



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. 03-05

May, 2003

The **May 8th, 2003** meeting is to be held at The **Wisconsin Club**, Milwaukee

Speaker: William Beaudot, Author of *24th Wisconsin Infantry in the Civil War*

William Beaudot on the 24th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry

Our May speaker, William Beaudot, will speak about the 24th Wisconsin, also called the Milwaukee Regiment, recruited mainly from the streets and farms of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County in the summer of 1862. In its ranks were the sons of some of the most prominent men in the city, including Arthur McArthur, John Mitchell, and Charles and Harry Rogers, as well as men of more common station.

When it arrived in Kentucky, the new regiment was assigned to a division led by a brash new brigadier, Philip Sheridan. While the 24th Wisconsin was badly mauled by the enemy at Stones River and Chickamauga, it won undying glory at Chattanooga where 18-year-old McArthur grabbed the regiment's battle flag, urging his men up Missionary Ridge with the immortal words "On, Wisconsin!" He was later promoted to major and lieutenant-colonel, and would one day win the Medal of Honor for his gallant action in Tennessee.

In 1864, the Milwaukee Regiment fought in the Atlanta Campaign, and the battle of Franklin, where it won more praise for its charge against the attacking rebels at a crucial moment, turning the tide of battle. After the war, the 24th Wisconsin was ranked by historian William Fox as one of the "Fighting Regiments" with

more than 10% of its members killed in battle or dying subsequently of wounds.

William J. K. Beaudot holds degrees from Marquette and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He retired after more than 36 years with the Milwaukee Public Library, ending his career as Manager of Acquisitions. He is, with Lance Herdegen, co-author of *In the Bloody Railroad Cut at Gettysburg* and *An Irishman in the Iron Brigade*. His latest book, *The 24th Wisconsin Infantry in the Civil War*, was published by Stackpole in January. He has also written for a wide variety of publications, including *Blue & Gray*, *Virginia Country's Civil War*, *Gettysburg Magazine*, *Milwaukee History* and more.

Period Costumes Invited

Our May meeting traditionally invites the members and guests to don period costumes. Our only request is that period weapons be left at home.

Election of Board Members Held at April Meeting

In accordance with the by-laws, four members of the Executive Board were elected at the April meeting. The nominees were Dale Brasser, Lance Herdegen, Judley Wyatt, and Ellen Kelling-Vukovic. Board member terms are three years.

Any five members may nominate candidates for the board.

Schedule of Events

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| • 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 |

Events of Interest

- May 3-4 — Civil War Days, Dousman Stage Coach Inn, 1075 Pilgrim Pkwy., Brookfield. Sponsored by the Elmbrook Historical Society. Adults \$4, Children \$1. Children under 5 free. For information: visit www.elmbrookhistoricalsociety.org or call (262) 781-6286,
- May 3-4 — Battle of Carthage (MO) reenactment, Carthage, MO. See www.geocities.com/battleofcarthage for more information
- May 10-11 — Beneath Two Flags-Civil War Event, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Ozaukee County Pioneer Village, 4880 Cty. Hwy. I, Saukville. \$3-\$7. Sponsored by Ozaukee County Historical Society. For information: visit www.co.ozaukee.wi.us/ochs or call (262) 377-4510.

Herbs From the Civil War Era

Thanks to a \$3,000 grant from the Herb Society of America-Wisconsin Unit, the Sanford herb garden at Old World Wisconsin, the ethnic pioneer historical site of the Wisconsin Historical Society near Eagle, has been redesigned and replanted this spring.

The new emphasis is on herbs that were used in the Civil War period, both for flavoring food and for medicinal purposes. Margaret Burlingham, a landscape designer, worked with Barbara Stelloh, Old World Wisconsin master gardener, in making sure of the historical authenticity of the plants selected. The Sanford garden is one of 14 at Old World Wisconsin, all of them near farmhouses or other dwellings on the grounds. Old World Wisconsin opened for the 2003 season on May 1.

The Waukesha County site



is conveniently close to Milwaukee, and attracts thousands of visitors each year, including about 35,000 school children. Herbs in the replanted garden include thyme, oregano and rosemary, all commonly used today. But you will also find there the now scarcely remembered horehound, lovage, wild quinine, lemon balm, calamine, lady mantle and Egyptian walking onion.

Civil War Identity Tag Loaned to Wisconsin Soldier's Museum

A brass neck tag that had belonged to a soldier in the 6th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, will be purchased by the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee and put on permanent loan at the Wisconsin Soldier's Museum in Madison. The proposal was made to the members present at the April meeting, and approved by acclamation. The tag was in the possession of a private collector and dealer and sold for \$2,500. The Museum does not have a similar item in its collection.

A precursor to the modern "dog tag," these items were privately made and stamped with various patriotic designs. The soldiers usually purchased them from sutlers and other vendors and had their names and units inscribed on them. The tags were worn with a leather thong around the neck. These items were fairly common early in the war. Similar identity items have been used throughout history, and have been in fairly universal use since WWI.

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.

Executive Board as of June 2002

President—Robert Braun (920) 568-4530
 First Vice President—Dale Brasser (920) 682-5478
 Second Vice President—Gene Jamrozy (414) 327-2811
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 Editor/Publisher of the *General Orders*—John D. Beatty jdbeatty@amcivwar.com

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Past Presidents

MGEN Robert Erffmeyer (414) 354-7800
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Committee Chairs

Program Committee—Dr. Peter Jacobsohn (262) 242-0931
 Membership Committee—Paul Eilbes (262) 376-0568;
paul.eilbes@ipaper.com

What If: The Confederacy Broke the Blockade

Idea

Because the naval war isn't as well covered as other parts of the Civil War, the notion that lifting the blockade could have alleviated the South's suffering and otherwise turned the war around has attracted few devoted followers, but they are as dedicated to it and to the Gettysburg/Jackson hypotheses as a convert is to religion.

Description

The theory runs something like this:

- The Confederate Navy, through construction, capture or purchase, puts to sea enough ships to seriously hurt Union naval supremacy outside several ports.
- The Confederacy, moving all the material it needs into its new country, builds an undefeatable army.
- Britain and France, etc.
- The North concedes Confederate independence.

From here there's a lot of theorizing that accompanies the other Confederate victory scenarios.

From the outside, it looks pretty simple, but naval power is actually pretty complicated. The first step is to build or purchase enough seagoing ships that could challenge the Union in at least two places. Since the Rebels never built up enough force to seriously challenge even one, indigenous construction wasn't enough. The monumental lengths to which the CSN went just to build the ships it did was remarkable in itself, and the construction of the major ironclad combatants borders on the miraculous.

But, to their last plank and rivet, the domestically-built Confederate ships were coastal, harbor and river defense vessels. None of the domestically built warships, except the raiders, were built for deep-water

combat against heavy warships.

Now, it was possible for the Confederates to buy the material and the machinery and the manpower to construct a major surface combat fleet, providing they could pay the bills, but it would have been tremendously expensive in terms of cash (which they didn't have) and shipping capacity (which was also at a premium). But if they could have done all that, they certainly could have built such ships. And they could have built them in quantity, providing the Union army didn't take the shipyards first.

If the Confederacy could have built a serious surface navy to compete with the Union, then the rebel army would certainly have not suffered from the kinds of material shortages it did throughout the conflict, and the railroads would have all been maintained and as abundant as they were in the North. In short, the South would have had to be the North's rival in industrial capacity by then.

But how long would this have taken? About ten to twenty years, give or take a few months. Also, the Confederacy might have bought or captured the needed ships, but its efforts to do this had little success throughout the war.

Conclusion

Naval power requires financial and industrial capacity that the Southern Confederacy simply could not have put together before the Union army overwhelmed it.

We'll wrap up this feature next time.

Note: *The author does not endorse or use counterfactuals as historical tools.*

2003 Schedule

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

- June 12: {Carroll College} John Michael Priest, topic to be announced.

Civil War Round Table Dinner Reservation for: May 8th, 2003

Mail *and* call in your reservations by May 2nd to:

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

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

Enclosed is \$_____ (meal price \$20.00 per person) for _____ reservations for the next meeting of the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table. (Please make checks payable to the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table.)

Name of Member: _____

Meet the New Members

JAMES AND SUSAN JOHNSON —
Waukesha, WI. Interest: 2nd Wisconsin Infantry, Member SUVCW.



Civil War Study and Quilting Group

Member Donna Agnelly leads a monthly Civil War discussion (and period quilting) group on the third Wednesday of every month, held at Quilter's Heaven on Forest Home Avenue in Greenfield. Call Donna at (262) 534-6892, or e-mail DAgnelly@tds.net for more information.

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 winter storms. Listen to WTMJ or WISN radio for news of meeting cancellations if the weather turns on us.

GO 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.

Those 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, Paul Eilbes.

A Gentle Reminder

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