



GENERAL ORDERS



The Newsletter of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc. Since 1947 and The Iron Brigade Association

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General Orders No. 05-02 February, 2005

The **February 10th, 2005**, meeting is to be held at **WISCONSIN CLUB**, Milwaukee
Speaker: Father Robert J. Miller, Holy Angels Church, Chicago

Robert J. Miller: “Both Prayed to the Same God:” Religion, Faith and the Civil War

It was an extremely devout country that went to war in 1861, and yet perhaps the most ignored topic in Civil War study has been the role that religion and faith played in it. From the very beginning of the United States, we have “been awash in a sea of faith”, as historian Jon Butler has stated. Notre Dame historian George Marsden (author of *Jonathon Edwards: A Life*) said that “American history recounted without its religious history is like *Moby Dick* without the whale.” Religion played an enormous motivational role in the founding of our entire American social system, as well as in culture and everyday life.

On the eve of the Civil War, this had not changed very much. Before, during and after the traumatic War years, religion and faith had a deep, pervasive influence on politicians, soldiers and civilians alike. Indeed, mid-19th century America was rampant with religious belief and attitudes. It was an age of tremendous evangelical fervor, and organized religion was an essential component of the time. It was religious congregations that brought more people together on a regular basis than any other cultural or voluntary institution in the country.

By 1860, the second of the two “Great Awakenings” had just rolled over the country (1800-1830s), and left thousands of new evangelicals in its wake. 25% of Southerners

and 15% of Northerners were active members of some religious group at the outbreak of the war. In the Civil War years, membership in churches grew from 1 in 15 to 1 in 7. Steven Woodworth says that “had all the Protestant churches in America been filled on any given Sunday morning in the 1860’s, more than 2/3 of the nation’s population would have been in attendance.”

During the War, the single greatest institution in maintaining morale among soldiers was their faith in God. Faith had an enormous role in motivation and attitudes of a huge number of soldiers; up to half of all Civil War soldiers by one estimate. James McPherson (in *Cause and Comrades*) says “The conclusion drawn from a study of GI’s in World War II holds true for Civil War soldiers as well: religious faith did not impel the individual towards combat but did serve the important function of increasing his resources for enduring the conflict-ridden situation of combat stress.”

Father Miller is a Catholic priest who has traveled and preached extensively across the country, ministering for 29 years. Born in Michigan and educated in Wisconsin and New York seminaries, he is presently ministering at Holy Angels Church in inner-city Chicago. He has Masters degrees in Religious Education and Divinity, and is the author of 5 books on spirituality and faith.

For over a decade, he has taught Church History at the University of St. Mary of the Lake’s lay ministry and deacon formation program. A longtime student of the Civil War and its religious ramifications, Father Miller will be the 2005-06 President of the Chicago Civil War Round Table. He is presently researching and writing a book on religion, faith, and the Civil War.

Schedule of Events

- Staff Meeting (open to all members) 5:30 PM
- Registration and Social Hour 6:15 PM
- Dinner 6:45 PM
- Program Begins 7:30 PM

Times subject to local conditions

Frank Vandiver, Author of *Mighty Stonewall*

Military historian Frank E. Vandiver, a former finalist for the National Book Award and university president, died 31 December 2004 at his home. He was 79. Vandiver had been ill with heart and lung problems.

The elder Vandiver, who served as president at Texas A&M University from 1981-88, also served as president of what is now the University of North Texas from 1979-81 and was acting president of Rice University from 1968-70.

Texas A&M spokeswoman Cynthia J. Lawson said that Vandiver was "a visionary under whose leadership the university realized significant academic achievements, furthering its status as a world-class institution."

Vandiver, who had a special interest in the Civil War, taught history at several universities, among them Washington University in St. Louis, the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, and Oxford. He was a professor and administrator at Rice for 24 years.

Frank Vandiver said his father's love of history began when he was visiting relatives in New York at a young age and was shown a Civil War uniform with a bullet hole in the chest.

"It helped get him hooked on the Civil War," his son said. "He was a great storyteller, and a great speaker and a great writer and a greater teacher."

Vandiver wrote and edited more than 20 books and 100 scholarly articles. Among his books were *Mighty Stonewall*, *Their Tattered Flags: The Epic of the Confederacy* and *Black Jack: The Life and Times of John J. Pershing*, which was a finalist for the National Book Award.

Vandiver was a popular speaker at historical meetings and sparked a passion among Civil War enthusiasts, said Dan Laney, president of the Austin Civil War Roundtable. [He spoke at the Milwaukee Round Table at least twice — Ed.]

"A lot of it came from his students who studied under him. They still had a lot of affection for him," Laney said.

Vandiver, an Austin native, held degrees in history from the University of Texas, Tulane University and Oxford. His first wife, Susie, died in 1979. Survivors include his wife, Renee; three children, his son and two daughters, Nita Jackson and Nancy Wahl, all of Houston; and six grandchildren.

— from <http://www.chron.com/cs/CDA/ssistory.mpl/metropolitan/2982793>

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Jack

The masthead of the *General Orders* is without Jack Thompson's name for the first time in over a quarter century. He was editor of this newsletter for twelve years, setting a standard that those who followed him could only hope to match. He was President of the Milwaukee Round Table in that long-ago era when the current Editor/Publisher joined (1985). He proofed every single issue of the newsletter from September 1998 through November 2004, and this correspondent could set his calendar by when the proof came in the mail.

This organization, the *GO*, and the entire world will seem a little smaller, a little colder, without him.

Outside of the newsletter and this Round Table, Jack was a forerunner at the old *Milwaukee Journal*, serving as the first ombudsman in the paper's history, and indeed one of the first in a major paper in the country. He started with the *Journal* in 1936, and retired in 1974. Forty years at the same place in an industry where the average for an editor is four is remarkable.

In 1944 and 1945 Jack served in the Navy on *Mt. McKinley*, an amphibious command ship off Leyte and Okinawa. His job was to direct fighter interceptors towards attacking Japanese planes, especially the *kamikazies*. Back then this was pioneering stuff, hard and tense work. It made many men bitter, nervous wrecks.

But Jack was seldom seen without a smile on his face. His pleasant, well-groomed demeanor was his trademark. His energy made him, according to

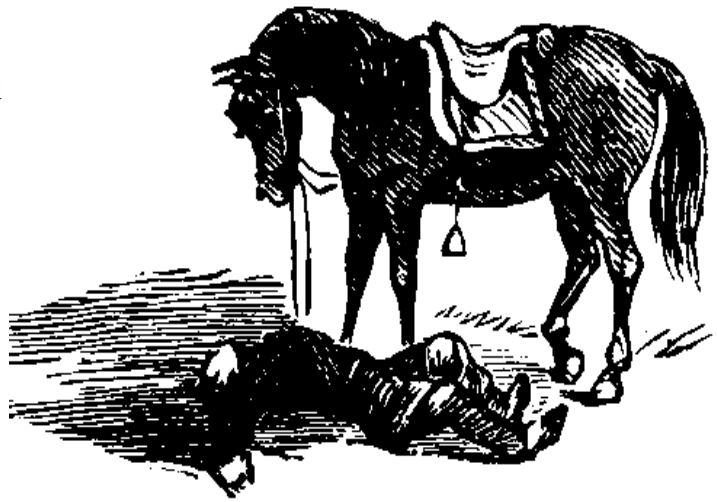
one long-time friend "the youngest 95-year old in history." He refused to give up on anything or anyone.

Jack edited an alumni paper for the *Journal* and the *Sentinel* right up until his hospitalization. He took courses at university, organized and developed courses for the Guild for Learning in Retirement, and was editor of its newsletter.

Jack leaves behind his wife Lois, a daughter, two grandchildren, a great-grandchild, a host of friends and admirers . . . and an empty spot on our masthead.

So long, Jack. See you on the other side.

—JDB



2005 Schedule

- Mar 10: Bruce Allardice: *Topic to be announced.*
- Apr 7: Kent Gramm: *A More Perfect Tribute: Lincoln and the Gettysburg Address.*
- May 12: Dan Nettesheim: *Winfield Scott Hancock:*

Leadership & the Subordinate General.

Meetings are at the Wisconsin Club unless otherwise noted. *Speakers and topics are subject to change without notice.*

Civil War Round Table Dinner Reservation for: February 10th, 2005

Mail your reservations by February 4th to:

Paul Eilbes, 1809 Washington Ave. Cedarburg, WI 53012-9730

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

Enclosed is \$_____ (meal price \$20 per person) for _____ reservations for the next 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: _____

In the Event of Inclement Weather...

Since we live in a part of the Union that has such wonderful weather, the President will decide if there is to be any change in a meeting due to weather. Listen to WTMJ or WISN radio for news of meeting cancellations if the weather turns on us.

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.

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A Gentle Reminder

The Wisconsin Club and the Board of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee would like to remind our members that jackets are required for the Club's dining room. Please contact club management if you have any questions.

General Orders Submissions and Editorial Policy

All submissions to the *GO* are used on a space-available, date-required basis. Electronic submissions are preferred over paper. The Editor/Publisher reserves the right to edit all submissions for length, propriety, content, and house style. Submissions with a direct Civil War interest, or those that are date-sensitive, will be published first.

All submissions must be received by the Editor/Publisher at jdbeatty@amcivwar.com no later than the 10th of the month before the next *GO* (for example, submissions for the January *GO* must be received by 10 December). All address changes, or problems receiving the *GO*, are handled through the Membership Chairman.