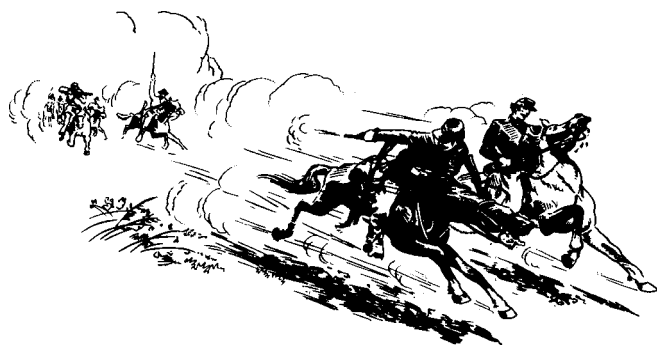


# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



## *News Letter*

September 2007  
Volume 57, Number 1

### **Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War**

**P**rofessor Chandra Manning examines why Union and Confederate soldiers identified slavery as the root cause of the war, how the war changed their ideas about slavery, and what those changing ideas meant for the war and the nation. Letters, diaries and camp newspapers will enable us to probe the innermost thoughts to better understand what soldiers - blue, gray, and black - thought about what they were fighting for and why.

Professor Chandra Manning is a graduate of Mt. Holyoke College with a masters degree in philosophy from the National University of Ireland in Galway and a Ph.D. from Harvard University. She has taught at Pacific Lutheran University and is currently an assistant professor at Georgetown University. When not immersed in Civil War studies, she is an avid baseball fan and offers a course on baseball in American history.

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### **September 2007 Meeting**

<b>Date:</b>	Tuesday, September 11, 2007	<b>Place:</b>	Officers' Club Fort Lesley J. McNair Washington, DC
<b>Price:</b>	Dinner \$29.00 per person Lecture only \$5.00		
<b>Agenda:</b>	6:00 pm Social Hour: Cash Bar 6:45 pm Dinner: Prime rib Vegetable of the Day (Vegetarian meals are available upon request in advance.) Mashed Potatoes Apple Pie		
	8:00 pm Speaker: Chandra Manning Topic: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War		

Guests are always welcome to attend our meetings.

The deadline for reservations is Wednesday, September 5, 2007. Please send them to:

Mr. John Restall  
3324 Glenmore Dr.  
Falls Church, VA 22041-3317

Phone: 703-578-1942  
Email: [restall@joimail.com](mailto:restall@joimail.com)  
If reserving a dinner by email, make  
such you receive a confirmation email.

As the Round Table must pay for all meals ordered, members and guests are obligated to pay for the meal in the event they do not attend.

**PLEASE NOTE IMPORTANT SECURITY NOTICE ON PAGE 2**

## Officers and Board of Governors for 2007-2008

President: Gordon Berg  
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Email: gordonberg@yahoo.com

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Newsletter Editor: Kenneth R. Rice  
Home: 703-527-0077  
Email: kennrice@erols.com

**M**embership in the Civil War Round Table of the District of Columbia is open to anyone interested in the study of the American Civil War or American history. Our program year runs from September through June of the following year. Dues are \$30.00 per year (\$15 if you join after January 31, 2008) and should be mailed with a membership application form (available on our web site or from the address below) to:

CWRT of DC Membership Committee  
Kenneth R. Rice  
4110 N. 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
Arlington, VA 22207-3005

Checks should be made out to **The CWRT of DC**. Membership includes a subscription to the monthly newsletter which contains notice of dinner meeting dates, speakers, and topics; information on field trips, and various Civil War related articles. Dinner meetings are held from September through June on the second Tuesday of each month at the Fort Leslie J. McNair Officer's Club in Washington, DC. Guests are always welcome at our meetings.

For further information about the Round Table, to submit a newsletter article, or present a program to the Round Table, please contact the newsletter editor.

## IMPORTANT SECURITY NOTICE

**W**e have been entering and leaving through the P Street gate. Please be prepared for a short delay getting through the gate when you arrive. This is for both vehicles and pedestrians. They will ask for a picture ID, search bags, and cars without a current DOD sticker.

## Newsletter by Email

**T**his newsletter is now available by email as an alternative to US mail. All recipients of this newsletter are requested to choose the email version of the newsletter. This will reduce newsletter expenses and allow the money to be used for things like battlefield preservation. To receive this newsletter by email, please indicate so on your membership form, or email the newsletter editor. The newsletter is published on our web site listed below. The newsletter editor's address is:

Kenneth R. Rice  
4110 N. 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
Arlington, VA 22207-3005  
Email: kennrice@erols.com  
Phone: 703-527-0077

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Visit our web site at: <http://users.erols.com/kennrice/cwrtdc.htm>

## President's Column

by Gordon Berg

The Round Table enters its 57<sup>th</sup> year at a crossroads. Past president Wendy Swanson's exemplary stewardship has set the administrative bar high and this year's executive board will strive to serve our members in a similar fashion. My goal for the 2007-08 year is to present an excellent roster of speakers while maintaining a strong commitment to our long tradition of financial support for preservation activities. I believe, with the help of each and every member, we can do both.

The Round Table will continue to meet at Fort McNair. We have negotiated with the catering company for dinner costs to rise by only one dollar. Many of you have noticed that the meetings tend to run behind schedule. We have notified the caterers that dinner must begin promptly at 6:45 p.m. and be served in a timely manner. I will do my best to make sure announcements, the book raffle and the speaker's presentation move along at a brisk pace. In return, I ask that each of you renew your commitment to attending as many meetings as you can.

Ken Rice works hard to make sure we continue to have one of the best Round Table web sites on the Internet and a newsletter that contains interesting and timely information. To help us conserve financial resources, I urge that everyone capable of receiving the newsletter by email do so. I would encourage anyone interested in contributing items to the newsletter to send the information to Ken. Many members are involved in activities that would be of interest to us all. Tell us about them!

We are working to select the destination and dates of our 2008 field trip as early as possible. This will allow for members to plan their summer schedules and provide sufficient time to widely publicize it to other round table members and the general public.

Other publicity efforts will involve sending monthly notices of our upcoming meetings to media outlets like the Smithsonian's electronic Civil War newsletter, The Washington Times' Civil War page, The Civil War News, and other round table newsletters. Bull Run has promised to run our list of speakers and we will reciprocate by running theirs. We will also design a new publicity flyer and distribute it widely to other organizations, book stores, and round tables. You can help us spread the word about our round table by taking some when they are available.

Our first speaker, Professor Chandra Manning, will talk about her extensive researches into what soldiers blue, gray, and black believed they were fighting for and why. A copy of her recent book, *What This Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War*, will be part of the book raffle. Don't miss her provocative presentation. I look forward to seeing you on September 11.

### Schedule of Speakers 2007-08

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| Sep 11 | Chandra Manning - Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War        |
| Oct 9  | Jack Hurst - Grant, Forrest and the Campaign That Won the War |
| Nov 13 | Chuck Mauro - Soldiers and Civilians in Fairfax County        |
| Dec 11 | Anne Rubin - Reactions to Sherman's March                     |
| Jan 8  | David Owens - Ambrose Bierce: The Devil's Topographer         |
| Feb 12 | Bart Friedman - Lincoln, The True Conservative                |
| Mar 11 | Brian McKnight - Contested Borderlands                        |
| Apr 8  | Ed Bearss - To be announced                                   |
| May 13 | Flint Whitlock - Distant Bugles, Distant Drums                |
| Jun 10 | Joe Balicki - Archeology of Civil War Battlefields            |

## Reenactment of Sunday Service Prior to Battle of Antietam

Saint Paul's Episcopal Church in Sharpsburg, their congregation and its church building played an important role in the Battle of Antietam, serving as the principal Confederate hospital after the fighting. The battle was a defining point in the life of their community, and its largest annual festival, Sharpsburg Heritage Days, marks the anniversary of the fighting with a parade, historical programs and various community events.

To mark the 145th anniversary of the battle this year and as a part of Heritage Days, the church will be holding a special commemorative service on Sunday, September 16, at 10:00 a.m.

The service will be an approximate reenactment of the service held three days before the battle in 1862. They will use the historic liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer, period vestments and music. They will honor and pray for those who died on both sides of this historic battle. The sermon will be reflecting on the battle's legacy and the lessons it can impart to modern-day Christians. A special reception will be held after the service with nineteenth century fare.

They have extended a personal invitation to our Civil War Roundtable group to join them for this important service. They are located at 209 West Main Street, a block and a half southwest of the Square. Parking is available on the street and behind church via the alley.

For further information, please contact:

Mark A. Michael  
Rector, Saint Paul's Church  
301-432-7098  
mamichael@stjames.edu

## Book Review by Jim Hurdle

### **This Mighty Scourge: Perspectives on the Civil War**

by James M. McPherson

Oxford University Press, January 2007, \$28.00

This rather slim volume (221 pages of text plus notes and bibliography) contains sixteen essays discussing an array of topics. Most have appeared elsewhere but three, discussing Lee's goals at Gettysburg, Lincoln and Grant's opinions about Vicksburg and Lincoln's interpretation of his role as commander-in-chief, are new contributions.

Because these are individual essays on distinct topics, each provides succinct arguments that can be read as you have the time and then put aside for the next opportunity. Of course, James McPherson offers such strong scholarship that one barely digests the first essay before wanting to sample the next.

Of the sixteen, the final, "As Commander-In-Chief I Have a Right to Take Any Measure That May Best Subdue the Enemy," discusses Abraham Lincoln's controversial positions about the role of the President during wartime. This one is particularly recommended, even to the point of reading it alone, as arguments used by Lincoln to take controversial measures such as rescinding the right to habeas corpus and issuing the Emancipation Proclamation while the Constitution still permitted slavery asserted special powers for a "war President" that are still being argued today in the context of the war in Iraq.

## 25 Years Ago

Howard C. Westwood spoke to the Roundtable on September 14, 1982. His topic was "The Battle of Galveston." This was his 16<sup>th</sup> presentation to the Round table, and the eighth consecutive year he spoke at the September meeting.

## Invitation for all Civil War Reenactors and History Buffs to the Dedication of a Bronze Civil War Soldier Statue.

Saturday, September 29, 2007, at 1:00 PM  
 Location: 314 Belgrove Drive, Kearny, N.J.  
 The site of the New Jersey Home for Disabled Civil War Soldiers and Sailors, and the present location of the American Legion hall.

On September 29 the General Phil Kearny Memorial Committee will be dedicating a restored 1888 statue of a Civil War Infantryman which originally stood (1888-1933) in front of the New Jersey Home for Civil War Veterans. All Civil War reenactors and history buffs are invited to this event. The organizers ask that reenactors please register (no fee), as they plan to issue a dedication ribbon to all registered participants.

In the decades that followed the Civil War, thousands of New Jersey veterans lived their final years at the "Old Soldiers' Home" located in Kearny. For nearly fifty years, a six-foot tall statue of a Union Infantryman stood guard at the entrance of the home until the home was closed in 1933. The barracks were torn down, cannon rolled away and the silent sentinel statue was removed from his post, somehow severely damaged, eventually placed in storage and forgotten. Recently discovered by the members of the General Phil Kearny Memorial Committee, the group has raised nearly \$35,000 to have this statue restored to its former glory. The bronze soldier will be placed near where he originally stood. A 7-ton boulder from the Gettysburg Battlefield will serve as a pedestal.

If you would like to attend the dedication ceremony, please contact: Bill Stypke (w.stypke@att.net) or

Gen. Phil Kearny Memorial Committee  
 PO Box 483  
 Kearny, NJ 07032  
 201-991-8749

## Book Review by Gordon Berg

### **Shiloh and the Western Campaign of 1862**

By O. Edward Cunningham

Edited by Gary D. Joiner and Timothy B. Smith  
 Savas Beatie, April 2007, \$34.95

**S**hiloh. The word in ancient Hebrew means "place of peace" but in Civil War historiography it has come to be associated with the roiling cauldron of smoke and blood that erupted for two days in early spring in the fields and woods surrounding the rustic Methodist chapel above Pittsburg Landing on the Tennessee River.

Unfortunately, the battle there on April 6-7, 1862, has never been studied with the intense scrutiny given to the war's more familiar killing fields in the Eastern theater of operations. But for the troops who fought there and survived the carnage, Shiloh would forever conjure up images of the apocalypse and evoke nightmare visions of the end of days. More than 23,000 young men forever consecrated the battleground with their blood and even the most naïve soldiers and civilians were now convinced that Johnny would not come marching home anytime soon.

But is the dearth of modern scholarship sufficient justification for publishing a PhD dissertation written more than 40 years ago? Anyone who reads O. Edward Cunningham's meticulously researched **Shiloh and the Western Campaign of 1862** will probably answer a resounding yes. Written for the noted Civil War historian T. Harry Williams at Louisiana State University and, for the most part, deftly edited by Gary Joiner and Timothy Smith, Cunningham's work stands the test of time remarkably well.

Cunningham displays an encyclopedic familiarity with the regiments and personnel engaged in the battle. He convincingly argues that the Union forces were not completely surprised and routed on the first day nor were

the Confederate attacks overwhelmingly successful. Moving his analytic eye from first contact in the pre-dawn darkness on a farm track beyond Fraley field to the furious action around Shiloh meeting house, the Hornet's Nest along the Sunken Road (that, in reality, was not sunken at all), the Peach Orchard, and back again, Cunningham demonstrates that the battle quickly lost its strategic coherence and devolved into numerous savage fire fights where regimental courage and line officer competence usually determined success or failure.

Many of the troops in both armies had never before been in harm's way and the uncommon valor exhibited by the vast majority of them is astounding. Cunningham's descriptive vignettes name many of them and he uses their own words to convey their experiences. His meticulous comparisons of after action reports, survivor letters and diaries, and contemporary newspaper accounts allow him to challenge some of the myths that grew up after the battle and correct prevailing errors of fact, some of which have found their way into modern scholarship.

In their useful introduction, Joyner and Smith explain the prevailing schools of thought that have grown up over the years to explain the outcome of the battle. There are proponents favoring the untimely death of Confederate General Albert Sidney Johnston as the reason the Rebels didn't press home their successes on the first day; others contend the Confederate second-in-command General P. G. T. Beauregard mistakenly ordered operations to cease while there was still almost an hour of daylight on April 6 and one more attack would have driven Union forces into the Tennessee River or forced them to surrender. Some argue that only the arrival of fresh Union reinforcements from General Don Carlos Buell's Army of the Ohio during the night of April 6 allowed Grant to counterattack the next morning and snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. Cunningham evades entrapment into this type of causal reductionism and argues that it

was primarily an ignorance of the topography that precipitated the eventual Confederate defeat.

Excellent as it is, Cunningham's dissertation could have been improved prior to publication. The editors do correct factual errors in helpful footnotes and include a revised bibliography of works published since 1966. Perhaps because the author died in 1997 and was thus unable to participate in revisions, the editors were unwilling to tamper with his prose. But readers not already familiar with a basic understanding of the battle could be overwhelmed by the sheer number of individuals mentioned and the many regiments that appear in the narrative. A fuller treatment of the second day's action might have helped the reader appreciate Grant's fierce tenacity and understand why Beauregard's valiant but decimated legions wilted under the onslaught of unbloodied Union regiments and a merciless Tennessee sun.

But these are minor quibbles with an overwhelmingly excellent monograph. The publisher, Savas Beatie, has done its usual fine job of providing useful and plentiful maps drawn by Gary Joiner and the section of modern photographs provides the reader with a sense of place. Shiloh was one of the pivotal battles of the Civil War and deserves the bright, albeit 40 year-old, light that O. Edward Cunningham shines on it.

## 50 Years Ago

**O**n September 24, 1957, Richard Wayne Lykes spoke to the Round Table. His topic was "The Siege of Petersburg." On September 28, the Round Table enjoyed a field trip to the Petersburg Battlefield led by Thomas Harrison of the National Park Service.

In September 1957, President Eisenhower signed the CWRT Centennial Bill which established a National Commission for the celebration of the Civil War Centennial.

**Membership and Annual Dues For the 2007-2008 Program Year**

Annual Dues are \$30.00 (\$15.00 after January 31, 2008). The dues must be received by October 1, 2007, for you to continue receiving the newsletter. Please make your check payable to **The CWRT of DC**.

New Member       Renewal       Address Change      Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip (plus 4): \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Office Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Check here to receive the newsletter by email (preferred distribution method) instead of USPS mail.

The above information is for the membership files and will be published in the membership roster.

Please mail this form and your dues to: CWRT of DC Membership Committee  
 Kenneth R. Rice  
 4110 N. 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
 Arlington, VA 22207-3005

If you have any speaker or topic preferences for future meetings, please list on them on the back.

**Dinner Reservation Form For Tuesday, September 11, 2007.**

The deadline for reservations is September 5, 2007.

The cost is \$29.00 per person. Please make your check payable to CWRT of DC.

Member's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of people: \_\_\_\_\_

Guest's Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Cost of dinners: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Contribution to Edwin C. Bearss Award: \$\_\_\_\_\_  
 (Please see the description on the opposite side of this form.)

Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Needed in case the meeting must be cancelled .)

Total enclosed: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this form and your check to: Mr. John Restall  
 3324 Glenmore Dr.  
 Falls Church, VA 22041-3317

### **Get Serious about Preservation!**

This past June, the DC Roundtable awarded its annual Ed Bearss Preservation Award to the Friends of Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. The award, totaling \$1000, was given to the group at the request of the man himself – Ed Bearss. As all of you know, this is something the Round Table does every year to honor Ed and to repay him, in some small way, for speaking to us and leading our field trip for free – yes, without compensation.

We're not alone. Ed donates his time to many groups in order to spark interest in the Civil War and to build momentum to preserve the Civil War landscape. This is an important time, because more of that landscape is disappearing every year. Therefore, now is the time to save it.

Your dinner reservation form has a spot to make a contribution. In addition, the Bearss' Bear, to collect money for the same purpose, is on the table at every meeting. Think what five or ten dollars from each of you every month would add up to at the end of the year. Added to the monies that we manage to set aside from book raffles, etc., we could contribute more than \$1000 to battlefield preservation.

There are many deserving Civil War preservation efforts out there, some large like the Civil War Preservation Trust, and some small like the Friends of Chickamauga and Chattanooga. Ed manages every year to choose those who are most deserving, so let's help him out and help out a good cause. Literally, we are the people who can help save history.