



# GENERAL ORDERS



## The Newsletter of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee, Inc. Since 1947

and The Iron Brigade Association

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The November 13th, 2003 meeting is to be held at The Wisconsin Club, Milwaukee

Speaker: Eric Wittenberg, author of *Little Phil*

### Eric Wittenberg: "Little Phil: A Critical Assessment of the Civil War Generalship of Philip H. Sheridan"

Sheridan successfully foisted his own version of history on the American public, our speaker argues. This controversial talk, based on Wittenberg's book, *Little Phil: A Critical Assessment of the Civil War Generalship of Philip H. Sheridan*, challenges conventional interpretations in the hope of leading the reader to re-evaluate his/her thoughts about Sheridan.

Unlike generals Ulysses S. Grant and William T. Sherman, whose controversial Civil War-era reputations persist today, Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan has been largely untouched by controversy. From his earliest days at West Point, Phil Sheridan refused to play by the rules. He was fortunate to receive merely a suspension, rather than expulsion, when as a cadet he charged a superior officer with a bayonet. Although he achieved fame as a cavalryman late in the Civil War, Sheridan actually began the conflict as an infantry commander and initially knew little of the mounted service.

In his first effort as a cavalry commander with the Army of the Potomac in the spring of 1864, he gave a performance that Wittenberg argues has long been overrated. Later that year in the Shenandoah Valley, where Sheridan secured his legendary reputation, he

benefited greatly from the tactical ability of his subordinates and from his huge manpower advantage against the beleaguered Confederate troops of Lt. Gen. Jubal Early. Sheridan was ultimately rewarded in spite of numerous acts of insubordination against his superiors throughout the war, while he punished similar conduct by his own officers.

According to our speaker, in his combat reports and postwar writings, he often manipulated facts to show himself in the best possible light, ensuring an exalted place in history.

Eric J. Wittenberg is a native of Southeastern Pennsylvania. He was educated at Dickinson College and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, and is a partner in the law firm of Krupman, Golden, Meizlish, Marks & Wittenberg, LLP. Eric studies cavalry operations, with a special focus on the Army of the Potomac's Cavalry Corps. He is the author of ten books and numerous articles. His first book, *Gettysburg's Forgotten Cavalry Actions*, won the Bachelder-Coddington Literary Award as the best new book on the Battle of Gettysburg of 1998.

#### 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 |

### April 2004 Meeting

Members should take note that the April 2004 meeting of the Civil War Round Table of Milwaukee is on 15 April, the THIRD Thursday, to avoid conflict with Good Friday on the 9th.

## Confederate Ironclad Class at Carroll College, January 13th, 2004

The Confederate ironclad program will be examined by its failures and its successes, using as major examples *Virginia*, *Arkansas*, *Chicora*, *Palmetto State*, *Tennessee* and *Albemarle*, touching on other vessels but concentrating on the planning, design, construction and deployment of these best-known ships.

Unlike the Union, the Confederacy's industrial base did not allow for a great deal of experimentation and failure when it came to weapons innovation. But when it came to building ironclad ships to deal with the South's decided naval inferiority, caution went to the winds, and almost anyone with a lumber yard and access to iron started building iron-armored ships.



Principal instructor John D. Beatty is an avid military historian and researcher working on a Master's degree in Civil War Studies. He taught the class on the blockades in January 2003, was a contributor to the *Garland Encyclopedia of World War II in Europe*, and is the Editor/Publisher of the *General Orders*.

The Event Fee is \$60, and will award one Civil War Certificate Unit. To register contact the School of Professional Studies at (262) 524-7216 or 1-(800) CARROLL. For more information contact Lance J. Herdegen, Director of The Civil War Institute

## Display Materials Sought

Calling all collectors of weapons, clothes, shoes, books, records, dolls, doorknobs, toy soldiers, trains, tin cans, and other memorabilia and artifacts related to the Civil War era in America: You are invited to show off your collections at a meeting of the Round Table. A 6-foot table is made available every month for just that purpose. Contact Gene Jamrozy to schedule your show!

***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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John D. Beatty	Editor/Publisher, <i>General Orders</i>	<a href="mailto:jdblatty@amcivwar.com">jdblatty@amcivwar.com</a>	2004
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## *Shiloh: An Introduction, Part III*

**D**espite the apparent unpreparedness of the infantry, artillery doctrine and theory appeared to be validated by the fighting in the Piedmont. The new rifled guns were especially useful against fortifications, and the effectiveness of rifled artillery against enemy guns was great.

However, artillery required a great deal of logistical support. As long as the militia batteries were not organized to support large units, their great admixture of calibers and types was acceptable. When they came together problems in logistics, deployment and crew training became glaringly obvious. Clearly, the artillery in many cases wasn't a lot better prepared to fight in the spring of 1862 than the infantry.

American cavalry doctrine, quite unlike the European experience, was seen as proven against the Indians. No one in America saw that European horse soldiers had anything to teach their New World counterparts.

But the cavalry had lessons to learn about supporting large infantry forces, about fighting other horse soldiers at least as well armed as themselves, and about encountering artillery. In short, the cavalry was nearly as bad off as the artillery, but not quite as unprepared as the infantry.

Finally, there was the non-too-trivial issue of leadership. Though some school-trained leaders were

available, their most valuable practical experience was in camp construction, logistics and engineering. The US Army taught the theory of large-unit maneuver and organization but had practiced it only once in the previous generation, in Mexico. Most of the Army had been operating as small detachments and only occasionally as regiments. Larger units such as brigades were only on paper, so few officers below brigadier general had any experience with the required formations for anything larger than a company, leave alone leading divisions of men in battle. The Manassas and Henry/Donelson experiences had provided a day's practice for a few, but that was hardly enough.

The armies on both sides were green from the ground up in early 1862. The men were generally unfamiliar with their weapons and the tactics to use them; most of the officers had little experience in marching their men from place to place let alone fighting battles; and the quartermasters were bedeviled by conflicting and even redundant requirements.

It was here that the Union and Confederate armies started that fateful spring, and very soon the consequences of these conditions would be felt.

*Author's Note: Any comments on this feature would be greatly appreciated —JDB.*

## 2003-2004 Schedule

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

- December 11: Hans Trefousse, subject to be announced.
- January 8: Arnold Schofield, "Forgotten Warriors, Allies & Adversaries: American Indians in the Civil War."
- February 12: Larry Hewitt, "The Confederacy's Best Chance for Victory: Robert E. Lee and the Battle of Annihilation."
- March 11: Thomas Schwartz, "Crazy folks... 'Why must I only take my chances?' —Abraham Lincoln and Death Threats." Announcement of Elections.
- April 15: James Ogden, subject to be announced. Election of Board Members.
- May 6: Bruce Tap, "Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War." Period costumes invited.
- June 10: (open)

### Civil War Round Table Dinner Reservation for: November 13th, 2003

*Mail your reservations by November 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: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Meet the New Members*

THE ANDERSEN FAMILY, (Michael, Catherine, Regan and Devin) Shorewood, WI. Interests: History and Reenacting



## **Civil War Quiz**

Based on total casualties (captured, killed, missing, and wounded), what was the second most costly battle of the American Civil War? Gettysburg, Chickamauga, Chancellorsville, or Antietam? Answer next month.

—From <http://militaryhistory.about.com/library/weekly/blcivilwarquiz1q.htm>

### ***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.

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](mailto: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 Board 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.