



THE drum roll

Volume 31 300th Regular Meeting
Number 9 May 3, 2013

Defeat is seldom the result of a single tactical event

Friday, May 3, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

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

Chattanooga The Lost Victory

This month we are privileged to have a return visit from Harold Knudsen. Since we last we heard from him, he has retired from the U.S. Army and is working for the U.S. government at the Rock Island Arsenal.

Most interpretations of the Chattanooga campaign claim that the establishment of the Cracker Line was the decisive event that reversed the initiative away from the Confederates and gave it to the Union. It has appeared so to many historians, but a defeat like General Braxton Bragg's is seldom the result of a single tactical event. Knudsen holds that the campaign was largely lost before the Cracker Line was put in, and the true reason for Union success is found in the level of war between tactics and strategy — operational art.

Through the prism of operational art, General James Longstreet saw that the Union corps movements going on around Bragg were the decisive factors. Tactical events such as the Union bridgehead at Brown's Ferry, the night battle at Wauhatchie, and the Cracker Line, and Bragg's idea to cut it with a division (or more) had little to do with the key operational facet working against Bragg: the growing Union center of gravity.

Knudsen will discuss operational art and historical applications and show that Longstreet had designs on an operational-level strike against Bridgeport, Alabama, a part of the story largely

unmentioned in the historiography of the war. The idea was a course of action designed to restore maneuver for the Confederates, eliminate the Union supply hub at Bridgeport, separate the Union corps, and keep the Union troops in Chattanooga isolated.



Harold Knudsen

Despite Bragg's missed opportunities in September 1863 to win a victory in the West and although his partial siege was the error that ended the South's last chance to achieve a strategic reversal, Longstreet envisioned one more opportunity. Lee's Warhorse had it right: Bridgeport, not Lookout Valley, was the key to Chattanooga.

Knudsen is an Illinois native. His career spans 25 years of active duty service and includes seven resident career artillery, command, and staff Army schools and colleges. He has many years of tactical experience in the integration of fire support into maneuver plans and fire control computation for cannon units. His years of staff work at the corps, army, and Pentagon levels give him a strong understanding of army operations from the lowest to highest levels. His book, *General James Longstreet, the Confederacy's Most Modern General*, draws heavily from twentieth century army doctrine, field training, staff planning, command, and combat experience.

All those who would like to join us for dinner with Harold Knudsen at 5:30 p.m. before the meeting on May 3, 2013, at Sam's of Arlington restaurant, 1863 West Central Road, Arlington Heights, please notify me at (847) 985 1466 or at gaviganthomas@comcast.net no later than Wednesday, May 1. — Tom Gavigan

Please note change in date for May Saturday meeting — May 11

The Maryland Campaign

A First Person Account

By Tom DeFranco

One of the most careful and diligent historians of the Maryland Campaign of 1862 was one of its participants — Ezra A. Carman. Carman was compared to John Bachelder, the well-known original historian of Gettysburg. The difference was that Bachelder did not fight at Gettysburg. Carman, on the other hand, commanded the 13th New Jersey at Antietam. (He missed Gettysburg because of wounds suffered at Chancellorsville.) Carman wrote one of the most detailed accounts of the campaign at over 1000 pages, and his work is still a must read for any serious student of the campaign. One of today's most knowledgeable students of the campaign, Tom Clemens, with coaxing from his professor, Joseph Harsh, took on the daunting task of editing Carman's lengthy work. Dr. Clemens visited the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table on Friday, April 5, 2013, to discuss his and Carman's work.

Carman gathered material from sources on both sides of the conflict and recounted them. Much of what is on the informational tablets on the battlefield today comes from Carman's work.

Among the vignettes that Clemens shared with the crowd were events at the Battle of South Mountain (fought on Sunday, September 14, three days before Antietam) as well as those at Sharpsburg itself. One such event was that of the commemoration of the death of Confederate Brigadier General Samuel Garland. At Fox's Gap even today is a structure known variably as the Mountain House or the Old Inn. It sits on the south side of the Old Hagerstown Road at the summit of South Mountain at Fox's Gap. It was used as Confederate headquarters that day. After the war, the Dahlgren family bought the property. Mrs. Dahlgren, wife of Admiral John Dahlgren and mother of Federal cavalry officer Colonel Ulric Dahlgren

took great exception to any recognition of a Confederate general on her property.

Clemens related the stories of several controversies involving high-ranking officers at the Battle of Sharpsburg on September 17. One such event detailed the actions of Colonel William



Ezra Carman

Christian, who commanded the Second Brigade of the Second Division of General Joe Hooker's First Corps. As three of his four regiments were preparing to advance into the fray, Christian had the men drill. They were not within Confederate musket range but were easily within artillery range, and men were starting to fall. Christian reportedly made for the rear, a junior officer mentioning that he showed the "white feather." Christian's run to the rear caused the brigade to halt until another officer could get them moving again. After the battle Christian was forced to resign in

disgrace. Carman, realizing firsthand what combat could do to a man, generously avoided using Christian's name when describing the situation.

Similarly, John Caldwell, a brigade commander in General Israel Richardson's First Division of Sumner's Second Corps, was accused of cowardice in not leading his brigade forward when ordered to do so. Richardson was livid, accusing Caldwell of hiding behind a haystack. Caldwell was court-martialed but acquitted of cowardice. Again Carman prudently avoided using Caldwell's name in describing this matter. Ironically, Caldwell led a division 10 months later at Gettysburg and helped to shore up the Federal left flank after General Dan Sickles made the mistake of advancing his Third Corps a half mile ahead of the rest of Army of the Potomac.

Also mentioned was the story of the lack of mention of Twelfth Corps. This omission hit home with Carman as his regiment (13th New Jersey) belonged to this corps. The only division of

Twelfth Corps that initially received any credit for their actions in the records of the battle belonged to General Samuel Crawford. Crawford had submitted his report directly to General George McClellan. Eventually the record was set straight after Twelfth Corps commander Alpheus Williams wrote to McClellan months later. In another letter, Williams stated that Crawford “skulked at Antietam” and that wounds Crawford supposedly received there were self inflicted.

The Confederates also had some controversy. Clemens mentioned a squabble between General James Longstreet and Stephen Dill Lee (an artill-

ery battalion commander at the time and later an infantry corps commander in the West). It involved the existence of a council of war called by General Robert E. Lee. S. D. Lee claimed that he was a party of the assumed council of war. Longstreet replied that if there had been such a meeting at the time S. D. Lee claimed, an artillery battalion commander would not have been present.

On behalf of the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table, I wish to thank Tom Clemens for his presentation of a most detailed account of the Maryland Campaign and for his bringing it to the reading public in an edited form.

2013–2014 Slate of Officers

The nominating committee of the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table is pleased to present the slate of nominees for election to each of the indicated offices for the 2013–2014 year.

President	Denise Limburg
1st Vice President	David Powell
2nd Vice President	Patrick McCormick
Secretary	Bruce Allardice
Treasurer	Tom DeFranco
Corresponding Sec.	Sarah McDougall
Membership	Ellen Allen
Historian	Kathleen Lange
Trustee (2-year term)	Charles Carr
Trustee (2-year term)	Carol Berry
Trustee (3-year term)	Charles Brenneman
Trustee (3-year term)	Wayne Rhine

The election will be held at the regular meeting on May 3, 2013. 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.

Book Discussion Group

The Civil War book discussion group at the Eisenhower Library, 4613 North Oketo Avenue (just south of Lawrence Avenue), Harwood Heights, meets on the first Saturday of the month from 10 until 11:30 a.m. The book to be discussed on May 4 is *Chancellorsville* by Stephen W. Sears. For June the group will read *Champion Hill: Decisive Battle for Vicksburg* by Timothy Smith.

May Events

May 1, Lake County Civil War Round Table. Ty Rohrer will speak on Waukegan and the Underground Railroad.

May 9, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. Dr. Eric Pullen of Carthage College leads a discussion on Northern Attitudes Toward Race and Secession. Participants may pick up readings at the museum. Registration is not required. Information on all Civil War Museum programs is available at (262) 653-4140 or www.thecivilwarmuseum.org.

May 10, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. Rob Girardi explores the personalities of the Union commanders and how their decisions affected the outcome of the campaign, 12 noon.

May 10, Chicago Civil War Round Table. Ethan Rafuse will speak on Lee and Gettysburg.

May 14, McHenry County Civil War Round Table. Bob Frenz will speak on Harley Wayne.

May 17, Salt Creek Civil War Round Table. Don Sikorski will speak on the Civil War in Florida.

May 18, 1863: Turning Points of the Civil War. Garry Adelman will speak on Gettysburg, Terry Winschel on Vicksburg, Jim Ogden on Chickamauga–Chattanooga, and Michael Burlingame on the Gettysburg Address at Chicago Civil War Round Table Sesquicentennial Symposium at Hilton of Lisle/Naperville. For information contact Paula Walker at paulaw98@comcast.net.

May 23, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. Dr. Eric Pullen leads a discussion on the Causes of the War. Participants may pick up readings at the museum. Registration is not required.



2012–2013 Officers and Trustees

President	Tom Gavigan
1st Vice President	Denise Limburg
2nd Vice President	David Powell
Secretary	Bruce Allardice
Treasurer	Tom DeFranco, Jr.
Corresponding Sec.	Sarah McDougall
Membership	Tom DeFranco, Jr.
Historian	Kathleen Lange
Trustee	Charles Brenneman
Trustee	Wayne Rhine
Trustee	Kathleen Lange
Trustee	Alisa Corsi
Trustee	Charles Banks
Trustee	Fred Reczkowicz

Appointed Positions

Book Raffle	Charles Banks
Newsletter Editor	Sally Smith

Women's Civil War Book Club

The next book for the Civil War book club for women is *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane. The next meeting of the group is scheduled for Saturday, June 15, at 2 p.m. at the home of Ellen Allen, 755 Fox Trail Terrace, Cary. If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Denise Limburg at dlimburg@prodigy.net or (847) 382-1022, or Mary Banks at (847) 497-3149 or zeller1@comcast.net.

2013–2014 Speakers

September 6	Greg Biggs	Fort Donelson Campaign
October 4	Terry Winschel	Vicksburg
November 1	Bruce Kraig	How the Civil War Changed Food in America
December 6	David Keller	Camp Douglas

April Raffle

The April raffle winners were Michael Brown, who won *American Scoundrel* by Thomas Keneally; Gerry Barry, who won *The American Heritage New History of the Civil War*, Bill Lax, who won *Ulysses S. Grant* by Josiah Bunting III; Mary Abroe, who won *Guide to the Battle of Antietam*, edited by Jay Luvaas and Harold W. Nelson; and Charles Brenneman, who won *An Account of the Battle of Wilson's Creek* by Holcombe and Adams.

Congratulations to the winners and sincere thanks to the donors. If you would like to donate Civil War-related books or items, please contact Charlie Banks.

May Saturday Discussion

All members and guests are invited to participate in the session to be held at the Hoffman Estates Community Bank, 1375 Palatine Road, Hoffman Estates, on May 11, from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Please note that the meeting date has been changed to the second Saturday of May. Attendees are asked to park in the adjacent lot rather than in spaces provided for bank customers.

The discussion of the Battles for Chattanooga: Chickamauga will be led by second vice president Dave Powell. 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 events that transpired during the Civil War.

To learn more about this Round Table call Tom DeFranco at (708) 456-2251 or visit our website at www.northernilcwrt.org