



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. 05-01 January, 2005

The **January 13th, 2005** meeting is to be held at **WISCONSIN CLUB**, Milwaukee
Speaker: Terry Winschel, US Park Service Historian, Vicksburg National Park

Stephen D. Lee and the Making of the Post-War South

Few men, North or South, had as significant an impact on shaping post Civil War America as did Stephen D. Lee. The former Confederate lieutenant general was a planter, educator, legislator, and statesman who in the aftermath of war devoted his life and energies to forge bonds of fraternity and brotherhood between those who had worn the blue and gray in the nation's bloodiest conflict.

Terrence J. Winschel, the long-serving historian at Vicksburg National Military Park, traces the remarkable course of Lee's life focusing on his activities to memorialize his comrades in arms. A leader in the "New South" movement, Lee threw his considerable influence behind the efforts of Union veterans to establish a national military park at Vicksburg, comparable to those established previously by Congress at Chickamauga/Chattanooga, Antietam, Shiloh, and Gettysburg. Although defeat at Vicksburg had sealed the doom of the Confederacy, Lee believed that the Southern soldiers who had fought so valiantly at Vicksburg deserved to be honored rather than shadowed by shame.

In 1895, the Vicksburg National Military Park Association formed for the purpose of petitioning Congress to establish a national military park at Vicksburg.

The Union and Confederate veterans who comprised the Association elected Lee as their president. Four years later, their efforts were crowned with success as on February 21, 1899, President William McKinley signed the legislation by which the park was established. In recognition of his work, Stephen D. Lee appointed to the park commission and was elected by his fellow commissioners, both of whom were Union veterans, as Chairman. Winschel details the work of both the Association and the Park Commission under Lee's leadership.

Terry Winschel is a native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and a graduate of Pennsylvania State University. He also holds both M.S.S. (Master of Social Science) and Ed.S. (Education Specialist) degrees from Mississippi College. He is a twenty-eight year veteran of the National Park Service and has served at Gettysburg National Military Park, Fredericksburg National Military Park, Valley Forge National Historical Park, and is currently Historian at Vicksburg National Military Park.

Winschel has written 50 articles on the Civil War and more than 90 book reviews. He is author of *Vicksburg is the Key: The Struggle for the Mississippi River* (University of Nebraska Press 2003), *The Civil War Diary of a Common Soldier* (LSU Press 2001), *Vicksburg: Fall of the Confederate Gibraltar* (McWhiney Research Foundation Press 1999), and *Triumph & Defeat: The Vicksburg Campaign* (Savas Publishing 1998).

<i>Schedule of Events</i>	
• 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
<i>Times subject to local conditions</i>	

A Most Unlikely Confederate Hero

Basic Books has announced publication of Gordon C. Rhea's, *Carrying the Flag: The Story of Private Charlie Whilden, the Confederacy's Most Unlikely Hero*. Members might remember Dr. Rhea's talk on this topic when he was in Milwaukee some years ago.

The book tells the story of the 40-year-old epileptic son of a prominent South Carolina family that has fallen upon hard times. A failure at law and in various business ventures, Charlie Whilden is even turned down by the Confederate army until its late desperate need for men. Yet at the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House, it is Charlie who wraps the flag around his body and leads a charge that helps change the course of one of the most significant battles of the Civil War.

In endorsing *Carrying the Flag*, Pulitzer-Prize-winning Civil War author James M. McPherson says the book "combines the story of a remarkable 40-year-old South Carolina soldier with the larger narrative of the terrible fighting at the Wilderness and Spotsylvania in May 1864. Readers . . . will come away with a greater appreciation for the hardships and sacrifices of both Johnny Reb and Billy Yank."

For further information, contact Peter Wentworth at 843-883-3378 or Pwentw@aol.com.

Civil War Soldiers System Data Completed

After 11 years of mostly volunteer effort, the National Park Service (NPS) declared Sept. 27 that the computerized database known as the Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System (CWSS) was complete. NPS made the announcement at Ford's Theatre National Historic Site.

The completed database has basic information on the service records of 6.3 million Civil War soldiers. It also includes lists of regiments from both armies and their histories, and information about the battles they fought. NPS's John Peterson, who served as project manager, hailed the volunteer work of the Mormons, the United Daughters of the Confederacy and genealogists to record the information from the National Archives.

NPS also plans to start what Peterson called a "Civil War thematic Web site." It would display a history of the war and focus on aspects such as hospitals and women in the Civil War, and will offer bibliographies, interpretive stories from the parks, and links to the parks.

—Deborah Fitts, Civil War News

Board of Directors, Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc., as of May, 2004

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Shiloh — The Battleground I

The Federal deployments around Pittsburg Landing were ideally suited to resist a surprise attack by mostly green Confederate forces. In an area checkered by streams, farmer's fields, creeks, roads and trails, the lack of consistent layout and entrenchments of the Federal camps, later explained by both detractors and supporters of Grant and Sherman as somewhere between incompetence, negligence and convenience, helped greatly to break up the Confederate attacks of 6 April.

In early April of 1862 the Federal Army of the Tennessee was encamped at Crump's Landing and Pittsburg Landing, on the western shore of the Tennessee River twenty-two air miles northeast of Corinth, Mississippi, where the Confederate forces under Albert Sidney Johnston were concentrated.

Crump's was not suitable for camping the entire Federal army (some 46,000 men total). Most of the army -- five of six divisions, amounting to 39,000 -- was encamped at Pittsburg Landing six miles upriver (south) of Crump's and nine miles from Ulysses S. Grant's headquarters at Savannah. The regimental camps were scattered in a heavily wooded, hilly area, which from the outlying boundaries of the army's camps and pickets to the river was no more than four miles in any direction.

The Pittsburgh Landing site had been made with little thought to connecting unit flanks, erecting fieldworks, clearing fields of fire, or even to regular pa-

trolling. Part of this attitude stemmed from Grant's prior experience in Missouri in 1861, and his stunning successes at Forts Henry and Donelson. After Missouri Grant did not much care what the enemy did or might do, an attitude unusual among Civil War generals.

The dominant terrain feature in the area was the Tennessee River, flowing along the eastern edge of the Federal base. The area was relatively flat, fairly well overgrown with trees and brush, split by several streams and creeks and patched with farmer's fields and the occasional orchards, cotton fields and temporary swamps. Off the numerous trails and roads it was difficult terrain with thick brush and uneven ground.

Grant was convinced that any major rebel attack, unlikely though he considered it to be, would fall on Crump's Landing, and not until 8 April at earliest. He thought that the morale of the Confederate forces at Corinth was quite low after the string of Federal victories so far that year, and any movement on their part was going to be half-hearted, at best. Reports of large rebel forces in the area from prisoners, escaped slaves, local scouts, and his own troopers was discounted.

Grant and Sherman both thought that a lack of entrenchments would serve to bait the enemy, that trenches could not be built in the area that would enclose the encampment, and that digging ditches would dull the men's fighting edge. This was the position both would take in their memoirs.

2005 Schedule

- Feb. 10: Rev. Bob Miller: *Religion during the Civil War.*
- 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: *Topic to be announced*

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: January 13th, 2005

Mail your reservations by January 7th 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.