



GENERAL ORDERS

The Newsletter of the
Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc.
Our 61st Year
and The Iron Brigade Association



OCTOBER 16, 2008

GLORIA SWIFT

Ford's Theatre Secrets Revealed! Museum Objects Tell All!

In October the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee welcomes Gloria Swift, the current curator of the Ford's Theatre National Historic Site.

Swift's presentation will look at the special items from the theatre's museum collection — the "life" the items led immediately after Lincoln's assassination, what happened to them afterwards and how they eventually "made their way back" to Ford's Theatre to become part of the museum. After her entertaining and informative program, you'll never look at a museum object the same way again!

Inside the box at Ford's Theatre where President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated, most of the furnishings are carefully chosen replicas. But in 2005 a carved-back, cane-seat parlor chair that was in the presidential box the night Lincoln was shot by John Wilkes Booth was donated to the government by a Virginia family that had kept the chair for 140 years. The chair has been checked for authenticity and perfectly matches the chair Mary Todd Lincoln was sitting on as well as one empty chair in a sketch of the assassination in Frank Leslie's *Illustrated Newspaper*, the period's paper of record for that time. In her role as curator of the theatre Swift commented, "This is a fabulous thing we've been given. We're very excited about it."

One item Swift would love to have in the museum remains elusively out of reach. "We'd love to have the rocker that President Lincoln was sitting in," said Swift. That chair, seized as evidence by the U.S. War Department for the conspiracy trials, was returned in 1921 to the family who owned the theatre and was then sold in auction to Henry Ford. The rocker can be viewed at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan.

Swift enjoys working at Ford's Theatre and telling the story of Abraham Lincoln through the use of the museum collections. She continues to create new exhibits in order to share some of the objects from storage, and she also serves as the contact point for the donations to the museum collection.

Gloria Swift was born in Washington, DC, and graduated from Northern Arizona University with a degree in American History. Specializing in military history, she has been an interpretive park ranger and curator with the National Park Service, working at such sites as Gettysburg National Military Park, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, and Monocacy National Battlefield. Swift lives in Frederick, Maryland with her husband Mark.



GENERAL ORDERS NO. 08-10
October 2008

IN THIS ISSUE

CWRT News	2
Announcements	2
Grant & Lee in Context	3
Wanderings: Shiloh	4
Civil War News	5
On This Date	5
October Meeting Reservation	5

OCTOBER MEETING AT A GLANCE

October 16, 2008

"Ford's Theatre Secrets Revealed!
Museum Objects Tell All!" Gloria Swift

PLEASE NOTE LOCATION FOR OCTOBER:



20290 W. Bluemound Road, Brookfield
From the east: exit I-94 at Moorland Rd.
Travel north to Bluemound, then west
(left) on Bluemound to Panos.

From the west: exit I-94 at Barker Rd.
Travel north on Barker, crossing Blue-
mound Rd. Access Panos parking is
through the parking lot behind Motel 6.

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: Friday, October 10

See page 5.

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

www.civilwarwi.org



Drew Lohff
Finlay, Ohio

Stephen Leopold
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

James Adducci
Homewood, Illinois

Bernard Van Dinter
Greendale, Wisconsin

Speaker's Bureau

If you are interested in adding your name to the Speaker's Bureau of members who would be available to speak on Civil War related topics to groups or organizations that make such requests, please contact: Dr. Peter Jacobsohn; 3819 W. Le Grande Blvd.; Mequon, WI 53092; peter@jacobsohn.com

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.



On October 14, 1957 Bruce Catton visited our Round Table and spoke on the "First Modern War."

October 1961 had John Patrick Hunter talking to our members on "Wisconsin in the Civil War."

Alan Nolan visited the Round Table in October 1962 and talked about "Myth and Fact in Civil War History."

October 1977 brought Dan Lapinski to the Round Table. The topic that evening was "Death and Resurrection of John Wilkes Booth."

In October 1988 William J.K. Beaudot was our speaker. The title of his talk was "Go Like Hell: The Attack on the Railroad Cut at Gettysburg."

October 13, 2008

Manitowoc County Civil War Round Table, 7 p.m.
Manitowoc County Historical Society Heritage Center
Speakers: Dave and Joan Estes, "The Battle of Fredericksburg and the Story of the 'Dig'"

October 21, 2008

Prairieville Irregulars, 7 p.m.
Student Center Building, Carroll University
Speaker: Patrick Lynch, "Ira Dutton, Part II"

October 27, 2008

West Side Soldiers Aid Society, 7 p.m.
Wadsworth Library, VA Historic District
Donations welcome for Christmas care packages for 2/7 Marines

November 1, 2008

21st Annual Harvest Ball, 1st Brigade Band, 7:30 p.m.
Memorial Hall, Racine
Information: 608-527-4222 or www.1stBrigadeBand.org

November 8, 2008

Veterans Day Parade, 11 a.m.
Downtown Milwaukee
Veterans Day Service, 1:30 p.m.
Reflecting Pool of the War Memorial

Shiloh Park Awarded \$1 Million Grant

Shiloh National Military Park was awarded a transportation enhancement grant totaling \$1 million for Phase 1 of the preservation and interpretation of the Battle of Shiloh in Hardin and McNairy counties.

The grant funds will be used to acquire additional areas of the battlefield at both Shiloh and Fallen Timbers, properties considered to be in the core and study area of the battlefield as defined by the Civil War Sites Advisory Council.

The federal grant program was established by Congress in the early 1990s to fund activities designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic and environmental aspects of the nation's transportation system. The grant to Shiloh is administered by the Tennessee Department of Transportation; this department has funded more than \$189 million in transportation related projects through their Enhancement Grant Program. The program provides funds to cities, counties and state organizations to fund activities such as the restoration of historic facilities.

State Rep. Randy Rinks, D-Savannah, TN, noted, "This battlefield draws visitors from around the nation and has a positive impact on the economies of both Hardin and McNairy counties. This is an important investment in preserving our nation's history for future generations." In his remarks, Governor Phil Bredesen stated: "The Battle of Shiloh site is not just an important piece of Tennessee history; it is one of the most significant battlefields in the nation. It is imperative that we preserve these areas, and I'm pleased the state can contribute to those efforts."

Source: *Jackson Sun*

Bigger Than History: Grant and Lee in Context

Part II

By John Beatty

Lost Cause Mythology and Controlling the Narrative

When the war was over and he signed his parole, Lee didn't make a great deal of the reputation that he made during the war, and he was not secretive about the fact that he wanted nothing to do with the narrative that was being created when he assumed the presidency of Washington University in 1866.

Into this vacuum strode Jubal Early, who had been a corps commander under Lee. Soon after Lee's death in 1871, Early and his fellow veterans began to outline the framework of what is now called the Lost Cause by adherents and Lost Cause Mythology — LCM — to skeptics. This narrative was (and still is) the lens through which the entire conflict was to be seen first by Southern writers and gradually by nearly everyone. Only evidence that could be focused in this lens would be seen.

The Lost Cause narrative started with the idea that the war was fought because the Confederacy wanted to be separate from the Union and that slavery was slowly dying; these two parts have always been crucially joined. The Lost Cause also holds that it was the right of the states to secede if they were so inclined as simply and easily as if a part of a country was leaving a gentlemen's club. In this light the entire conflict is regarded as the defense of the South, state's rights, and Southern society. This reasoning pervades even the origins of the fighting in that it contends that the ground Fort Sumter was built on reverted to South Carolina's ownership when she seceded.

The story holds that the North won the war by sheer numbers, not because the South was outfought in the field. All the South's soldiers were better, man for man, and her leaders superior to their blue-suited vermin/mercenaries in all ways that mattered. But there were just too many Yankees with too many guns.

A final tenet of LCM is that Robert Edward Lee of Virginia was a superior being, not even human, who never uttered a wrong word, did anything incorrectly or had an impure or un-Lee thought. In LCM he is *homo Lee*, the next evolution beyond mere men (if evolution is to be believed at all). Lesser mortals who had failings and naturally lacked Lee's brilliance surrounded the supreme Lee being. In this view Lee never lost a battle — his subordinates did. Lee himself was perfect; unmatched, unbeatable. All his victories were his and his alone; any defeats of armies he was charged with were the faults of underlings.

Since the 1870s historians and commentators around the world have insisted that Lee was the *sine qua non* of soldiering. Coupled with the rest of LCM, the viewpoint becomes immutable. One flaw cannot overwhelm the other parts (even if admitted), and all must be pulled apart to dismantle any one portion of the viewpoint.

This image has caused some commentators to remark about "Marble Man" Lee, a blemish-free icon too big to be flesh and blood and must either be of ether or of stone. Patient and meticulous scholarship has followed, some brilliant and some not. Lee's blemishes are undoubtedly visible, but to LCM they are not

blemishes but hangers-on to Lee's glory, incompetent subordinates or incorrect interpretations of the record. Even Lee's detractors speak of him as a genius. And the Southern cause was just as noble forty years after the war, even in Rhode Island; sentiments such as these were expressed:

C.S.A. 1861-1865

To the Starry Cross of the SOUTH.

When first this warlike Banner was unfurl'd
A noble cause was born into the World;
No purer Flag hath e'er defy'd the Wind
Proclaiming high the Rights of Human kind.
The cruel YANKEE, midst ignoble Fight,
Stood aw'd, or fled in Panic at the Sight;
And though the South by Traacher's o'erthrown,
The Mem'ry of past Valour ne'er is gone:
Midst Ruin vast, and overwhelming Loss,
All Southrons true revere the STARRY CROSS!

H.P. Lovecraft (1902)

Logic does not enter into LCM argument, even if logical argument is attempted. A case in point is the "reversion" argument for Fort Sumter. This argument, posed by a supposedly free-living individual, was challenged in an Internet chat by simply asking under what theory of chattel in Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence does this "reversion" operate and what precedent can be cited. The Southern Confederacy, the questioner was assured, set the precedent in April 1861 when they seized Fort Sumter. The "theory of chattel," further, was that "might made right." When pointed out that the same argument could be made for Grant and Richmond, the group was assured that this "didn't count because Grant had more men than Lee."

The Anti-Grant Cabal and Maintaining an Image

Grant over the years has enjoyed a bipolar reputation similar to that of Lee: commentators on his life and career either love him or hate him. The only reasons consistent for this are the same as for Lee, in that at the end of a fractious internecine conflict, those who stand out become particular objects of either veneration or vilification.

But for Grant there have been additional reasons. To LCM and in many other theories of the Civil War, Grant won not because he was a better general but because he is emblematic of LCM's favorite theme beside the sainted Lee: Grant had all the men and material he needed to defeat the Confederacy and then some. But Grant wasn't wasteful of human life. As Mark McFeely has pointed out, Grant got the punch line of the sick joke of war: men die. Lee never got that point.

Grant's chief sin has been the one that Southern (and a few Northern) writers cannot possibly forgive, forget or overlook: he accepted the surrender of Robert E. Lee at Appomattox. Even if all the other reasons are disregarded, if they had not existed at all, some commentators will state categorically that Grant was an inferior general to Lee, citing a list of battles

Continued on page 5



After two previously unsuccessful attempts, I was finally able to visit Shiloh National Military Park last month with my son and two traveling companions.

I think what always strikes me most about wandering through a battlefield is the serenity that surrounds you. It never ceases to amaze me how land that witnessed such terrible fighting and bloodshed could now be so serene. But it's true — and perhaps that's what makes these hallowed grounds so special — the quiet, the serenity, the desire to sit down and really contemplate what happened there.

The weather during our visit was hot and steamy — two words I really dislike! If this is what it was like in September, how do those southerners stand high summer weather?

After a stop at the Visitor's Center and a quick stop to check out the offerings at the bookstore, we started our wanderings.

The terrain in some areas is quite steep — we had a nice little climb from Pittsburg Landing up to the cemetery and the location of the Federal lines on the first day. I'm not sure how much overgrowth has occurred since the battle but the trees in some areas are quite dense.

By the time we reached the Bloody Pond on the first day of our two-day visit, it was dusk. You have to approach the pond on foot with caution; it's pretty marshy around the perimeter, and I ended up almost sliding into the pond! The water has a really rusty color to it which naturally makes you think of the wounded men who used this shallow pool of water to quench their thirst and bathe their wounds and how the pond was said to have become stained with the color of their blood. The pool has a distinctly brackish odor.

There were twenty-one states represented in the Battle of Shiloh. Today, twelve states have monuments on the battlefield. Wisconsin is one of them. Our state monument, along with those of Arkansas and Minnesota, can be found in the vicinity of the Hornets' Nest and Sunken Road.

I knew that my friend Elaine, upon my return, would ask me if I found Putnam's Stump. I did! Pvt. John D. Putnam, Co. F, 14th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, was killed on Monday, April 7, during a charge against a Confederate battery. He was buried where he fell, at the foot of a young oak tree. Thomas Steele, one of the burying party, suggested that his name be carved into the tree low to the ground; that way, if the tree was cut down Putnam's name would remain.

When the national cemetery was created, Putnam's body was removed to it. Because of the precautions taken by the burying

party in 1862, Putnam's grave is one of the few marked with a full name, company and regiment.

In 1901, the Wisconsin Shiloh Monument Commission visited the battlefield to select the site for the state monument. They discovered that the oak tree had indeed been cut down but the stump remained with Putnam's name still legible. The commissioners decided to reproduce the stump in granite and place it on the exact spot where the original had stood.

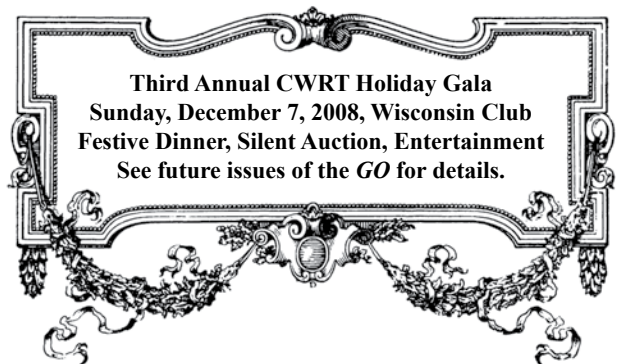
Our wanderings also took us to the graves of six Wisconsin color bearers in the national cemetery. The gravestones are in a semi-circle and overlook the Tennessee River. A soft rain began to fall as we paid our respects to these men and the others buried there.

If you have the opportunity to visit Shiloh, don't forget to add Corinth, Mississippi, about 45 minutes away, to your itinerary. Here you will find the Corinth Interpretive Center which is a unit of Shiloh National Military Park. The 15,000-square-foot center houses interactive exhibits, a multimedia presentation on the Battle of Shiloh and a video on the Battle of Corinth. The walkway leading up to the center has bronze replicas embedded in it that reflect on the aftermath of the battle: a crushed kepi, broken saber, canteen, belt buckle, haversack and more. There is also a wonderful water feature in the courtyard area that shouldn't be missed.

At the building entrance, you pass six Civil War soldiers cast in bronze marching into the center. I happened to talk to the gentleman running the bookstore at Shiloh after visiting Corinth. He asked if I saw the bronze soldiers — of course, hard to miss them. The gentleman's name was Don Todel, and he was the model for one of the six soldiers! You never know where a conversation is going to lead you!

I'm hoping for a return visit to Shiloh — more time to take it all in, more time to walk the fields. Time — what we all wish we had more of.

*Contributed by Donna Agnelly
Next month: Franklin and Murfreesboro*



On the Web

Discover battlefields and sites in 28 states plus maps, events, reenactment schedules, podcasts, books and more at Civil War Traveler: www.civilwartraveler.com. Subscribe to a free monthly e-newsletter for the latest additions to the site.

The podcasts on this site are very good. The latest one added covers the Battle for Burnside Bridge. If you're planning a trip, the podcast, downloaded to an MP3 player or burned to a CD, provides an added enhancement to your trip. If you've visited an area one of the podcasts covers, it's a nice way of sitting down with your map or photos and reviewing your trip. Currently, podcasts are available for Antietam (2), Gettysburg (3), Petersburg (3) and Richmond (5). The numbers in parentheses indicate the number of different podcasts available for each site.

Restored Cyclorama Unveiled

On Friday, September 26, 2008, after a five-year, \$15 million restoration, the Gettysburg cyclorama painting completed in the 1880s by French painter Paul Philippoteaux and his team of assistants, had its grand reopening.

A weekend of special programs took place in conjunction with the reopening. The history of the painting is also told in a new book, *The "Battle of Gettysburg" Cyclorama*, written by Sue Boardman and Kathryn Porch.

The painting, now housed in the new visitor center, weighs in at 12.5 tons. It is 377 feet long and 42 feet high.

A very nice article reviewing both the museum in the visitor's center and the cyclorama painting can be found at: www.nytimes.com/2008/09/25/arts/design/25gett.html. Don't forget to click on the "more photos" link under the photo of the painting on page 1 of the article. The link takes you to 10 more photos of the painting and the visitor's center.

Lincoln Pennies Unveiled

On September 22, 2008 the U.S. Mint unveiled the 4 new Lincoln pennies. The four pennies are in recognition of the bicentennial of Lincoln's birth and the 100th anniversary of the of the first issuance of the Lincoln one-cent coin.

The head side of the coin will still carry the image of Lincoln. The reverse side of the coin will show the following aspects of Lincoln's life: Birth and early childhood in Kentucky; Formative years in Indiana; Professional life in Illinois; Presidency in Washington, DC.

At the end of the 2009 Lincoln Bicentennial One-Cent Program the 2010 (and beyond) one-cent coin will feature a design that will be emblematic of Lincoln's preservation of the Union.

To see the four images on the one-cent coin visit: www.usmint.gov.

☆☆☆☆☆ **ON THIS DATE • OCTOBER 16 1863** ☆☆☆☆☆

Orders from Washington created the Military Division of the Mississippi, combining the Departments of the Ohio, the Cumberland, and the Tennessee with Gen. U.S. Grant in command.

John S. Jackman, Pvt. Orphan Brigade, wrote of this day:

Cloudy and cool. "Novemberish." I have forgotten the date and it was of so little importance at the time, I did not make any note of it, but it was about this time, the fact was announced that Chattanooga was to be shelled from Lookout Mountain. That morning, I clambered up to the top of the Ridge, to see the grand sight. The guns opened — little field pieces — and first we could see a little tuft of smoke rise out of the trees on the side of the mountain, then presently could hear the full report of the gun. Often the shells would fall short, and those that did go to the works, did no harm.

Bigger Than History continued from page 3

won or casualties inflicted, or the general demeanor of the two officers, or that Lee was just a superior "gentleman." In some circles it is irrelevant that the surrender took place in Wilmer MacLean's parlor as it did. Lee was simply better, period.

It has always been handy, from the first time Grant was noticed by anyone in the Army, to refer to Grant's affinity for liquor, justified or not. Grant suffered all his life with migraine headaches that may have been aggravated by malaria (then sometimes called ague), which can bring on mental confusion and lack of coordination. Never in his life did he weigh more than 140 pounds and he stood barely five feet five inches high. The only analgesics of his day were alcohol and laudanum (alcohol and opium). If he needed pain relief, it didn't take much to get him intoxicated, and a malaria attack could look like intoxication. How often he did get drunk during the war is unclear, but it is also beside the point. Grant's reputation for drunkenness was and is easy to use against him, misapplied or not. In an era when inability to hold one's liquor was a social sin, this has been hard to shake. Grant's enemies and detractors have accused him of being drunk whenever something didn't go quite right such as Shiloh, the failed first assault on Vicksburg, and the disastrous assault on Cold Harbor.

Continued in the next *General Orders*

Civil War Round Table Dinner Reservation for October 16, 2008

Mail your reservations by Friday, October 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 October 16 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.

Copyright © 2008 by the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc. Permission is granted for use of the contents, in whole or in part, in non-for-profit Civil War Round Table newsletters only. All other rights are reserved.

General Orders design and layout by Patricia A. Lynch.

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

October 16, 2008

Panos Char House
20290 W. Bluemound Rd., Brookfield
Gloria Swift: Ford's Theatre

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.