

The Outpost

**The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table
Vol. LII No. 6 February 2015**



477th Regular Meeting

DATE: Friday, February 20, 2015

PLACE: Oak Trace, 200 Village Drive, Downers Grove, IL

TIME: 8:00 p.m.

TOPIC: "The Civil War Trust's 2015 Battlefield Preservation Extravaganza"

SPEAKER: William J. Hupp

The Civil War Trust is the largest and most effective nonprofit organization devoted to the preservation of America's hallowed battlefields. The CWT's story began back in 1987 when a group of stalwart souls met to discuss a plan to protect the rapidly disappearing battlefields. This led to the formation of several preservation groups. In 1999, in an attempt to increase the efficiency in which preservation opportunities could be pursued, the two groups merged forming the Civil War Preservation Trust. In 2011 the organization shortened its name to the Civil War Trust.

2015 will be the final year of the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War. Preservation efforts during the Sesquicentennial have been particularly successful, with the CWT raising over \$45 million in additional preservation funds and total battlefield acreage saved going over the 40,000 mark. Bill will review the preservation gains during the Sesquicentennial and open the floor for questions about how the CWT does its work and what lies ahead in the future for preservation. (Hint: the future looks very bright, with more buildings coming down.)

Bill Hupp is a life long student of the Civil War. Bill worked professionally as an accountant, CPA and CFO for over 30 years. He currently serves on a number of non-profit boards including serving as a Trustee for the Civil War Trust. A longtime member of the Salt Creek CWRT, Bill served 13 years as Treasurer, and more than 5 years as Battlefield Preservation Chair. He has spoken to the round table on the 8th Illinois Cavalry, given a virtual battlefield tour of Perryville and Wilson's Creek and moderated a large number of highly debatable debates. Bill has recently launched a new venture, Liberty Hobby Center, a place for gaming with military miniatures, and developing new products for this niche hobby market.

JANUARY MEETING SUMMARY by JAN RASMUSSEN

Faugh a Ballagh! Clear the Way! The famous battle cry of the Irish Brigade as described by Brian Conroy in his January presentation "The Irish in the Civil War". More than 150,000 Irishmen fought for the Union in the Civil War because the highest concentration of Irish immigrants was in the larger northern cities. They came to America seeking economic and religious freedom. They fought hoping that their adopted country would be indebted to them for their bravery and put a stop to anti-Irish discrimination.

The first all Irish military organization was the 69th New York militia which was formed and led by Michael Corcoran. After Corcoran's death in 1863, Francis Meagher succeeded him, forming the Irish Brigade which consisted of the 69th, 63rd and 88th New York Infantry Regiment as well as the 116th Pennsylvania from Philadelphia and the 28th Massachusetts from Boston. Father William Corby from Notre Dame was chosen to be chaplain. The Irish Brigade fought bravely at Antietam losing 60% of their strength. Months later at Fredricksburg, the Irish Brigade suffered heavy losses losing 45% in casualties. At Gettysburg, the Irish Brigade distinguished itself in the Wheatfield again suffering heavy losses. A brigade monument with the Celtic cross and an Irish wolfhound lying down, stands nearby.

The Irish did not serve in ethnic regiments alone. Throughout the Union Army, Irishmen served with distinction. Several notable officers came from the Irish Papal Brigade. Cavalry officer Myles Keogh served under Buford and eventually died with Custer at the Little Big Horn. Joseph O'Keefe accompanied Phil Sheridan on his famous ride at Cedar Creek and was mortally wounded at Five Forks. Patrick Clooney became captain of the 88th N.Y. and was killed at the Sunken Road at Antietam.

Significantly fewer Irish lived in the southern states, but approximately 20,000 Irishmen fought for the Confederacy. The majority of the ethnic Irish units were at the company level. The Louisiana Tigers raised by Major Chatham Roberdeau Wheat was probably the largest Irish unit. Other Irish units included Charleston's Irish Volunteers, Cobb's 24th Georgia Volunteer Infantry, and the 10th Tennessee Infantry. The 5th Missouri Infantry, commanded by Colonel Joseph Kelly, was called the "Sons of Erin", or Kelly's Irish Brigade. Six Confederate generals were Irish born. The most famous was Patrick Cleburne, who died valiantly at the Battle of Franklin.

The dark spot in the history of Irish in the Civil War was the Draft Riots of 1863. In March of 1863 Congress passed the Enrollment Act which required single men age 20-45 and married men up to 35 to register for the draft. This angered many northern whites, especially Irish immigrants. Fuel was added to the fire when black men, mostly freed slaves, were excluded from the draft. The Irish workers feared the newly freed slaves would migrate North and create competition in the labor market. In July when the draft was held, the working class Irish rioted. Blacks were targeted and many were killed. Federal troops returning from Gettysburg were sent to restore order.

Brian provided excellent powerpoint slides to enhance his presentation. The Salt Creek CWRT thanks Brian for his enlightening program.

PRESERVATION REPORT BY DAN JOSEPHS

Many of you recently received the e-mail from Janet Rasmussen recently indicating that on January 7, 2015 the Civil War Trust completed the purchase of Lee's Headquarters (and surrounding property) on the Gettysburg Battlefield. The plan of the Civil War Trust is to restore the property to its 1863 condition, remove non-historic buildings from the property, and convey the property to the Gettysburg National Battlefield Military Park once the historic rehabilitation is complete. This is an incredibly important purchase by the Civil War Trust for many reasons.

This real estate has great historical significance. The private home was co-owned by Mary Thompson, a citizen of Gettysburg. The other co-owner of the home at the time of the battle was Congressman Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania. It is located on the Chambersburg Pike on Seminary Ridge. As a result, the battle of July 1, 1863 took place on this property. Stone's brigade of the First Corps including three Pennsylvania regiments (150th PA, 149th PA, and 143rd PA), formed a line during the First Day's battle. Also, part of Battery B, 4th US Artillery, (Stewart's battery) was located on this real estate during the July 1st battle. After Stone's Brigade, Battery B 4th US, and the other Union troops retreated to Cemetery Hill and Cemetery Ridge, General Lee established and maintained his headquarters at the Mary Thompson House through the rest of the battle until the Confederates retreated. The Civil War Trust consulted with Edwin C. Bearss, Historian Emeritus of the National Park Service, Dr. Gary Gallagher of the University of Virginia, and Timothy Smith, Research Historian of the Adams County Historical Society who confirmed the historical significance of this real estate. Since the entire parcel of property is located adjacent to the Gettysburg National Battlefield, the Civil War Trust has wanted to purchase this real estate for years. This real estate not only contained the Mary Thompson House (still privately owned), but also includes a private business consisting of an operating hotel and restaurant. The total amount of this real estate is 4.01 acres. Another problem that the Civil War Trust faced was that there was no restrictive covenant on the land, meaning that additional commercial development could have taken place on this land. In many other instances, a battlefield preservation group could purchase a restrictive covenant, limiting the real estate to be privately owned only and no commercial development could take place. At some later date, a battlefield preservation group could purchase the property from the private owner.

Due to the private home, the operating business, and the surrounding battlefield land, the purchase price of the real estate was extremely high, 5.5 million dollars. The Civil War Trust had to raise this amount by the end of last year and close on the purchase of the real estate by early last month (January, 2015). The Civil War Trust, through private donations, a corporate gift from Fed Ex, and a matching grant, raised enough funds and met their deadline of December 31st of last year. I was astounded that the closing of the purchase of this real estate took place on January 7th. As my fellow attorneys will confirm, there are so many details related to such a gigantic purchase of real estate. For those of you who have donated to the Civil War Trust, you should be proud of your financial assistance in the purchase of this property.

According to their press release dated January 7, 2015, The Civil War Trust protected more than 2,300 acres of Civil War battlefield land during the year 2014. They have also passed the milestone of 40,000 acres of battlefield land in 20 different states by the end of 2014.

ALL FOR THE UNION

2015 Membership Renewals are due.
Renewals before the next meeting
are eligible for the free membership
drawing at the February meeting.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Nancy Fritz
Mark Poshpeny

Speakers Needed
Contact Jan (jrbarns@sbcglobal.net)
if you have a presentation to share.

UPCOMING CIVIL WAR EVENTS

FEBRUARY 17, 2015
LINCOLN-DAVIS CWRT
"Love & Valor: Intimate CW Letters
Speaker: Charles Larimer
Country House Restaurant, Alsip, IL
Lincolndavisroundtable@yahoo.com

FEBRUARY 26, 2015
SOUTH SUBURBAN CWRT
"Luke Babcock: 2nd Kansas Cavalry
Speaker: Steve Labarre
sscwrt@gmail.com

MARCH 6, 2015
NORTHERN ILLINOIS CWRT
"Gouverneur K. Warren"
Speaker: Rob Girardi
Arlington Hts. Historical Museum
northernilcwrt.org

MARCH 13, 2015
CHICAGO CWRT
"Searching for George Gordon Meade"
Speaker: Tom Huntington
Holiday Inn Mart Plaza Chicago
350 North Orleans Street
chicagocwrtinner@earthlink.net

MAY 30, 2015
CW Sesquicentennial Symposium
"1865-2015 The Civil War: Victory,
Defeat and Memory"
Lisle-Naperville Hilton
Paula Walker 708-429-5781
Paulaw98@comcast.net

FUTURE SCCWRT MEETINGS

March 20, 2015
"The 12th Illinois Cavalry"
Speaker: Samuel Blackwell

April 17, 2015
"Colonel Elmer Ellsworth"
Speaker: Doug Damman

May 15, 2015
Panel Discussion

THE SALTCREEK CWRT
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