

# The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

March 2022



[www.firstdefenderscwrts.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrts.us)

"Be these honorable men?" Such is a question posed at the outset of a presentation I recently developed centering around Wilbur Storey, Clement Vallandigham and Ambrose Burnside whose paths intersected during the late spring and early summer of 1863.

Burnside is a well-known actor in the drama of the Civil War, most commonly associated with the ill-fated Battle of Fredericksburg and, to a somewhat lesser extent, the tragedy of the "Crater" at Petersburg. Sometimes described as the "King of the Copperheads," Vallandigham was such a thorn in the side of the Lincoln Administration that he was banished to the South (which didn't want him, either, and promptly provided him passage to Canada!). Storey is lesser known to most students of the Civil War, but as the editor of the *Chicago Times*, the most influential newspaper outside of New York, he was a feared partisan whose virulent invective led the Democratic charge and who was (another) thorn in Lincoln's backside.

Each of these men, though, was entirely human and strongly believed in the causes he espoused. By the standard of the times, none were inherently "bad" men and certainly none could legitimately be viewed as "evil" (although one could certainly find a pretty large group of folks who would disagree). Each had a set of principles in he strongly believed and which aligned with a significant proportion of the American population. They were all men of their time, and their "honor" would collide in the Ohio River Valley in a series of incidents which, again, created another unwanted pain in the posterior of a harried Abraham Lincoln.

Today, the din of 24-hour cable news introduces us to many men and, with the progress of a century and a half, women. In our polarized society, the difference between a saint and a satanic minion often depends on just where you happen to be standing at any moment in time. Simply consider the disparity of views between our current president and his immediate predecessor. (For fun, tee up that question on any social media platform!)

If we closely study Wilbur Storey, Clement Vallandigham and Ambrose Burnside, we may find, though we disagree with their positions, their statements or their actions, there was a measure of "honor" about them which we can admire if we consider them closely and without prejudice. How might future generations, when considering the leading personalities of today, answer the question, "Be these honorable men (and women)?"

*Craig*

## Round Table Business

The February meeting of the First Defenders Civil War Round Table was called to order at 6:20 pm, February 8, 2022, by President Craig Breneiser at Giannotti's Country Manor Restaurant with 17 members attending in person. Six members attended online for a total of 23 attendees.

Craig announced that V. P. Mark Quattroch had an emergency situation at home and was unable to attend the meeting. Mark reported by email that he had no preservation report for the evening. Similarly, Secretary Linda Zeiber experienced a personal emergency and could not attend the meeting in person. Many thanks to Lisa Breneiser for stepping in to record the minutes of the February meeting.

Member News: Roger Cotterill is currently in a nursing facility in Drums, PA, dealing with medical issues. Dave Fox had spoken to him on February 7, 2022. Roger relayed that he misses talking to people since he doesn't have many people in his facility to talk with. He would love to hear from Round Table members. He appreciates cards and phone calls. If you would like to call, please call on a Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday or Sunday since he is in dialysis on the other week days and cannot take calls. His cell phone is 570-708-2644. The following is his mailing information:

Roger Cotterill  
Providence Place  
149 S. Hunter Hwy.  
Apt. 326  
Drums, PA 18220

### Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Tim Antosy presented his report for the February 2022 meeting. Our balance as of February 7, 2022, stood at \$3432.02 with \$230.00 ear-marked for preservation plus \$150.00 for a special project. The unencumbered balance as of February 7, 2022, is \$3052.02. There is a total of 53 paid members.

### Book Raffle

Our March selections for the book raffle follow:

1. CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS by Reid Mitchell
2. AN HONORABLE DEFEAT by William C. Davis
3. CIVIL WAR BARONS by Jeffrey D. Wert
4. ORDEAL BY FIRE by James M. McPherson & James K. Hogue
5. LEE CONSIDERED by Alan T. Nolan
6. MOSBY'S MEMOIRS by Col. John S. Mosby
7. MY ENEMY, MY BROTHER by Joseph E. Persico & KILLED IN ACTION by Gregory A. Coco (2-Book Set)
8. HARPER'S PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR

At our February meeting we began a new raffle to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the First Defenders CWRT. The prizes are as follows:

**Grand Prize:** 23 ¼ X 33 ¼ "Mort Künstler Print (DISTANT THUNDER) with COA

**1st Prize:** Set of Fans from the 75th Anniversary Reunion of the Battle of Gettysburg, July 1-4, 1938

**2nd Prize:** The Photographic History of the Civil War (10 Volumes)

**3rd Prize:** Echoes of Glory, Illustrated History of the CW, 3 Book Set

The raffle will continue to our last meeting in May. Ticket prices are the same as the monthly raffle. If anyone is interested in donating books, please see Gary at the next meeting; he can take some new selections, but it will be limited.

### **Joe's Jaunts**

Joe Schaffer announced that LBG and friend Charlie Fennel has bladder cancer and is currently being treated at Johns Hopkins. He will be undergoing surgery and treatment. He has cancelled his Round Table program for March, and has also cancelled the spring jaunt to Culp's Hill. Charlie has asked to reschedule for our next campaign.

Joe asked for ideas for a different jaunt this spring. Please contact him.

Our speaker for March will be Dwight Hughes, "Unlike Anything That Ever Floated: The U. S. S. Monitor". The program seems especially appropriate since the Battle of Hampton Roads occurred on March 8-9, 1862.

The April speaker will be John Shildt who has presented programs in the past.

The May speaker is TBD.

### **Conferences**

It has been reported that Heather Miller of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College is offering a 15% discount to any of our Round Table members who would like to attend the conference from June 10-15, 2022. Wally Heimbach recommends the conference and noted that the lecturers are top-notch. The tours are also very good, and, if you have the opportunity to do a "staff-ride," he encourages you to do so. Dorm room accommodations are available.

### **New Book**

Jeff Wert has a new book about to be released entitled, "The Heart of Hell: The Soldiers Struggle for Spotsylvania's Bloody Angle." Jeff has spoken at the Round Table many times. He has never disappointed us.

### **Website**

Lisa Breneiser reported the website has been updated with the new preservation totals through the 24<sup>th</sup> Campaign and the Booklist has also been updated.

The member area includes the links to our previous presenters and their presentations.

Our website address is: <http://firstdefenderscwr.us> Please reach out to Lisa at [Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com](mailto:Lisa.breneiser@gmail.com) if you need access to the member area.

Please verify that First Defenders is a trusted email address, in your address book. There have been reports of members not receiving their meal confirmations. Gmail, especially has been cracking down on email blasts. Please check your spam folder for our emails.

### **Newsletter**

Please keep in mind that items to be included in the newsletter are due one week from the meeting date. All items of interest and information are welcomed. Send your articles to Linda Zeiber, [zeibers@comcast.net](mailto:zeibers@comcast.net) or call 610-678-1168 for further information.

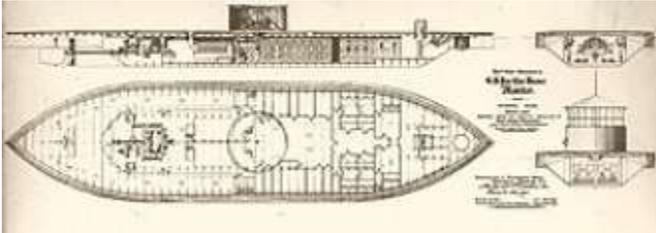


## March Program

# Unlike Anything That Ever Floated: the *U.S.S. Monitor*

Featuring Dwight Hughes

The U.S.S. *Monitor* was an ingenious but hurried response to both the imminent threat of the Confederate ironclad C.S.S. *Virginia* and the growing prospect of international intervention in favor of the South by



powerful British and French ironclads. The United States Navy had no defenses against either menace, but *Monitor* would become a cultural icon of American

industrial strength and ingenuity. This largely symbolic role would far outshine her actual accomplishments beyond the single engagement that captured the imagination and changed the dynamics at sea. This presentation takes *Monitor* from her inception in the mind of a brilliant inventor through the dramatic first clash of ironclads at Hampton Roads in March 1862.



*Dwight Hughes is a public historian, author and speaker. A 1967 graduate of the United States Naval Academy, he had a 20 year career as a Navy surface warfare officer and was decorated with a Bronze Star and Purple Heart. Following his retirement from the Navy, Dwight's second career was in software engineering, primarily in geographic feature naming data and electronic mapping under contract to the U.S. Geological Survey (a ridge in Antarctica is named after him for his contributions to that continent's databases!). A lover of sea and ships, Dwight has*

*written several books and is a contributing author to the Emerging Civil War. He resides near Manassas, Virginia, with his wife, Judi, who is a retired U.S. Air Force officer.*

Coming Silver Anniversary Campaign Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
12 APR 2022	John Schildt	<i>The Hospitals of Antietam</i>
10 MAY 2022	**To Be Announced**	

**Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, March 8, 2022  
Meeting & Program:**

If possible, please make your meal choices/reservations on the website. Our meal choices for March are:

- Shrimp Scampi
- Marinated Chicken Breast
- Lasagna with meat

If you make your reservation online and you do not receive a thank-you and/or confirmation email, your reservation did not go through. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection to Kathy Little at 610-367-8082 no later than noon, FRIDAY, March 4, 2022, which is also the deadline for online reservations. The price is \$30.00 inclusive for meals.

**\*IMPORTANT NOTE\*** Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations for any reasons after noon on the FRIDAY preceding the meeting. This is the policy of Giannotti's, and the Round Table will be billed for your meal whether you attend or not. Please understand that you will be asked to reimburse the RT should you not attend after having made a reservation and not cancelled prior to the aforementioned time period.

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE: IT IS MUCH APPRECIATED IF YOU PAY IN THE APPROPRIATE DOLLAR AMOUNT. WE DO NOT HAVE A CHANGE DRAWER. WE WILL NOT ACCEPT \$50 OR \$100 BILLS IN PAYMENT. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.**

**Our 25<sup>th</sup> Campaign Anniversary celebration will be held at our April 12, 2022 meeting. We hope to see you there!**