



THE drum roll

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The only Illinois infantry regiment at Gettysburg

Friday, May 5, 2017, 7:30 p.m.

Arlington Heights Memorial Library
500 North Dunton Avenue, Arlington Heights, Illinois

82nd Illinois Infantry



Dan Josephs

The 82nd Illinois regiment was the only Illinois infantry regiment present in the Army of the Potomac at the Battle of Gettysburg. On May 5, 2017, Dan Josephs will discuss the makeup of the 82nd, which consisted primarily of native-born Germans. This regiment was one of two Union infantry regiments that had companies of Jewish soldiers, who referred to themselves as Israelites. A large percentage of the soldiers came from Chicago and the surrounding metropolitan area.

The talk also will focus on other battles the 82nd Illinois fought, beginning with Chancellorsville. In September 1863 the 11th Corps was transferred to the West to reinforce the Army of the Cumberland. The 82nd Illinois went with the 11th Corps and participated in the Chattanooga

campaign, mainly in a supportive role. After the Chattanooga campaign, the 11th and 12th Corps did not return to the Army of the Potomac.

As part of the 20th Corps, the 82nd Illinois participated in various battles of the Atlanta campaign. The regiment also accompanied Sherman's troops across Georgia and through the battles in the Carolinas. The regiment participated in the Grand Review of Sherman's Army in Washington, DC, after the war.

Dan Josephs is a member of this round table and the author of the Battlefield Preservation column in the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table newsletter. He is an attorney with his own law practice. He also belongs to the Chicago and Salt Creek Civil War round tables. His interest in the Civil War began when his family visited various Civil War battlefields during his childhood. His father also has a great interest in the Civil War and has attended some presentations to this round table.

Josephs also traces his interest in the Civil War to Bruce Catton's two three-book series published in the 1960s. During his youth he took Catton's books everywhere, including Boy Scout camps. Josephs and his wife, Abbe, often visit Civil War battlefields during the spring and summer months. They attended 150th anniversary events at several battlefields, including Gettysburg, Chickamauga, First Bull Run, and Second Bull Run. They named their cat Joshua after Colonel Joshua Chamberlin.

If you would like to join us for dinner with Dan Josephs at 5:30 p.m. before the meeting on May 5 at Sam's of Arlington restaurant, 1863 West Central Road, Arlington Heights, please contact me at ccars@comcast.net or (847) 738-4141 by Wednesday, May 3. —*Charles Carr*

Banquet reservations should be made by May 26, 2017

Civil War Battle Tactics

By Pat McCormick

One of the features of our round table is that we have a deep and talented bench. In 2016 Charlie Banks ably filled in at the last minute when a scheduled speaker had to cancel. And on April 7 of this year, Dave Powell was pulled off the pines to pinch-hit for speaker Steven Fratt. (Actually, since the topic was Tactics in the Civil War, let's refer to Dave as a tactical reserve instead.)

In seeking to explain the unprecedented (for U.S. wars at least) casualty levels of the American Civil War, long-standing tradition has it that the cause was Napoleonic tactics wedded to rifled weaponry. This theory was certainly accepted by the primary historians of a half-century ago, including such luminaries as Bruce Catton and Shelby Foote. However, as Powell pointed out, there are a number of problems with this premise, among them that there had been plenty of sanguinary engagements even in Napoleon's day (Borodino being one such example). Furthermore, said Napoleonic tactics were already evolving before the Civil War.

From the 18th Century into the 1830s, primary weaponry — the smoothbore musket — remained little changed. Rifles (and specialized rifle units) were in existence, but in that era the rifle itself was sort of a hybrid arm, slower to load than the typical smoothbore (1 to 1.5 rounds per minute as opposed to 3 to 4 for the smoothbore). Working the bullet down the rifled grooves slowed the process.

But with the invention of the Minie ball, rifled weaponry increasingly came to the fore. The Minie ball was smaller than the bore of the weapon but expanded when fired, filling the grooves and thus having the spin imparted to the projectile. This feature vastly increased the range of front-line weaponry and is often cited as a primary cause for the astounding bloodshed of 1861–1865. However, a key point missed by this explanation is that to make full use of the expanded range took a great deal of training — and

training was in short supply during the Civil War. (Target practice was rare prior to 1864.)

Though improved rifles did not drive the casualty levels of the Civil War, they did contribute to a series of tactical advancements in progress throughout much of the 19th Century. Chief among these was a gradual increase in rates of advance. In 1795, armies typically advanced at 75 paces per minute, as Powell referred to it, a slow and implacable funeral march. The French inched the rate up to 87 paces/minute, enough to throw opponents off; they also experimented with columns in addition to lines. Starting in the 1830s, the pace gradually increased to 120/minute, including Winfield Scott's manual of 1835. After the Mexican War, Hardee's tactics of 1855 included the "double quick" of 155/minute. The increased pace of advance heightened the importance of moral courage to close with the enemy.

Hardee's tactical rules were the basic framework for both armies in 1861, yet despite their relative newness they were frequently modified as both armies gained experience and as the percentage of rifles increased. Regarding experience, Civil War soldiers quickly became proficient in the crucible of combat, but not necessarily skilled. In the meantime, formations gradually became looser, until by late war the classic steadily advancing, elbow-to-elbow formations had been largely replaced by wider spacing and a series of short rushes to the enemy lines.

Command and control proved to be a major consideration in the Civil War armies. For starters, these armies grew far larger than any previous American armies. Winfield Scott's entire army in Mexico was around 20,000 men; by early 1862, George McClellan commanded 125,000 on the Peninsula, and at Gettysburg George Meade led some 90,000.

At the brigade level, there was some rethinking of brigade formations. At war's start a brigade would typically put all of its regiments in one continuous line, but early in the war U.S.

General Silas Casey was tasked with coming up with a new system. Casey's tactics, published in August 1862, were used by both sides (though never universally adopted). Casey called for a typical four-regiment brigade to deploy two regiments in front and two in rear, with the commander in the middle. This arrangement was easier to control and more flexible than a long line, and presented more concentrated power as well. The disadvantage was frontage. When facing a traditionally deployed enemy, the flanks of the Casey formation were vulnerable. Consequently

the rear regiments needed to be trained to shift quickly out to the sides and pivot forward onto line with the front regiments.

Clearly, the story of Civil War tactics is far more subtle and diverse than the traditional picture of close-packed lines advancing slowly into massed long-range rifle fire.

On behalf of the round table I would like to thank Dave Powell for an eye-opening presentation. Thanks also to another of our "tactical reserves," Danny Kafka, whose notes informed this account as I was unable to attend.

May Events

May 7, Bleeding Kansas, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. Class will cover the historical events of the Kansas-Missouri Border Wars of 1854–1861 using contemporary sources hidden away for more than 156 years, 1–3 p.m.; \$25/\$20 Friends of the Museum. Information on all Civil War Museum programs is available at (262) 653-4140 or www.thecivilwarmuseum.org.

May 9, McHenry County Civil War Round Table. Steven Fratt will speak on Civil War Tactics and Combat.

May 11, Lake County Civil War Round Table. The speaker will discuss Funeral Practices of the Civil War.

May 12, Second Friday Lecture Series, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. Brian Kangas will speak on Slavery, Secession, and the Voyage of the Lady Elgin, noon. Free program is sponsored by the Milwaukee Civil War Roundtable and the Iron Brigade Association.

May 12, Chicago Civil War Round Table. Connie Hansen will present a first-person portrayal of Jennie Wade's mother.

May 13, Women in History Tea, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. Leslie Goddard will appear as Clara Barton, who was the first woman to serve as a caregiver on the front lines of a battlefield during the Civil War and later founded the American Red Cross, 1 p.m.

May 19, Salt Creek Civil War Round Table. Rev. Robert J. Miller will speak on For God, Church, and Country.

drum roll, May 2017

Election of Officers

Officers for the 2017–2018 club year will be elected at the regular meeting on May 5, 2017.

The nominating committee will present the slate of nominees headed by Wayne Rhine and Harold Knudsen.

Volunteers are still needed to fill some positions. Anyone who is interested should contact Pat McCormick. Additional nominations may be made at that meeting with the consent of the nominee, who must be a current member of the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table.

May Saturday Discussion

All members and guests are invited to participate in the session to be held at the Barrington Area Library on Saturday, May 20, 2017, from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Pat McCormick will lead the discussion on the third day at Gettysburg and Lee's retreat.

These discussions are generally held on the third Saturday of the month from September through June. They are held to generate and foster a free exchange of ideas on Civil War events.

To Contribute to the Drum Roll

All members are welcome to contribute to the newsletter. If you have information to share, contact Sally Smith, 328 Eastern Avenue, Barrington, Illinois 60010; telephone (847) 381-6486; or drum_roll4@juno.com.



2016–17 Officers and Trustees

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Appointed Positions

Book Raffle	Charles Banks
Newsletter Editor	Sally Smith

Annual Banquet

The 34th annual banquet of the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table will be held June 2, 2017, at Concorde Banquets, 20922 North Rand Road, Kildeer, Illinois. Wayne Motts will speak on the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Reservations should be sent to Tom DeFranco, 9273 Fairway Drive, Apt. 316, Des Plaines, Illinois 60016, or Pat McCormick, 1444 North Lee Boulevard, Berkeley, Illinois 60163, by May 26, along with a check for \$39 for each person having dinner and the choice of dinner. Dinner choices are beef brochette, chicken Marsala, broiled whitefish, and a pasta dish.

Book Raffle

The lucky winners at the April book raffle were Mark Schmitz, who won *Soldiering with Sherman: The Civil War Letters of George S. Cram*, edited by Jennifer Cain Bohrnstedt; Bill Lax, who won *Agent of Destiny: The Life and Times of General Winfield Scott* by John S. D. Eisenhower; Bob Kast, who won *Those 163 Days: A Southern Account of Sherman's March from Atlanta to Raleigh* by John M. Gibson; Fred Reczkowicz, who won *War in the West*, edited by John Cannan; and Alisa Corsi, who won *Short History of the American Civil War* by Roy P. Basler, all donated by John Luberdia; and Alfred Kitch, who won *Call of Duty* by J. Steven Wilkens.

Congratulations to the winners and sincere thanks to the donors.

Eisenhower Library Discussion

The Civil War discussion group at the Eisenhower Library, 4613 North Oketo Avenue, Harwood Heights, meets on the first Saturday of the month from 10:00 until 11:30 a.m. On May 6 the group will discuss the Vicksburg campaign in the fall of 1862, including Grant's first campaign and Sherman's activities at Chickasaw Bluffs.

Women's Civil War Book Club

The Civil War book club for women will meet on July 23. The location and book to be discussed will be announced next month. If you are interested in joining the group, contact Denise Limburg at (847) 382-1022 or dlimburg@prodigy.net or Mary Banks at zeller1@comcast.net or (847) 497-3149.

**To learn more about the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table
visit our website at www.northernilcwrt.org**