs blinking across a 30-by-30 foot topographical layout.

"It's desperately outdated. And it has a terrible nickname in these parts. They call it the "Electric Nap". There are many middle school students that simply fall asleep the minute the lights dim," said park spokesman Katie Lawhon.

Historic landmarks are struggling to hold the attention of multimedia Americans who can watch Sports Center updates on their cell phones. Virginia is dotted with historic museums and landmarks testing new approaches to telling their

stories. How well they all manage to engage the public will answer this fundamental question: Are historic sites...history?

Gettysburg has the opposite problem of many of Virginia's destinations: the battlefield gets plenty of visitors fired by the latest Civil War movie or book or History Channel special, but the hallowed ground has had little protection from commercial development. It has the feel of a city's well-worn neighborhood park. Cars and tour buses crowd around a 1920 visitor center that was designed to handle 70,000 people a year, not the 1.7 million it gets.

Source: Civil War Interactive (www.civilwarinteractive.com)
"The Daily Newspaper of the Civil War."

ALL FOR THE UNION

The DuPage County Civil War Show is coming up on Sept. 15th. As usual, we will be sharing a table with other Roundtables. We need volunteers to staff it. A sign up sheet will be passed around at the meeting. Please give generously of your time!

Noted presidential historian Richard Norton Smith will be speaking on: "Giving Politics a Good Name: Abraham Lincoln and the Permanent Campaign.". The presentation will be at Hammerschmidt Memorial Chapel Auditorium, 190 Prospect Ave., Elmhurst on 9/30/07 at 7:00 PM. Admission is free and the public is welcome.

THE VACANT CHAIR

Too late for inclusion in the last newsletter, the SCCWRT received news of the passing of long-time members, officers, board members, and general all-around great gentlemen and friends, Daniel Lapinski and James Krob. Heartfelt condolences are sent from the membership to their families, and all who were touched by their magnificent spirits. "We shall meet, but we shall miss them".

EDITOR'S NOTES

The next board meeting will be held at the home of Mary Lord, 200 Village Dr., Apt. 341, Downers Grove, IL. 7:30PM, 9/4/07. Phone: 630-769-6182

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Oct. 5-Paula Walker-Major General Gouverneur Kemble Warren and the Battle of Five Forks

November 2-Annual Battlefield Preservation Auction at the DuPage County Historical Society.

Dec. 7-Roger E. Bohn-Anecdotes and Adventures of the Civil War Blockade.

THE SALT CREEK CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

www.saltcreekcwrt.org

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