



GENERAL ORDERS

The Newsletter of the
Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.

Our 61st Year

and The Iron Brigade Association



NOVEMBER 13, 2008

RICHARD W. HATCHER, III **The History of Fort Sumter**

In November the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee will be visited by Richard W. Hatcher, III. Mr. Hatcher's presentation will be focused on the history of Fort Sumter with an emphasis on the fort's history during the war years.

In 1829 the construction of the fort that would defend Charleston Harbor was begun. The fort, situated at the mouth of Charleston Harbor, was one of thirty new coastal fortifications built in response to the War of 1812. On April 12 -13, 1861, the fort was the site of the beginning of the Civil War; it was also the focal point of the 587-day Siege of Charleston. Heavily damaged during the siege by the U.S. Army and Navy artillery the fort was destroyed as an artillery post. Yet, despite the damage, Fort Sumter remained a critical front line position in the defense of Charleston Harbor. After the war, the rubble and debris were removed and the fort was reestablished as an artillery fortification.

Fort Sumter continued to serve in the defense of Charleston Harbor, undergoing modernization between the Spanish-American War and World War II. In 1947, the Army closed Fort Sumter and transferred it to the National Park Service in 1948, at which time it received its designation as a National Monument.

Mr. Hatcher's presentation will also cover the construction and use of the fort until its closure by the Army.

Mr. Hatcher has worked for the National Park Service since 1970, beginning his career at Richmond National Battlefield as a volunteer and seasonal employee. In 1976 he became a permanent employee at Colonial National Historical Park at Yorktown, Virginia; then at Kings Mountain National Military Park, South Carolina; and next at Wilson's Creek National Battlefield, Missouri. Since 1992, he has served as the historian at Fort Sumter National Monument, Fort Moultrie, and Charles Pinckney National Historic Site.

At Fort Sumter, Hatcher has provided specialized tours to U.S. military personnel, historical groups and dignitaries. He has worked with local, state, regional, national and international media outlets, serves on the South Carolina Battleground Preservation Trust Advisory Board and is the Fort Sumter NMP liaison officer with the Charleston Civil War Round Table.

Mr. Hatcher is the co-author of *This Hallowed Ground: Guides to Civil War Battlefields, Wilson's Creek, Pea Ridge, and Prairie Grove* and *Wilson's Creek, The Second Major Battle of the Civil War and the Men Who Fought It*, which earned the Missouri State Historical Society's History Book of the Year Award in 2001.

A native of Richmond, Virginia, Hatcher's interest in the Civil War began during the 1961-1965 Centennial. In 1973, he graduated with a BA in U.S. History from Virginia Commonwealth University. He has been married since 1979 to Mary Godburn Hatcher who has served, in the past, as a seasonal park ranger at Petersburg National Battlefield and as a staff historian at Fredericksburg National Military Park.

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NOVEMBER MEETING AT A GLANCE

November 13, 2008

"The History of Fort Sumter"
by Richard W. Hatcher, III

Wisconsin Club
9th & Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee
(Jackets required for dining room)

5:30 p.m. – Staff Meeting
(Open to all members)

6:15 p.m. – Registration & Social Hour

6:45 p.m. – Dinner

7:30 p.m. – Program

Dinner – \$23 by reservation.

Deadline: Monday, November 10

See page 7.

Speaker and topic are subject to change.
In case of inclement weather, listen to
WTMJ or WISN radio.



Iron Brigade Flag Fund

Donations to the Iron Brigade Flag Fund continue to be accepted.

Donations for Camp Randall Guns

The Awards and Donations Committee is asking members to consider making their Civil War related donations to the Camp Randall Guns Fund. “The project is local, the effects are real, and we’re grabbing a piece of history,” John Beatty has said. “One of these guns was captured at Shiloh. Can’t get much more authentic than that.”

Sadly neglected over the years, the old artillery pieces are literally disintegrating in place. Think of the Camp Randall guns next time you want to give of your hard-earned money. John Beatty, Awards and Donations Committee chair, at jdbeatty@amcivwar.com.

Tiffany Iron Brigade Flag

If you have visited the Veteran’s Museum in Madison, you may be aware that there is a square cut out of the Tiffany Iron Brigade flag. Ms. Chris Zickuhr, flag expert at the museum, is seeking our help in getting any information that would help locate the square or discover what happened to it. If you have information regarding the missing square please contact Chris Zickuhr at 608-261-6802.

Quartermaster’s Regalia

Show your pride and identity in being a supporter of the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table or present a thoughtful gift for a special occasion. All items are made of first rate quality materials, modestly embroidered with the Round Table, Iron Brigade logo, along with your name or initials.

Mail: Roman Blenski, Quartermaster
4601 W. Holt Ave.
Milwaukee, WI 53219

Call: 414-327-2847

Fax: 414-543-8289

Email: dbcpmilw@execpc.com

In Person: Monthly Meeting at Book Raffle

ITEM	COST
Blue Brief Case	\$25.00
Blue Light-Weight Sweatshirt	\$30.00
Blue Izod Polo Shirt	\$40.00
Blue Dress Shirt	\$40.00
Blue Fleece Lined Jacket.....	\$60.00
Iron Brigade Pin	\$5.00
CWRT Pin	\$5.00
Bugle Pin	\$5.00
Iron Brigade Medal	\$25.00
Red River Medal	\$25.00
CWRT 60 Year Medal	\$10.00

November 8, 2008

Milwaukee Veterans Day Parade, 11 a.m.

November 10, 2008

Manitowoc Country Civil War Round Table, 7 p.m.
Manitowoc County Historical Society Heritage Center

November 18, 2008

Prairieville Irregulars, 7 p.m.
Student Center Building, Carroll University
Speaker: Darwin Adams, “Re-inventing Quantrill”

Donations Requested for December 7 Silent Auction

Tom Arliskas, chairperson for the December 7 Christmas Gala, is looking for donations of artifacts, memorabilia, collectibles, Civil War or nineteenth-century themed baskets — anything for the silent auction table. All proceeds go to the mission and activities of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee. Some items have been donated already: wines from Adams County Winery, PA; an extensive collection of postcards of Gettysburg; first edition books. A complete list of auctions items will be available in December.

Contact Tom at csuniforms@yahoo.com or 414-810-3182 or see him in person at the November CWRT meeting.

On The Web

If your interest lies in books and authors, a very nice free blog site is run by Andrew Waggenhoffer. The site carries book reviews, interviews and commentaries and specializes in lesser known authors and publishers. Civil War Books and Authors can be found at <http://cwba.blogspot.com>

If you prefer a combination of Civil War news and diary excerpts, you’ll want to visit the Daily Chronicles of the American Civil War at: <http://www.cw-chronicles.com/blog/> The diary entries are currently from 1864 but the site also has an archives section which takes you to entries from other years.



In November 1957 Frank Klement talked to the Round Table on the Knights of the Golden Circle – Fact or Fancy.

November 1963 brought Shelby Foote to our meeting with his presentation on Grant’s Seven Failures Above Vicksburg.

John Patrick Hunter visited in November 1971 and spoke on Haskell of Gettysburg: The Iron Brigade’s Finest.

In November 1986 our speaker was A. Wilson Greene. Mr. Greene’s topic that night was The Bloody Angle at Spotsylvania.

In November 1999 fellow member John Beatty spoke on The Crimes of Pickett’s Mill.

Thanksgiving During the Civil War



A Thanksgiving dinner was celebrated in 1621 as part of a harvest festival. President George Washington declared a day of Thanksgiving in 1789 and another in 1795.

But our *national* day of Thanksgiving came from President Lincoln during the Civil War. In the fall of 1863 the Civil War was not going well for the North. In July Federal forces won at Gettysburg but General George Meade was criticized for not pursuing Lee. The Union suffered defeat at Chickamauga that fall with losses estimated at 35,000. Lincoln knew that the country was weary of the war and its consequences.

On October 3, 1863, Lincoln set the precedent for a national day of Thanksgiving by issuing the proclamation printed in part below. John Nicolay, one of Lincoln's secretaries, indicated that the document actually was written by Secretary of State William Seward.

I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fer-

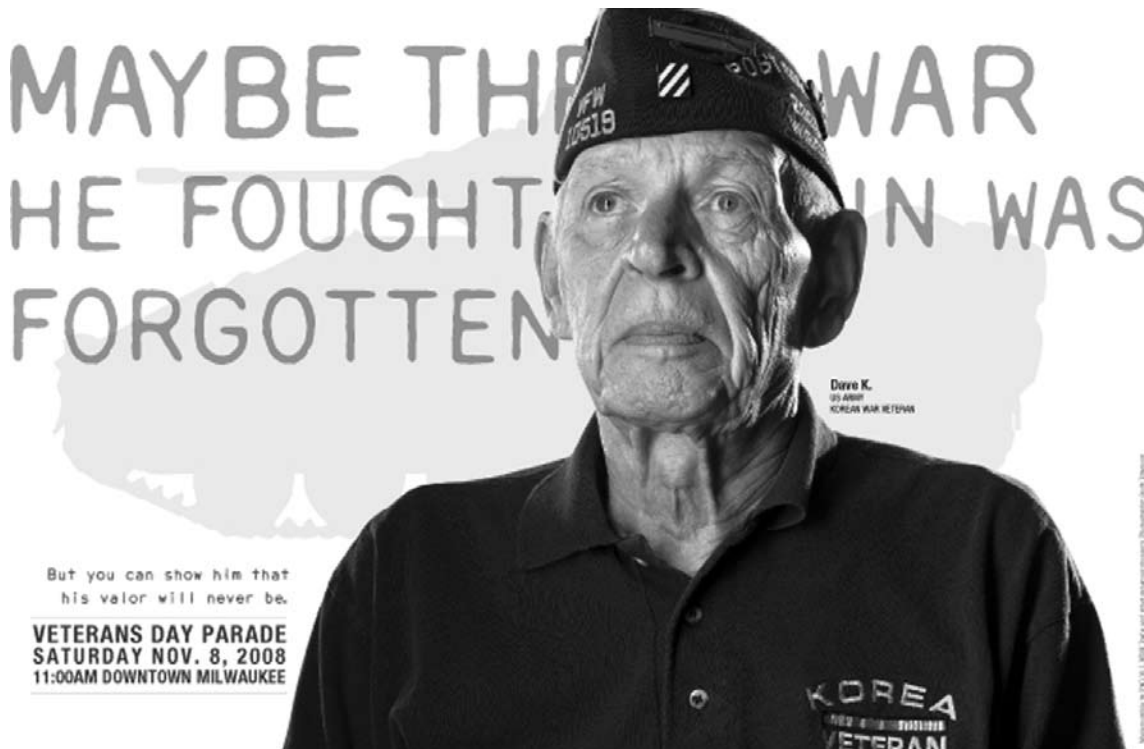
vently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union.

The first national annual Thanksgiving in 1863 was not officially observed by the U.S. military. Providing a Thanksgiving dinner for the troops was beyond the capabilities of the commissary. Individual units, especially those with New England roots, found ways to celebrate the day toasting missing friends and family.

In 1864 the Union League Club of New York City launched a public campaign to provide Thanksgiving dinner for Union soldiers and sailors. A request was put out for donations of cooked poultry and other meats as well as pies, sausage and fruit. Monetary contributions were also requested from those who wished to participate but who could not provide food. In the three weeks following the appeal, the Club collected over \$57,000 towards the purchase of 146,586 pounds of poultry. An additional 225,000 pounds of poultry was also received along with other meats, pastries, fruits, vegetable and cheese.

One soldier in General Sheridan's Army of the Shenandoah, in response to his Thanksgiving meal, said: "It isn't the turkey, but the idea that we care for."

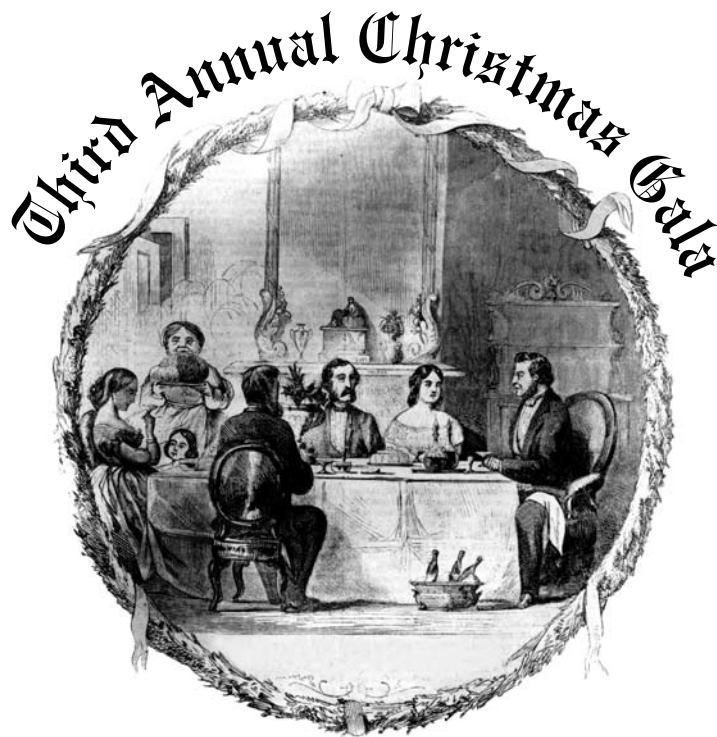
Thanksgiving was decreed by every president after Lincoln. The date changed several times until 1941, when Thanksgiving was approved by Congress as a legal holiday and the day was set as the fourth Thursday in November.



**Saturday,
November 8**
Milwaukee
Veterans Day
Parade, 11 a.m.

**Tuesday,
November 11**
Milwaukee
VA Medical Center
Service, 10:30 a.m.

November 19-23
Remembrance Day
Gettysburg



Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.

*The honor of your company is requested at the Wisconsin Club
Sunday Afternoon, 7 December 2008.*

4:15 p.m.

COCKTAILS & SILENT AUCTION

5:45 p.m.

DINNER

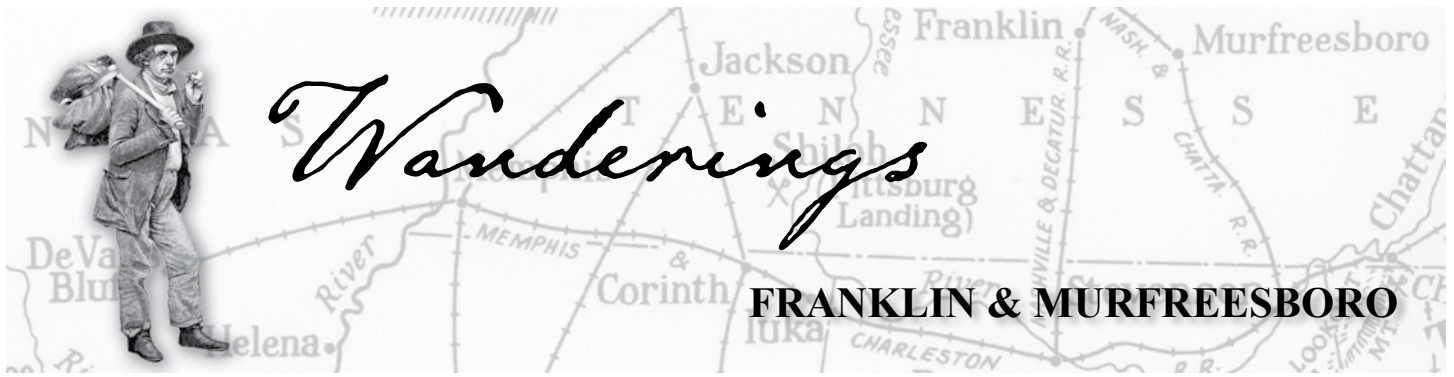
HOLIDAY & HISTORIC MUSIC BY EILEEN BEAMISH

Cranberry Punch, North Woods Salad,
Roast Pork Loin OR Roast Tom Turkey,
Spring Green Herb Infused Potatoes and Sweet Pea and Candied Carrot Confit,
Over-Stuffed Dutch Apple Pie with Frozen Vanilla Bean Custard

7:00 p.m.

**PROGRAM OF CIVIL WAR HOLIDAY TRADITIONS AND DANCE
BY THE WEST SIDE SOLDIERS AID SOCIETY, INC.**

Civil War attire is encouraged, but not required.
The cost of this holiday event is \$25 per person.
RSVP with Choice of Entrée by 1 December 2008 to (262) 376-0568.



FRANKLIN & MURFREESBORO

After leaving Shiloh National Military Park on my trip to Tennessee in September, my son and my two fellow travelers continued on to Franklin and then Murfreesboro.

Franklin is a busy urban town where the memories of the war are scattered and few. On our first of two days there, we quickly checked in and headed out to the Carter House. I came armed with a self-guided driving tour which helped immensely. The Carter House is considered the epicenter of the Battle of Franklin, and the more than 1,000 bullet holes the house received during the battle are still visible. After stopping at the museum, we took a guided tour of the house and grounds. The young lady who acted as our guide is a direct descendent of a Confederate soldier who fought at Franklin.

After our tour of the Carter House, we asked our guide where the Pizza Hut (now torn down) was located. She directed us just up the street. Wandering over there we found the marker commemorating where Cleburne fell — nothing fancy or grand, simply a large post with Cleburne's name on it. Similar posts marked where Strahl and Adams fell.

Returning to the Carter House, we took in the video presentation of the battle before leaving. By this time it was late in the afternoon. We hurried across town to the Carnton Plantation where we discovered we missed the last tour of the home by a mere ten minutes. So we finished our first day in Franklin by visiting the Historic District and then heading over to Fort Granger. It was here, in the spring of 1863, that Federal forces commanded by Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger occupied Franklin. The earthwork fort situated above the Harpeth River served as a command post for Maj. Gen. John M. Schofield during the Battle of Franklin.

We started our second day with a trip to Murfreesboro, the site of the Battle of Stones River, one of the bloodiest of the war. The two armies sustained nearly 24,000 casualties at this battle with some of the wounded spending as much as seven days on the battlefield before help could reach them.

The Visitors Center at Murfreesboro is excellent, and the bookstore was, hands down, the best we saw on the trip. The preserved part of the battlefield covers a 2.5 mile loop, and it was a perfect day to take it in. I found out that Stones River National Battlefield uses prescribed fire to preserve the battlefield landscapes; these fires also help eliminate the invasion of exotic plants.

Stones River also lays claim to the oldest intact Civil War monument in the nation — The Hazen Brigade Monument. The monument is located in a small gated area and bears tribute to the only

Union unit that did not retreat on the afternoon of December 31, 1862, helping Gen. Rosecrans establish an anchor that ultimately stopped the Confederates.

There are also some really interesting formations on the preserved area of the battlefield. As we wandered through one of the wooded sections we came across these rocky formations that, when you first see them, look like a maze. When you actually stand in them, you see just how deep they are, making you realize just how treacherous crossing this area must have been.

Going back to Franklin, we finally succeeded in getting to the Carnton Plantation. The house has been beautifully restored — some of it must have been quite recently because you can still smell the fresh paint. Standing on the back porch, you remember that this is the very spot where the bodies of four Confederate generals were laid out. The floors of the home, which served as a field hospital after the battle, still bear blood stains from the men who were treated there.

After wandering through the grounds, we ended our visit by stopping at the McGavock Confederate Cemetery. The cemetery is the largest private military cemetery in the country and is the final resting place of 1,481 Confederate soldiers killed during the battle. Adjacent to this cemetery is the McGavock family cemetery. As with all cemeteries, it was calm and peaceful and gave you the opportunity to reflect on the sacrifices made not only by the men buried there but in cemeteries elsewhere and the terrible cost of war — for the lives lost and the lives forever changed.

Submitted by: Donna Agnelly



McGavock Confederate Cemetery, Franklin

Bigger Than History: Grant and Lee in Context

Part III

By John Beatty

Lee the Patrician Opportunist

Before Fort Sumter, Lee had been a regular Army officer, an engineer officer with a brilliant reputation but with very little actual experience leading men into battle. As Virginia seceded in 1861, he tendered his resignation to the Army and went home. Winfield Scott offered Lee a command of undetermined size in the rapidly expanding army. Lee refused, likely because he knew that promotion opportunities were going to be few for Southern-born officers in a Northern army during a war that was not expected to last more than a few months. Instead he offered his services to the home state of Virginia, knowing his opportunities for advancement would be better.

Lee's first combat command was in West Virginia in 1861, where George B. McClellan outmaneuvered him. Early in 1862 he assumed command of the Army of Northern Virginia, then embattled at the outskirts of Richmond, where he managed to outmaneuver McClellan's huge and ungainly force, sacrificing many thousands at Malvern Hill while the Union army changed its base. For the next three years he commanded the same force, winning most of his battles while Thomas Jackson was his principal subordinate. After Jackson's death in May 1863, there were few spectacular Confederate victories.

In 1864 Lee and his army were pinned against Richmond while the remainder of the Federal forces rendered the Confederacy into pieces, destroying their industrial capacity and gobbling up their seaports in the meantime. Early in 1865 Lee was made commander-in-chief of all Southern land forces, a total of troops that was by then somewhat smaller than the number commanded by McClellan in the Peninsula, and with a number of effectives that was then three times less than his opponents.

After he was outmaneuvered in April 1865 Lee abandoned Richmond and moved west, hoping to reach a supply train so he could feed the troops. The Federals managed to get in front of him and, realizing the hopelessness of his situation, he surrendered his army. Lee died in 1871, only six years after the war ended. He left no memoirs, no large compilation of papers or letters, and said practically nothing about the war after Appomattox.

Very little of the above description, all of which can be verified by published sources, is widely accepted in American Civil War scholarship. Many historians assert that Lee was offered the command of THE Union Army, a highly unlikely event since his home state was seceding, and contrary to the evidence. The conventional view is that Lee could not fight against his home state, but the stainless Lee could see no objection to his fighting against the country that gave him his training and his career.

Most scholars and few others will accept the idea that Lee was "pinned against Richmond" in 1864, and they refute this by simply saying that he was defending the capital and could have moved at any time if he had been ordered to or saw fit to do otherwise. It is further asserted that Lee detached his cavalry to fight in the Valley of the Shenandoah, which he would not have done

if he were truly concerned about his military situation around Richmond.

While all true, it's hardly relevant: he didn't dare move the main body to the army without jeopardizing his lines of supply and losing his best defensive position at Petersburg. This is a very good definition of "pinned down," and dictionaries seem to agree. Early's cavalry corps was detached to the Shenandoah because it was the grain bin of the Confederacy, and its loss would have been a military disaster. There are other objections to this view but nearly all depend on "honor" concepts and "everyone knows" rhetoric, on careful definition of "winning," and on counting totals of battles (regardless of size or import) and men lost. Defenders of Lee also rely on the peerless thoughts and actions of the "fine Southern gentleman" that his hagiographers have attributed to him, as opposed to discussions of key terrain lost, opportunities squandered and precious and irreplaceable resources destroyed.

Grant the Hardscrabble Loyalist

Grant had left the Army under a cloud in 1854 and tried many other occupations notable only for failure. At the beginning of the war he was trying to make a living by clerking in his father's store. Grant offered his services to Illinois when the war began and finally got command of a regiment. There he would have been more than happy to spend the war if other officers had had his nerves, or rather his lack of them. Grant was the senior officer when his regiment and two others went into Missouri on a brief raid that ended in a small humiliation and a valuable lesson about the nature of fear. Thereafter, by Grant's own account, he never showed any.

From his first moves down the Tennessee River to Appomattox Court House, Grant rarely took a step back, never asked for more resources, and took every objective he aimed at, eventually. In March 1862 he cleared most of middle Tennessee of Confederate troops by taking Forts Henry and Donelson. He was badly surprised at Shiloh in April in a bloody fight where Confederate ineptitude and Yankee determination helped save his position, but cost him his job. When Henry Halleck was moved up to replace McClellan in Washington, Grant regained command of the troops in western Tennessee. For the next six months he planned and campaigned to capture Vicksburg, which finally fell in July 1863. After salvaging Chattanooga in November 1863, he was promoted to Lieutenant General in March 1864, the first to wear the rank since Washington.

Choosing to command the army from the field with the Army of the Potomac, Grant directed the dismemberment of the Confederacy. Knowing that Lee's reputation as a fighting general was the Confederacy's best asset, Grant contrived to hold him and his army against the Confederate capital as a backstop strategy if he could not defeat him in the field. Lee proved a worthwhile opponent but was unable to foil Grant's plans. For nine months the two armies laid siege to each other around Richmond while Atlanta fell, the Shenandoah Valley was sacked, Georgia was made to howl and the South's ports were captured. In March 1865 the

penultimate offensive cut Richmond's last rail line, and Lee just had to move or starve. Grant ran Lee down just to the west after a nine-day pursuit.

Grant was drafted by the Republican Party in 1868 and won election as President handily, and was reelected in 1872. His administration was primarily known for graft, but was also known for settling the *Alabama* claims with Great Britain, which may have avoided another war. A series of bad investments after he left office left him penniless. He wrote magazine articles to pay the bills, but he died in 1882 a pauper, leaving a barely finished manuscript of his memoirs that are still in print.

Regardless of these verifiable facts, accounts of his drinking and bad judgment leading to the scandals that rocked his Presidency leave Grant with a reputation as a bad president and a drunk with a big enough army that it didn't matter how plastered he was. This version of Grant leaves the LCM (Lost Cause Mythology) intact, the peerless Lee untarnished, and the popular history of the Civil War wrapped in fable.

The Unfinished Conflict

The difference between the two commanders wasn't just blue and gray; it was also industrial versus agrarian. Lee cared deeply for his troops, but thought more of them than he did his cause or his country. Grant also cared for his men, but believed them to be expendable in the service of the republic. Lee was a charismatic leader of men; Grant was an unassuming manager of them. Lee was of the shanty nobility of the Old South; Grant was of the middle-class capitalists of the Middle West. It is regrettable that few scholars make this distinction because it is more important to history than the myth making that pervades both sides. Both were competent and deadly at what they did, but Grant's style was just more successful given the resources of the day.

The Lee/Grant issue is emblematic of the unfinished nature of the conflict as old as the republic that turned violent in 1861 and ended its conventional military phase in 1865. It is difficult to refer to this period as THE American Civil War because there have been so many of them. The Americas have been in a state of continuing civil war since Columbus first landed, and arguably since the first people came to this hemisphere. Sectional and factional issues have been dividing American society since 1776, even as it fought wars of expansion, outlasted the Indians and fought attackers from Europe and Asia. The civil rights movement, the Progressive movements, the rise of the trade unions, women's suffrage and even Prohibition, have all been part of a society long at war with itself.

But the American Experiment endures; a constitutional republic with a democratically founded political system that noisily overcomes its factionalism and sectionalism when required to survive, but this part of its history is a long-running game of one-upmanship. Civil War studies, as several scholars have privately agreed with this correspondent, has very little to do with American history and even less to do with military history because of its extreme insularity from more mainstream disciplines.

Whether the Lee/Grant controversy ever is resolved or not, its very existence colors the history of the middle 19th Century in America, and will for the foreseeable future because it suits the sectionalist narrative first made after the war, and it suits the chronic sectionalism that divides American society.



*City Point, Virginia,
Rear view of U.S. Grant's Headquarters, circa 1864
From a stereograph in the Library of Congress,
LC-811-2587A*

*Civil War images are part of the on-line
American Memory Project of the Library of Congress:
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem>*

Civil War Round Table Dinner Reservation for November 13, 2008

Mail your reservations by Monday, November 10 to:
Paul Eilbes
1809 Washington Ave.
Cedarburg, WI 53012-9730

ALSO, call in reservations to:
(262) 376-0568

Enclosed is \$ _____ (meal price \$23.00 per person) for _____ reservations for the November 13 meeting of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee. (Please make checks payable to the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.)

Name of Member _____

General Orders, the official publication of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc., is produced September through May and upon request of the Board of Directors.

Send submissions to **Donna Agnelly, Editor**, 420 Racine St., Unit 110, Waterford, WI 53185 or email to **dagnelly@tds.net** with "Civil War Round Table" in the subject line of your message. All submissions must be received by the Editor no later than the 10th of the month prior to the next issue. The Editor reserves the right to select articles and to edit submissions for style and length.

All address changes or problems receiving your *General Orders* should be directed through Membership Chairman Paul Eilbes.

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Yearly memberships available: Individual (\$35), Family (\$45), and Non-Resident (\$20).

Contact Paul Eilbes for information: (262) 376-0568.

The Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc., admits members of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges and activities of the Round Table.

CWRT of Milwaukee, Inc. • 2008-2009 Meetings

November 13, 2008

Rick Hatcher: Fort Sumter

December 7, 2008 (Sunday)

Holiday Gala. Period attire encouraged, but not necessary

January 8, 2009

Frank O'Reilly: Fredericksburg/Spotsylvania

February 12, 2009

Bruce Allardice: Lincoln as War Leader

March 12, 2009

John Latschar: Gettysburg

April 16, 2009

Steven Wise: TBA

May 7, 2009

James Ogden: Chickamauga

Period attire welcome

Speaker and topic are subject to change. In case of inclement weather, listen to WTMJ or WISN radio.