

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

May 2022



www.firstdefenderscwrtable.us

There is a recently released volume in the Emerging Civil War's ever increasing library of titles: "The Great 'What Ifs' of the American Civil War." As noted on the dust jacket, "Historians tackle the conflict's most intriguing possibilities."

What might have happened in April 1862 along the Tennessee River had Albert Sidney Johnston not been killed at Shiloh? How might the Civil War have changed had Great Britain intervened either as Confederate ally or simply as a peacemaker? How might the western war been conducted differently if Jefferson Davis had not been so tenaciously loyal to Braxton Bragg? How would Reconstruction unfolded had Abraham Lincoln escaped the assassin's bullet (and would we still view him as an American saint)? And, of course, what might have happened on the first day at Gettysburg had Stonewall Jackson not been shot two months earlier?

The Civil War, like all history, pivots on the slimmest of threads. A twist one direction or the other changes everything that comes after. Whether a general changes a decision or a private hits (or misses) his intended target, the repercussions can echo forever. "What ifs" can be fascinating to ponder.

In our own collective orbits, what if the Civil War had never been fought? What if 25 years ago there had been no vision to create the First Defenders Civil War Round Table? What if we would never have met the friends we have? What if we had never learned fascinating things we never knew? What if we would have nothing to do on the second Tuesday of the month between September and May?? What if there would be no "next campaign?" What if...

Of all the "what ifs" mentioned above, I at least have the answer for one. There *will* be a "next campaign" beginning in September. Have a happy, safe summer, and don't be a "what if" when it comes time for re-enlistment in the First Defenders Civil War Round Table!

Craig

* See enclosed "Fourth Battle of Winchester " for a Braxton Bragg "what if!"

Round Table Business

The April meeting of the First Defenders Civil War Round Table was called to order at 6:27 pm, April 11, 2022, by President Craig Breneiser at Giannotti's Country Manor Restaurant with 32 members attending in person. We welcomed one guest, Jeff Newman from Mountain Rest, SC, Ev Binn's brother-in-law.

Our speaker for the evening, John Schildt, offered a prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

The meeting continued at 7:53 pm following dinner. Craig reminded everyone of the founding of our round table 25 years earlier. Six charter members who are still active were recognized. Souvenir glasses crafted by Lisa Breneiser were presented to Lori Border, Dave Fox, Rodney LaPearl, Bill Quinn, and Joe Schaeffer. The 6th charter member is Jan Fisher who missed the meeting.

[President's Note: I apologize for overlooking Bill Quinn in my message "shout out" last month. He, too, is an original "Valuska Volunteer!"]

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Tim Antosy presented his report for the May 10, 2022, meeting. Our balance as of May 10, 2022, stood at \$3173.16 with \$551.00 ear-marked for preservation plus \$150.00 for a special project. The unencumbered balance as of May 10, 2022, is \$2,368.16. There is a total of 53 paid members.

Book Raffle News

It doesn't seem possible, but our final CWRT meeting of our 25th campaign is upon us! Thank you to everyone for contributing to preserving our historical sites and our history. We help to continue the education of everyone to our history. That's a good thing.

At our final meeting, we will conclude with the Special Raffle ending. Good Luck to All!!

For our last monthly raffle, we will offer the following selections for May:

1. The Civil War Infantryman (In camp, on the march, and in battle) by Gregory A Coco
2. Civil War City (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 1861-1865) by William J. Miller
3. Lee & His Generals by Captain Wm. P. Snow
4. Gettysburg (The 2nd Day) by Harry W. Pfanz
5. Civil War Command & Strategy (The Process of Victory & Defeat) by Archer Jones
6. Island of Mercy (Hospitals in the Maryland Campaign, September 1862) by Dr. Gordon Dammann & John W. Schildt
7. Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant (2 Volumes in 1) published by Konecky & Konecky, NYC
8. Pickett's Charge (The Last Attack at Gettysburg) by Earl J. Hess.

At our final meeting, we will conclude the Special Raffle.

Special Raffle

- Grand Prize—23 1/4 x 33 1/4 Mort Kunstler 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

Joe's Jaunts

Joe Schaffer announced that LBG and friend Charlie Fennel is doing well following treatment for bladder cancer. The Culp's Hill "jaunt" that had been scheduled for April with Charlie has been canceled. There will be no spring jaunt this year.

Chris Mackowski is will be our lead speaker in September.

Meal Captain

Kathy Little announced that all meal reservations are due a day earlier than usual for the May meeting. The deadline will be Thursday, May 5, 2022. Please note this important change.

Website

Lisa Breneiser reported the website has been updated with the new preservation totals through the 24th Campaign and the Booklist has been updated.

The member area includes the links to our previous presenters and their presentations. Our website address is: <http://firstdefenderscwrt.us> Please reach out to Lisa at 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 or call 610-678-1168 for further information.

"The Fourth Battle of Winchester"

In 2002 renowned historian Richard McMurry published an "alternate history" in which there is a fourth battle at Winchester. His thesis, however, was to prove that victory in the Civil War would be won in the west, not the east. It's an interesting read from one of the most fascinating and humorous speakers on the Civil War circuit.

In the preface, McMurry talks about some of the counterfactual questions that have been asked of him over his past thirty years of speaking engagements. He notes he has known the answer to only five. The first is about the enigmatic Braxton Bragg (and we've all known folks who would ask this sort of question!):

Q: What would have happened if Braxton Bragg had used an atomic bomb at Perryville?

A: He probably would have won a clear tactical victory for the Confederates, but you can never know. Being Braxton Bragg, he might have vaporized his own army, thereby effectively ending the war in mid-October 1862.

Another "what if" has been answered by a leading Civil War historian!

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May Program

"Rally 'Round the Flag": Color Bearers at Gettysburg

presented by Dan Welch



Civil War color bearers played both a practical and symbolic role in the final years of Napoleonic warfare. Aligning on the colors provided soldiers with direction when smoke, noise and confusion made it difficult to hear bugle calls or the shouted orders of officers. Soldiers assigned to carry the national or state colors were honored to do so even though they did not carry weapons and were a conspicuous target for opposing riflemen. In this program, we learn more about the heroic stories of color bearers during the three-day Battle of Gettysburg.

Dan Welch is a public educator in Ohio and the former education program coordinator for the Gettysburg Foundation. Dan holds a bachelor's degree in instrumental music education and a master's in military history with a Civil War concentration. He is the author of "The Last Road North: A

Guide to the Gettysburg Campaign, 1863" part of the Emerging Civil War series. Dan continues to serve as a seasonal ranger at the Gettysburg National Military Park.



Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, May 10, 2022 Meeting & Program

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

Breaded Haddock

Chicken Parmesan

Risotto

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, THURSDAY, MAY 5, 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.**