



THE OFFICIAL RECORDS



OF THE ROBERT E. LEE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE OF CENTRAL NJ

JANUARY 9, 2012 MEETING

Woodbridge Public Library, 7 pm

Captivating Captives: Johnson's Island Prison Camp

Speaker: Mike Gray

Our speaker this month is Professor Michael Gray, the foremost authority on Union prison camps in the Civil War. Michael received his B.A. and M.A. from East Stroudsburg University and his PhD from Kent State University. He is currently serving as an assistant Professor of History at East Stroudsburg specializing in the American Civil War. He also teaches a variety of other courses; from a graduate course on Civil War sites to an undergraduate class on baseball history. Michael serves as a manuscript reviewer for Penn State University's Civil War Center and the University of Tennessee Press. He has written book reviews for many publications including *The Journal of American History*, *Civil War History*, *The Journal of Southern History*, *The Pennsylvania Magazine of Biography and History*, and *Ohio History*. Michael's "Business of Captivity: Elmira and its Civil War Prison" earned him honorable mention from the National Park Service in its "Eastern National Award" and the "Seaborg Prize" awarded for unique perspective and superior scholarship. He serves as historical consultant for the Lehigh Valley Heritage Center and is the chair of the Lincoln Group of the New

York Book Award. Michael wrote a new forward to *A History of Andersonville Prison* by Ovid Futch, University of Florida Press (2011). In addition, he is the General Editor of Lehigh Valley Heritage Center's *Heroes of History: A Textbook for Lehigh Valley Students*. Michael is also writing an article for *The Pennsylvania Magazine of Biography and History* on the July 1864 train wreck at Shohola, Pennsylvania. The train was transporting Confederate prisoners to Elmira Prison Camp; fifty-two Confederates died. Michael will present an illustrated presentation on his upcoming book, *Captivating Captives: Excursions into Johnson's Island Prison* published by the Kent State University Press. Michael will have his books available for sale. Plan to start the New Year off with a wonderful presentation, and feel free to bring a friend!

NEWS AND NOTES

* This month's regular raffle book is *Arms and Equipment of The Union* by the Editors of Time-Life Books. The preservation raffle book is *Arms and Equipment of The Confederacy*, also by the Editors of Time-Life Books.

* We want to hear from you! Any member who has recently taken an interesting Civil War related trip, or has read a good Civil War book should consider sharing the information with the rest of the RE Lee CWRT members. You can e-mail the information to our newsletter editor Chris Luzhak at CLuzhak@aol.com or you can mail it to the RE Lee CWRT, 1162 St. George Avenue, Suite 194, Avenel NJ 07001.

* Special thanks again to Phil Kohn for his terrific presentation last month.



December speaker Phil Kohn explores the vital role of Drewry's Bluff in the defense of Richmond

* Attached is a dues notice for this year's meetings. Prompt payment is always appreciated!

* **PARADE NEWS:** On December 4, 2011, Woodbridge Township held its Holiday Parade. Bands, fire engines, and floats were among many different participants in this annual event that attracted a very nice sized crowd.

With their flag snapping briskly in the wind on this unseasonably warm but windy day, the 7th Virginia Cavalry, Co. A, marched proudly and thrilled the spectators with the firing of their rifles and the shouts of "Merry Christmas You All!"

Robert E. Lee Roundtable members Phil Kohn, Gary Drake, Karen Kulaga, Jim Donavon, Mark Luongo, Bruce Form, and Mike Lawrence marched along with other members of this reenactment unit that is always invited to take part in all three of the town's parades.

* **Quote of the month, submitted by Mike Lawrence:**

"The country must now be roused, to make the greatest effort that it will be called upon to make during the war. No matter what the sacrifice may be it must be made and without loss of time. All the resources of the Confederacy are now needed for the defense of Tennessee."

—Confederate General Albert Sydney Johnston,
January 22, 1862

* **Fact of the month, submitted by Mike Lawrence:**

On April 14, 1861, a member of the Federal garrison at Fort Sumter, Private Daniel Hough of the 1st US Artillery, was accidentally killed by an exploding cannon during evacuation ceremonies at Fort Sumter—making Hough the first combat soldier killed in the Civil War.

This Month in the Civil War 1862:

1/15/62: Edwin Stanton Confirmed as Secretary of War

1/19/62: Battle of Mill Springs, KY

1/27/62: Federal Armies ordered to advance

Book Review:

Civil War Road Trip Volume 1:

A Guide to Northern Virginia, Maryland & Pennsylvania 1861-1863

By Michael Weeks

511 pages with photographs and maps. Published by The Countryman Press, www.countrymanpress.com, 2011.

Review by Jay Jorgensen

Michael Weeks has a passion for the road that is clearly evident in his latest book *Civil War Road Trip Volume 1*. This book focuses on the battles in the Eastern Theater during the war. The battles that are included consist of First Manassas, Second Manassas, the 1862 Valley Campaign, Peninsula Campaign, Seven Days Battles, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg.

This book is much more than just a driving tour of historic sites. The author starts each chapter off with some information about planning your trip, as well as some recommendations to enhance your trip. He also suggests one or two books on the

battle action that are helpful in providing a very good overview of the battles to be visited.

The information presented about the trips is not limited to the immediate battlefield itself. Rather, Mr. Weeks includes information about corollary sites of interest. Several examples of this are contained in the chapter dealing with the Peninsula Campaign and the Seven Days Battles. Tourists are given information where they can go to follow the battlefield action. There are other important sites in that are highlighted. The Tredegar Iron Works in Richmond is one of those sites discussed in the book. Similarly, one can learn about the Civil War-related items at Yorktown, with its rich Revolutionary War heritage that tends to overpower the Civil War importance of the area.

The book also provides the author's running narrative of the battle action. This enables novice and expert alike to understand the importance of the terrain features and the military actions taken by the respective armies. The text in that regard is general, and is not meant to be an exhaustive analysis. Yet, it is enough so that readers are able to place the action in the overall context and importance of the campaign.

The driving directions in the book are sufficient to help tourists navigate among the Civil War sites discussed. Appendix A in the book provides additional information about the locations, including latitude and longitude coordinates. In today's world of GPS, those coordinates are a nice addition to touring these Civil War sites.

Civil War Road Trip Volume 1 will prove to be a valuable guide for anybody interested in traveling to the sites during the Civil War sesquicentennial. It is a book that you will want to take along with you in order to fully experience all that the mentioned areas have to offer.

President's Message

By Bill Bork

Many thanks go out to Phil Kohn for his excellent fill-in presentation of Drewry's Bluff.

Brought up at the last meeting was a website for Yale Professor David W. Blight's Lectures on the Civil War. If interested, you can visit the web site at www.Wig-Wags.com.

Upcoming Plans call for a trip to Virginia and Pennsylvania with John Quarstein in late June. Remember that with this month's *Official Records*,

a **RED X** will start to appear for those who haven't paid their dues!

Thanks to Rich Bellamy, Doug Hollywood, Jim Donovan and John DiNuzzo for subscribing to the *Civil War News*. We receive \$10 for every one. It's a great read and it supports our Round Table.

Hope every enjoyed the Holidays and that we will all have a great 2012. See you on the 9th!

Is it real? or
Is it Hollywood?

***Come Join Us!!
January 23, 2012***

The first in our evening series of
Civil War Movie Nights at the
Civil War Library and Research Center
hosted by Mark Luongo



View the feature film,
The Great Locomotive Chase
and after, join in on the
discussion that will separate
Historical Facts from
Hollywood Fiction

The program is from 7:00 - 9:30 PM in our
Civil War Library and Research Center
94 Green St., Room 104, Woodbridge, NJ

***Limited seating to 20 people
so make your reservation by
calling Mark Luongo at
718-317-1016***

WANTED VOLUNTEERS!!

Become a Library Volunteer

**We want to expand the hours of
the Civil War Library & Research Center.**

**This can only happen if we
have an available staff to be there.
If you are interested in joining the**

Volunteer Library Service

**on a Monday, Tuesday,
Wednesday, or Thursday evening
from 7:00 to 9:30 or
Saturday from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM,
sign up and volunteer your time.**

All you have to do is call.

Mike Lawrence

732-738-8411

Civil War Quiz

1. What was the highest rank achieved by Robert E. Lee in the US Army?
2. The troops of what major general constituted the only Confederate force that actively opposed Sherman's March to the Sea?

3. What close friend of Jefferson Davis was simultaneously a naval lieutenant and a colonel of cavalry?
4. What kind of attire did the men of the 9th Mississippi wear at the battle of Shiloh?
5. What former US secretary of war was relieved of his command by another former US secretary of war?

—Submitted by the Editor

***New submissions needed! Kindly email them in
MS Word format to CLuzhak@aol.com.***

*Last month's answers: 1. None 2. Simon Cameron
3. A compact medical case used in the Union army
4. Robert Todd Lincoln, President of the Pullman
Luxury Coach Company in 1901 5. Civil War Nurse
Mother Bickerdyke*

Who Am I?

I was born in "Poplar Grove," Mathews City, VA November 9, 1833. After my husband's death, my mother moved the family to Richmond, where I lived at the outbreak of Civil War.

When the government asked the public to help care for the wounded of First Bull Run, I responded by opening a private hospital in a house donated for that purpose by judge John Robertson. Robertson Hospital, subsidized by my substantial inheritance, treated 1,333 Confederate soldiers from its opening until the last patients were discharged 13 June 1865.

Because the hospital returned more of its patients to the ranks than any other medical-care facility, officers tried to place their most seriously wounded men in my care. I used my high rate of success to convince President Jefferson Davis to allow my hospital to stay open even as his orders shut down other private hospitals in the city. To circumvent the regulation calling for all hospitals to be run by military personnel, on September 9, 1861 Davis appointed me captain of cavalry, unassigned, making me the only woman to hold a commission

in the Confederate States Army. My military rank allowed me to draw government rations and a salary to help defray some of my operating costs. Only 73 deaths were recorded at Robertson Hospital during its 45-month existence.

I remained a beloved celebrity in postwar Richmond, active in the Episcopal Church and a popular guest at veterans' reunions and Daughters of the Confederacy meetings. The war, my continued charity work, and my generous hospitality to veterans eventually exhausted my fortune.

In 1905 I moved into the Confederate Women's Home in Richmond as a lifetime guest, dying there 26 July 1916, in my 83rd year. An honorary member of the RE Lee Camp of the Confederate Veterans, I was honored with a full military funeral. Four chapters of the United Daughters of the Confederacy are named in my honor. Who am I?

—Submitted by the Editor

New submissions needed! Kindly email them in MS Word format to CLuzhak@aol.com.

Last month's answer: Brigadier General Henry Heth, CSA

Vision Statement

With the Civil War being a defining event in the history of the United States and a continuing influence on our society in general, the Robert E. Lee Civil War Round Table of Central New Jersey is dedicated to preserving and expanding knowledge about — and understanding of — this seminal event.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to serve our members by striving to reach, with resources available, the goals set forward in the Vision Statement. This would be achieved, as finances allow, by: holding meetings, seminars and round tables; offering speakers who are experts in some aspect of the Civil War; encouraging nonpartisan, nonpolitical discussion and dialogue while honoring all those involved in the conflict; contributing toward the preservation of battlefields and important historical sites for future generations; providing eyes-on/hands-on/feet-on first-hand experiences by arranging field trips to battlefields and historical sites and by sponsoring living-history/reenactment events; enhancing communication by publishing a newsletter and maintaining a website; and operating a dedicated library/research center available to members, serious scholars and the general public.

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NOTE: Civil War News discount fliers will be available at each Civil War Round Table meeting, in the Civil War Library & Research Center, or by contacting Mira Form at 732-846-5725 or by email at mkform@optonline.net



The Official Records is the monthly newsletter of the RE LEE CWRT of Central New Jersey.

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