



BORDER BUGLE

Newsletter of the Civil War Round Table of Kansas City



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Civil War Round Table
Of Kansas City

P. O. Box 6202

Shawnee Mission, KS 66206

An IRC 501(c)(3) charitable
organization

391th REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY, March. 28, 2006

Homestead Country Club

6510 Mission Road, Prairie Village, Kansas

Social Hour-Cash Bar-6:00p.m.

Dinner-6:30p.m.

MARCH SPEAKER

MR. JOHN COSKI

Mr. John Coski, Director of the Library and Historian at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond, Virginia. Mr. Coski's presentation on "The Confederate Battle Flag: America's Most Embattled Emblem" is also the title of his recently published book. There will be copies of his book for purchase and signing at the meeting.

Commander's Call

James L. "Spike" Speicher

Our 390th meeting was a rousing success. Our speaker, David Hinze, did a fantastic presentation on the artillery at the Battle of Antietam. I have received numerous compliments on his talk and have passed those on to him. He did want me to advise all our members that he really enjoyed his time with us and how much he appreciated our hospitality.

This month our speaker comes to us from Richmond, Virginia. John Coski works for the Museum of the Confederacy and is author of the

Cont' on page 2

**Please be sure that we have your reservation by Friday March. 24. Return reservation
In the enclosed envelope with required payment of \$20.00 per person to;**

Paul Gault, 7118 N. Congress Ave., K.C. Mo. 64152, .

If you have questions or your payment is unavoidably tardy, please contact either Treasurer Paul Gault at 816-741-2962 or Assistant Treasurer Betty Ergovich at 913 441-6462.

Attendance requires a paid dinner reservation.

acclaimed book The Confederate Battle Flag: America's Most Embattled Emblem. Mr. Coski takes an impartial look at the meaning and mis-meaning of the flag by various groups in today's society. This is an extremely interesting presentation that you won't want to miss. Mr. Coski will have copies of his book available for purchase and autographing.

There is a very important event coming up that all Round Tablers will be interested in. There will be a dedication ceremony on Saturday 29 April at the Byram's Ford Battlefield. The ceremony is to dedicate a new non-firing reproduction 12-pounder Napoleon cannon that has been placed on the top of Bloody Hill. The cannon is adjacent to the Kansas City Water Department building on 63rd Street. From 10:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. there will be a Civil War living history campsite with musket firing and cannon firing demonstrations. From 11:30 until noon is the dedication ceremony. Mayor Barnes has tentatively agreed to participate. A catered lunch will be served on site from noon to 1:00 p.m., when the living history camp will again be open for tours and demonstrations. This is a Round Table/Monnett Fund event and I encourage all of you to come out and support the event. The Round Table is planning to have recruiting table set up at the ceremony.

Once again I want to say what an honor it is for me to be the Round Table president this year. You are a great group and it is a joy for me to be where I am.

If you have any comments, ideas, or concerns the contact information for me is: home- 913.962.9986; work- 816.512.8727; and e-mail colspike@hotmail.com.

Deo Vindice.

Spike



2006 Schedule of Speakers

March 28- Mr. John Coski, Director of the Library and Historian at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond, Virginia. Mr. Coski's presentation on "The

Confederate Battle Flag: America's Most Embattled Emblem" is also the title of his recently published book. There will be copies of his book for purchase and signing at the meeting.

April 25- Dr. Loren Humphrey, M.D., author of "Johnny Come Home", a historical novel about a Union soldier in the Civil War, will present a discussion on "The Civil War in Northeast Missouri" about the forces that kept Missouri in the Union and how control of the railroads won the war in Northeast Missouri. Copies of his book will be available for purchase and signing at the meeting.

May 23- Mr. Jim Beckner, member of the Civil War Round Table of Kansas City. Mr. Beckner's presentation on "Southern Religion: Its Place in the Cause" will examine the role that religion played in the Confederate Army.

June July and August are Summer Sessions To Be Announced...

September 26- Mr. Greg Biggs, former associate editor of "Blue and Gray" magazine. Mr. Biggs' presentation on "Tactical Perfection: Nathan Bedford Forrest at Brice's Crossroads" will look at what many historians consider to be a tactically perfect battle in the Civil War.

October 24- Dr. Richard Sommers, United States Army Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. Dr. Sommers is the author of the acclaimed book Richmond Redeemed, which is the definitive work on the Siege of Petersburg. As the leading authority on that siege, Dr. Sommers' presentation will focus on that nine-month period.

November 28- Mr. Bill Quatman, member of the Civil War Round Table of Kansas City. Mr. Quatman's presentation on "The Fall of Richmond" will be discussed from the viewpoint of Union General Godfrey Weitzel, who was in Richmond at the time. General Weitzel is a direct ancestor of Mr. Quatman.

December 19- Christmas meeting with entertainment.



MENU FOR MARCH 28, 2006:

House Salad with Champagne Vinaigrette, Pork Piccata, Mashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables, and Margoline Hazelnut Cake.

BATTLEFIELD DISPATCHES

Part 3

[Unpopular Surgeon]

“During that time Regimental Surgeon Underwood heard of me and sent word by Lieut. Joe L. Thornton for me to report next morning at Headquarters. When sick call was blown. I told the Lieut. to tell him to go to the place the Bible says is never very cold and that if he came near me with his blue pills I would shoot him so full of lead that some prospector would be likely to locate a Lead Claim on him. Lieut. Told him I was crazy with fever and would do just what I said and that I was the best revolver shot in the Regiment. I heard no more from Dr. Underwood.”

[Hitching a Ride & Jayhawking Rations]

“After leaving Camp what seemed an age to me, we were ordered back to Kansas. I had barely got strong enough to stand alone when we started north. We were furnished a few old worn out mules & wagons to haul our rations. One of Co. A. (Uriah Ackley) was detailed to drive [the] team and into his wagon I crept for a ride and could have rode to Fort Scott only my propensity for foraging. On the 2nd day out from Fort Smith some of the boys asked what was in the wagon. I told them Hard Tack and Bacon. I was Brevetted Commissary Sergeant by them and they began handing in their Haversacks and I filling and handing them out. It was several days before the wagon master found us out, but when he did, it was not long until I found myself out “With very emphatic Orders to Stay Out.” After that I walked (when the Boss was about)!”

[A fate worse than Death]

“I remember I walked the day we reached Cabin Creek and that I saw the skeletons of our two lead scouts who were a day ahead of the Command and had been killed by Bushwhackers and EATEN by WOLVES. A detail was sent back to bury their Bones.”

[Rations on the Wing]

“We had been in Camp, but a short time when a Prairie Chicken dropped down within 30 yards of our Camp. It had hardly struck the ground until I had my Revolver leveled. I shot its head off and in a few minutes an Orderly rode up and he said Colonel Moonlight would be pleased to see the soldier who fired the shot at Headquarters. I told him I was on sick report and was not able to walk that distance. In a few minutes the Col. made me a short call. I told him I had heard the order read that evening that there should be no shooting, but when the chicken dropped so close and that my mess was out of rations, I forgot orders. He let me off after giving me to understand it was because I was sick and out of grub.”

[Home Cooked Rations]

“When we arrived at Fort Scott, Ks., we were entirely out of rations. We went into camp a short distance south of town and of course we nearly all went to town to try for a square meal. The citizens done their best for us and we went to Camp with our belts let out from one to 4 holes.”

[Pig Stealing]

“While on my way to camp I saw a trick played on a farmer who had brought a dressed hog to town for sale. It was after dark and the man was standing holding his team in front of a store waiting for the dealer to come and see the pork when two soldiers came up and asked his price. One of them took hold of the hog’s head as if to see how it was dressed and before the man realized what was going on they jerked the Pig weighing about 100 lbs. out of his wagon and was gone with it. The night was rather dark at the time, but in a very few minutes it turned a deep indigo Blue for at least 2 blocks around, but as he could not leave his team all he could do was to stand there and Curse the soldiers.”

[Sleeping in Snow & Stealing Apples]

At Mound City we met the worst Blizzard I ever was out in and although we camped out in the open having no tents and very few blankets no one froze. At Paola Ks., the night we camped there, an Illinois Regt. stole about 100 bushels of Apples out of a storeroom without going inside. They cut a hole in the floor and carried them out in haversacks. There was an old unused cellar under the store and of course “a soldier to find it.”

[Westward Bound]

“At Olathe, we found our Capt. (H.E. Palmer) and the remainder of our Co. having formed a stragglers camp with Orders to march to Fort Riley. All who had been on the Price Raid were given a furlough to go by way of home; others to go via of Lawrence direct to Fort Riley. At Riley we established Camp west of the Fort near the Crossing of the Republican River on the road leading to Junction City. Late in February 1865 we had refitted and resumed our March west or rather to the N. W. [North West] up the Republican crossing over to Fort Kearney [Nebraska] on the Platte River, up the Platte to Julesburg where we forded the River and went into Camp near where the U.P.R.R. now crosses Pole Creek.”

[Fatal River Crossing & Bucking Bronc]

“Our forage train Crossing after us lost a 6 Mule team and loaded wagon. The mules balked and sunk in the quicksand in 30 minutes from the time they stopped, wagon & mules were entirely out of sight. We crossed the river, using the North Platte Valley, below Chimney Rock, our route then lay up the river by way of Scott’s Bluff to Fort Laramie where we drew 3 months rations and pushed on for what was known as the upper Platte Bridge. On the way (at Chaparral Creek) I had the ill

luck to do what no one else ever did, that is, to shoot myself; I was, as usual, riding a bucking horse and as we were about going into Camp he began Pitching and caused the hammer of my revolver to strike on my Carbine, the bullet passed through several coils of a lariat I carried tied on my saddle and glanced angling across the Calf of my leg and lodging in my boot; this let me off duty 2 or 3 weeks.”

End of part 3



VOLUNTEER!

Be A Part of History!

The John Wornall House Museum needs docents to lead tours and interpret their wonderful site. Step into history for three hours twice a month. Weekday shifts available. Please tell your friends! Call Paula at 816-44-1858.



COMING EVENTS....

March, 2006: Liberty Memorial Museum presents a series called “The World War I Years” in 6 parts starting Sunday, Mar. 26 and playing each Sunday through May 7, at 2:00pm. All of these episodes are introduced by Tim Westcott, of Park University and past President (1996) of the Civil War Round Table of Kansas City.

April 8-9: Civil War Encampment at Fort Scott, referred locally as the “Spring Muster”. Enjoy a weekend of Civil War history as the Union Army reoccupies Fort Scott National Historic Site. Period music, living history, demonstrations and portrayals will be featured. Call 620-223-0310 for details, or visit www.nps.gov/fosc.

April 22-23: “Civil War on the Border”, this 10th annual Civil War reenactment at the Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop, in Olathe will feature Union and Confederate camps, battles, military demonstrations, living history activities, food vendors and more. Call 913-971-5111 or visit www.olatheks.org/visitors/mahaffie.

April 23: Trails West Library, 11401 E. 23rd St, Independence, Mo. “The Civil War in Jackson County”, the fighting in Jackson County began with the Kansas-Missouri Border War, 6 years before the Civil War. Bushwhackers and outlaws kept it going for another 15 years following the end of the war. Speaker is Ted Stillwell. Sunday, 3:00pm.

April 29: “Civil War on the Western Border” with Deb and Tom Goodrich, a bus tour. Join authors Tom and Deb Goodrich for a narrated bus tour back to the past. Back to those turbulent times when our state was formed....Back to “Bloody Kansas.” We will visit the sites of battles, raids and massacres. We will visit museums. We might even see a lovely ghost from the

past. WE WILL HAVE FUN!!! Leave Topeka 8:30am Saturday, April 29. Meet at “The Ritchie House,” 1116 SE Madison St., (just SE of Downtown, next to I-70, return at 6:00pm. \$60.00 per seat includes donuts, coffee, lunch, snacks, drinks and admission to museums. Call for info and credit cards; 785-357-0510, send cash or checks to: Bus Tour, 1278 SW Collins, Topeka, KS 66604.

April 23: Sunday, 2:00pm. “Company K of the 7th U.S. Volunteer Infantry” Presented by Roger D. Cunningham. Author and historian Roger D. Cunningham presents a lecture on Company K of the 7th U.S. Volunteer Infantry, an African-American unit organized in Kansas City during the Spanish-American War. Company K was also known as the “Seventh Immunes” because the unit’s black soldiers and lieutenants were supposed to be recruited from men who had already been exposed to tropical diseases. It was believed that this made them immune to re-infection.

Location [Kansas City Museum](#) 3218 Gladstone Blvd. Kansas City, MO 64123-1199, 816-483-8300



WEBMASTER WANTED!

We had one once, but who knows what happened, it was down more than up. If you would like to help your round table get into the 21st Century and put up a little web site, that would be really nice. Please contact our President or myself and we’ll see what we need to do and what it takes. Thank you!

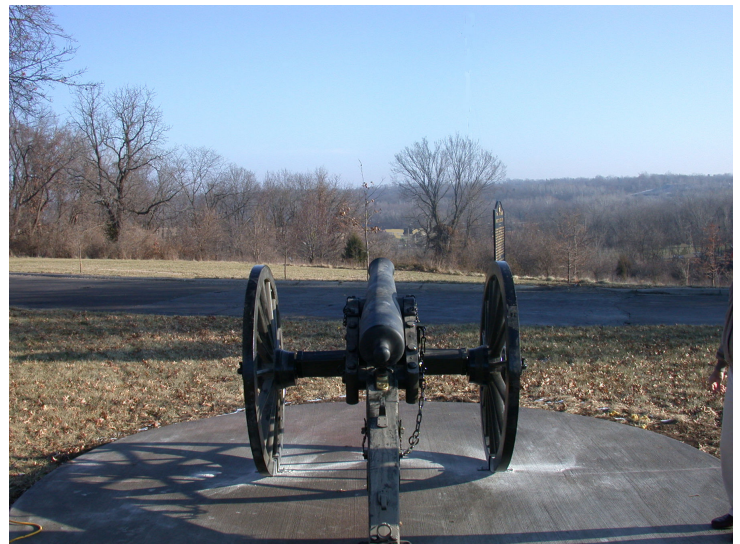


NEW MEMBERS

Lloyd Kirk, 8124 Rosewood Dr. Prairie Village, KS 66308, 913 649 6355, lpvkirk@aol.com.



CANNON AT BYRAM’S FORD



Daniel L. Smith, chairman of the Monnett Battle of Westport Fund, announced the installation in Kansas City, Missouri of the replica artillery piece with limber at the site of Pratt's Artillery Battery on the Big Blue Battlefield at Byram's Ford. This 12-pound Napoleon cannon was one of four artillery pieces, which were fired from this location on the third day of the Battle of Westport, 23 October 1864. The Battle of Westport was the largest battle of the Civil War fought west of the Mississippi River.

The placement of the gun marks the conclusion of a long effort by the Monnett Fund to secure it for this location. In 1988 Orvis Fitts as Chairman of the Monnett Fund along with President Jack Brooks prepared a plan for the creation of an artillery fund to acquire a replica gun at Byram's Ford.

This plan was renewed in the Monnett Fund's Interpretive and Development Plan issued in 2002. In July 2002, Smith and his daughter Lauran A. Smith appeared on behalf of the Monnett Fund before the Kansas City Public Improvements committee (PI AC) for the 5th District in support of its application of funding for the acquisition of the gun. Through the efforts and support of 5th District councilwoman Becky Nace and councilman Terry Riley, the PIAC funding of \$28,000.00 was approved for the acquisition in 2004 by the Kansas City Parks Department.

With the assistance of President Sandy Ackerson and consultation with Gil Bergman, the specifications for the replica and suppliers were given to the Parks Department by the Monnett Fund. On December 22, 2005, Kansas City Parks planner Steve Abbott oversaw the final installation with the hoisting into place of the carriage and cannon barrel. The cannon is sited toward the location of Byram's Ford as shown in the accompanying photograph.

The installation of the cannon project marks the successful completion of the one of the intermediate term objectives of the Monnett Fund's Development Plan for Byram's Ford. The Monnett Fund is hosting a commemoration ceremony on the occasion of the cannon placement. Monnett Fund members Betty Ergovich and Alana Smith are chairing the committee planning the event, which will be held on Saturday April 29, 2006.

Mayor Barnes and other dignitaries will participate in the dedication ceremony of the cannon. There will be living history demonstrations headed by James Speicher, President of the Civil War Round Table of Kansas City and by James Beckner, First Vice-president of the Monnett Fund. An artillery demonstration will be provided through the course of the day. The festivities on April 29 will begin at 10:00 a.m. with the opening of exhibits of artifacts and historical

displays. The dedication ceremony will commence at 11:30 a.m. Our veteran tour guides, Orvis Fitts and Jack Brooks will be present to provide insight to the significant battle that occurred at Byram's Ford on both 22 and 23 October 1864.

During the celebration, the Monnett Fund will be sharing with the public its vision for the completion of the next phase in the eventual restoration of the Big Blue Battlefield. Substantial portions of the Battlefield are on the National Register of Historic Places including the Byram's Ford Site and the Byram's Ford Road. The Fund aims to complete the necessary funding and restoration work by the time of the sesquicentennial of the American Civil War in April 2011.

Those who would like to attend the luncheon hosted by the Monnett Fund following the dedication ceremony are requested to contact the Fund by April 15, 2006 to make a reservation. The cost of the luncheon is \$12.00 and will be served by the Fund at the battlefield.



GREAT CIVIL WAR BOOKS: AN AUTHOR'S READING LIST

by Bruce Levine

When this blog's editor invited me to name the ten best books on the Civil War, I blanched and took a pass. There are far too many really fine ones, and too many that I still haven't read, for me to presume to make up that kind of list. But I do welcome the chance at least to recommend some of the really excellent books on the subject. A few of these are newly published while others have been in print for quite a while.

The best (okay, in this case I will crawl out on that limb) one-volume treatment of the war remains James M. McPherson's Pulitzer Prize winner, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (Oxford University Press, 1988). It's extremely well informed, its judgments are sage, and it's clearly and smoothly written. It's a masterpiece. If you're going to read only one book on the subject, read this one.

No aspect of the subject receives as much attention (by far) as the war's military history. A couple of books are especially useful to anyone seeking a general grasp of that story. In *Civil War Command and Strategy: The Process of Victory and Defeat* (The Free Press, 1992), Archer Jones uses key battles to illustrate some of the principal strategic and tactical principles that shaped the war's conduct. Richard M. McMurry's *Two Great Rebel Armies: An Essay in Confederate Military History* (University of North Carolina Press, 1996) provides eye-opening answers to a question that jumps out at any student of the Civil War: Why did

Confederate armies do so well in the war's eastern theater and so badly in the western one? J. Tracy Power, meanwhile, offers a deeply researched and illuminating account of life in Robert E. Lee's army during the Confederacy's final year in Lee's *Miserables: Life in the Army of Northern Virginia from the Wilderness to Appomattox* (University of North Carolina Press, 1998). And in a collection of essays entitled *Controversies and Commanders: Dispatches from the Army of the Potomac* (Mariner Books, 2000), Stephen W. Sears brings wisdom, enormous erudition, and considerable writing skill to bear on a series of the war's key military episodes and colorful figures. (My favorite is his rehabilitation of "Fighting Joe" Hooker.)

David Blight's *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory* (Harvard University Press, 2001) presents a masterful account of the way in which Americans remembered (and chose to forget about) the bond between the Civil War and African-American slavery during the first half-century after Appomattox. Historians have explored that linkage with great energy and effectiveness during the last forty years. The results include James L. Roark's revealing portrait of how slave-owners reacted to slavery's destruction: *Masters without Slaves: Southern Planters in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (W. W. Norton, 1977). The breakdown of slavery under the blows of war - and of the slaves themselves - can be followed in a dramatic documentary collection entitled *Free at Last: A Documentary History of Slavery, Freedom and the Civil War*, edited by Ira Berlin, Barbara J. Fields, Steven V. Miller, Joseph P. Reidy, and Leslie Rowland (The New Press, 1992). And the late Armistead L. Robinson, with whom I went to

graduate school, argued that slavery itself was the chief cause of the Confederacy's defeat in his posthumously published *Bitter Fruits of Bondage: The Demise Of Slavery And the Collapse of the Confederacy, 1861-1865* (University Press of Virginia, 2004).

Robinson's subject - the reasons for the Union's victory - has once again become the focus of a lively and thought-provoking debate among professional historians, with some emphasizing the Confederacy's internal weaknesses (including but not limited to slavery) while others focus on what occurred on the battlefield. A good, readable introduction to that debate is Gabor S. Boritt, ed., *Why the Confederacy Lost* (Oxford University Press, 1992). Drew Gilpin Faust's lively study of the war's impact on women of the planter class spotlights that group's waning loyalty to the Confederate cause: *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Random House, 1996). Gary W. Gallagher's *The Confederate War: How Popular Will, Nationalism, and Military Strategy Could Not Stave Off Defeat* (Harvard University Press, 1997) emphasizes the Confederacy's success in maintaining its citizens' loyalty down to the wire. William W. Freehling replies to Gallagher and others in a short but spirited volume entitled *The South vs. the South: How Anti-Confederate Southerners Shaped the Course of the Civil War* (Oxford University Press, 2001).

I could very easily triple this list from the baker's dozen I've given here and not come close to running out of excellent recommendations. And tomorrow morning I imagine that I will kick myself for not doing just that. Oh, well...

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