

Sumter to Appomattox

The Official Newsletter of the New South Wales Chapter of
The American Civil War Round Table of Australia

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Please visit our website at www.americancivilwar.asn.au

A Message from the Chairman –

In my message in the last letter I intimated that "...we had turned the corner with our attendances ... with an increase of over 50% from the poorly attended February "boutique" meeting". I was wrong! The April meeting was the most poorly attended meeting we have ever had with only 13 people present and 4 of these were Jennifer Kirkby's guests who came to support the magnificent work she and Geoff Kay did in putting together and most interesting and challenging Quiz Night. Your Committee must now consider if our decision to go to monthly meetings was the right one. There were not enough people to conduct a raffle and the payment for the venue for the night had to come from our reserve funds. In blunt terms, the additional cost and work involved in organising the additional meetings is simply not worth the effort if members are not going to show up!

This month we commence our series on aspects of the life and times of Abraham Lincoln with some quite exciting presentations for the remainder of the year.. I ask that you make every effort to be at the May meeting to enable us to move forward in a positive way.

In the last Newsletter I referred to the initiative of one of our new Committee members, Geoff Kay, who had acquired a most interesting Civil War resource, two detailed maps of A2 size produced by the *National Geographic* magazine for the Civil War Centenary in 1961. Geoff was looking at the prospect of having these reproduced in full colour for members who might be interested in purchasing the maps at a nominal price. In contacting the magazine for permission to print these maps, *National Geographic* offered to provide us with 50 sets of these maps from their excess stock. This offer was gratefully accepted and we will now offer the maps to our members with whatever money we get being used to purchase equipment for use in our meetings. Well done Geoff, your initiative has benefited us all!

Lastly, I draw your attention to a new competition for members suggested by Jennifer Kirkby. Some great prizes have been donated for winners of this competition, so have a go, what have you to lose

Paul Kensey

Our Forthcoming Meetings

The May and June meetings of the NSW Chapter of ACWRTA will be held at the **Roseville Memorial RSL Club, Pacific Highway, Roseville**. Each meeting will commence with a bistro-style dinner at the Club from 6pm with the proceeding of the meeting proper to start at 7:15pm.

Our next meeting will be held on **Monday, May 14**, where **John Cook** who will speak on the topic:

**"A Surprise Nomination:
Lincoln's Path to the Presidency"**.

The following meeting in June is scheduled for **Monday, June 18**, with **John Dixon**, one of our new members, to give a presentation on:

"Lincoln - The Great Emancipator".

John Dixon is the senior History teacher at Knox Grammar School, Wahroonga and has made a study of his topic during his university History studies. You can be guaranteed a most interesting and informative presentation at this meeting.

As is our normal practice, it is hoped to have available a paper of the presentation to members at the conclusion of the meeting. Members living outside the Sydney Metropolitan Area will have the paper mailed to them with the next Newsletter and other members may receive the papers, on request.

Also, we have a number of papers from Terry Cartright's presentation in February when he spoke on the topic of *The Forgotten Hero – Major General George Henry Thomas – The Rock of Chickamauga*. This is an excellent paper, well researched and documented and provides a comprehensive profile of a most competent but less recognised general of the Union. He was a native of Virginia who, in remaining loyal to the Union, was disowned by his family from the beginning of the War. Copies of this paper will be available at our May meeting or by contacting John Cook (telephone 9412 3214).

It Happened in May

Hatches and Dispatches

May 10, 1863 – Thomas J (Stonewall) Jackson dies at Guinea Station, Virginia, aged 39 years;

May 11, 1864 – JEB Stuart is mortally wounded at the Battle of Yellow Tavern, Virginia;

May 23, 1824 – Ambrose Burnside (USA) is born in Liberty, Indiana;

May 28, 1818 – Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard (CSA) is born in St Bernard, Louisiana;

Command Changes

May 2, 1863 – JEB Stuart assumes command of the Confederate cavalry after “Stonewall” Jackson is mortally wounded in the Battle of Chancellorsville;

Battles

May 1, 1863 – Battle of Port Gibson, MS, which begins Grant’s Vicksburg Campaign;

May 1 - 4, 1863 – Battle of Chancellorsville, that results in stunning Confederate victory for Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia;

May 5, 1864 – Battle of the Wilderness begins;

May 8, 1864 – Fighting begins at Spotsylvania Court House, Virginia;

May 12, 1864 – Battle of Bloody Angle, Spotsylvania;

May 12, 1865 – The last land battle between large forces resulting in a Confederate victory takes place at Palmito Ranch, Texas;

May 16, 1863 – Battle of Champion Hill, Mississippi;

May 17, 1863 – Battle of Big Black River Bridge, MS;

May 18, 1863 – Siege of Vicksburg, MS, begins;

May 19, 1863 – Grant launches his first unsuccessful attack against the besieged Vicksburg;

May 23 – 26, 1864 – Battle of North Anna, Virginia;

May 25, 1862 – Jackson attacks the Federals in the First Battle of Winchester, VA and captures the town two days later;

May 27, 1862 – Battle of Slash Church (Hanover Court House);

May 31, 1862 – Battle of Seven Pines (Fair Oaks) where General Joseph Johnston (CSA) is severely wounded.

Other Significant Events

May 4, 1865 – Lincoln is buried in Springfield, Illinois;

May 9, 1865 – The trial of the 8 accused Lincoln assassination conspirators begins;

March 4, 1865 – Lincoln is inaugurated for a second term as President;

May 10, 1865 – Jefferson Davis is captured near Irwinville, Georgia;

May 16, 1861 – Tennessee is officially admitted to the Confederacy

May 20, 1861 – North Carolina becomes the 11th state to join the Confederacy whilst Kentucky issues a proclamation of neutrality;

May 29, 1865 – President Johnson grants amnesty and pardon to all who participated in “the existing rebellion”, with a few exceptions.

It Happened in June

HATCHES AND DESPATCHES

June 1, 1831 – John Bell Hood (CSA) is born in Owingsville, Bath County, Kentucky;

June 3, 1808 – Confederate President Jefferson Davis is born in Christian County, Kentucky;

June 5, 1864 – On Matagorda Island, Texas, 13 black members of the Union’s Corps de Afrique are hanged by Federal military authorities after convictions for mutiny;

June 5, 1864 – Brigadier General William E (Grumble) Jones (CSA) is killed in action in the Shenandoah Valley;

June 14, 1811 – Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* is born Litchfield, Conn;

June 14, 1864 – General Leonidas Polk, (CSA) is killed at Pine Mountain, Georgia during the Atlanta Campaign.

COMMAND AND POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS

June 17, 1862 – Braxton Bragg succeeds General Beauregard as Commander of the Western Department of the Confederate Army

April 22, 1861 – Robert E Lee is named the commander of the forces of Virginia;

It Happened in June (cont'd)

BATTLES / MILITARY ACTIONS

June 1 – 3, 1864 – Battle of Cold Harbor, Virginia;

June 1, 1862 – Second day of fighting in the Battle of Seven Forks;

June 6, 1862 – The Battle of Memphis, Tennessee;

June 8, 1862 - Confederate forces under "Stonewall Jackson, successfully fight off Federal attacks and achieve victory at the Battle of Cross Keys, Virginia;

June 9, 1863 – Battle of Brandy Station, Virginia, which is the largest cavalry battle ever fought on American soil. In this battle JEB Stuart was surprised by the Union forces commanded by Alfred Pleasanton and narrowly escapes defeat;

June 10, 1861 – Battle of Big Bethel, Virginia, is the first major battle of the Civil War. Although outnumbering the Confederates by more than four to one, the Union attack failed disastrously:

June 12 – 15, 1862 – JEB Stuart's spectacular four-day reconnaissance that develops into a ride around McClellan's army on the Virginia Peninsula;

June 27, 1864 – Battle of Kennesaw Mountain, Ga, results in a Confederate victory thus temporarily checking Sherman's march on Atlanta.

OTHER SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

June 4, 1862 – Southern planters burn huge stocks of cotton on the Yazoo and the Mississippi to prevent their capture;

June 19, 1862 – President Lincoln signs into law a measure prohibiting slavery in the territories of the United States;

June 20, 1863 – By presidential proclamation West Virginia is admitted to the Union as the 35th State;

June 23, 1861 – Federal balloonist Thaddeus Lowe observes and maps the Confederate lines over northern Virginia;

June 25, 1864 – At Petersburg, Federal engineers begin digging a tunnel towards Confederate lines which they hope will enable them to blow apart the Southern earthworks;

June 28, 1863 – Lee diverts Confederate forces from an intended drive to Harrisburg to march them towards Gettysburg;

June 30, 1865 – All eight alleged conspirators in the Lincoln assassination are found guilty.

Lincoln's Early Life – Part 2

This is the second in a series of articles that will support the presentations on the life and times of Abraham Lincoln to be given at our monthly meetings throughout 2007. In the first part of this series of articles we traced Lincoln's early life up until his marriage to Mary in 1842.

The Lincoln's first son, Robert Todd was born in August 1843 and late in that year they moved out of the Globe Tavern and began renting a three-room cottage in Springfield.

The following year, 1844, the Lincolns purchased their first home in Springfield for \$1500. At this time, Lincoln returned to his former home-town in Indiana whilst campaigning for Henry Clay, the Whig candidate for US President. Towards the end of 1844, Lincoln accepted William Hearden as a partner in his Springfield law practice.

In March 1846, the Lincoln's second son, Edward, was born and in August Lincoln was elected to the United States House of Representatives taking his seat the following year. It was while in Congress that Lincoln began to speak out publicly against the Mexican War, introducing his *spot resolutions* about the War. At this time, also, Lincoln became known for his opposition to slavery.

During 1848, Lincoln campaigned throughout New England for Zachary Taylor, the Whig candidate for president. His opposition to the Mexican War was not popular in his home state of Illinois and in 1849, at the conclusion of his term in Congress, Lincoln returned to full-time law practice in Springfield after failing in his attempt to be appointed Commissioner of the General Land Office. In March 1849, Lincoln was admitted to practise law before the United States Supreme Court. At this time he also received a patent for his device to lift vessels over shallows by inflating buoyant chambers (nothing ever came of this invention).

In February 1850, the Lincoln's second son, Edward, died and in December of that year, their third son William Wallace (Willy) was born with their fourth and last son, Thomas or "Tad" as he became known, born in April 1853.

1854 was to be a critical year in United States history and Lincoln's future greatness had its origins in the events of that time. His opposition to the infamous *Kansas-Nebraska Act* and the start of the implosion of the Whig Party over slavery, set the scene for his having a critical role in the future direction of the country as the decade progressed. Interestingly, Lincoln believed at this time that all the great advances in building the nation had been made in the previous century by the founding fathers. How wrong this turned out to be and what a great contribution was Lincoln to make in setting the country's future direction!

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Lincoln's Early Life Part 2 (cont'd)

It was in 1854 that Lincoln was elected again to the Illinois Legislature but he declined the office to become a candidate for the US Senate. He was defeated in this attempt to enter into Federal politics.

Although initially reluctant to leave the Whig Party in the hope the Party might be the party for all those supporting anti-slavery, he helped set up the new Republican Party in Illinois in 1856. During the presidential campaign in 1856 Lincoln delivered over 50 speeches in support of the Republican nominee, John C Fremont. On the home-front, the Lincolns added a second storey to their Springfield home.

Throughout 1857, Lincoln spoke out against the infamous *Dred Scott Decision* of the US Supreme Court and in 1858 Lincoln was nominated again to run for the US Senate against the Democrat Stephan Douglas. During the summer of 1858, Lincoln's national profile was raised by his famous series of seven debates with Douglas, one of which was the famous "*House Divided*" speech. In November 1858, Douglas defeated Lincoln in the Senate election.

Notwithstanding this further defeat for political office, Lincoln was becoming established at the national level and set the scene for his campaign and surprise nomination at the Republican candidate for the 1860 presidential election.

A Quiz Question – With a Prize!

Fresh from her role as Quizmaster at our April meeting, Jennifer Kirkby has made the suggestion that we reintroduce a component of our Newsletter from earlier times. This is where a question is posed and a prize given (say a bottle of fine wine) to the member submitting the first correct answer. A similar type of quiz is conducted by the Smithsonian Institution in their on-line Civil War Newsletter. Well, here is this month's question:

On June 30, 1862, near Glendale, Virginia, I saw General Robert E Lee and President Jefferson Davis observing the start of the Battle of Glendale. As Federal artillery fire began to fall on the area, I rode up to them and said:

"As Commander of this part of the field, I order you both to the rear! A single Yankee shell could deprive the Confederacy of its President and the Army of Northern Virginia of its Commander"

General Lee and President Davis then rode beyond the range of the Federal guns and away from the front line.

Who am I?

Answers to this question should be forwarded to John Cook by telephone to 9412 3214 or by e-mail to jcook@bigpond.net.au

What's in a Name?

Although the term "Civil War" is now most often used, not so long ago the name of the great conflict differed markedly in different parts of the country. Somewhat oddly, "Civil War" was used in the early years of the War, though "War of Southern Independence" was popular, whilst the North favoured "The Rebellion". Indeed, "The War of Rebellion" is the formal name given by Congressional fiat, which only gradually gave way to "Civil War" in the North. In contrast, the South gradually came to favour "War Between the States" in the years after Appomattox.

Other names for the conflict have been numerous with one researcher enumerating 120 such names and he clearly missed a few. Some of the more popular names have been:

The War of Separation
The War of Constitutional Liberty
The Confederate War
Mr Davis's War
Mr Lincoln's War
The Southern Rebellion
The War of Southern Rights
The War of Northern Aggression
The Late Unpleasantness
The War for Abolition
The War of Southern Liberty
The Second American Revolution
The War of Yankee Arrogance
The War of Southern Arrogance

None of these terms was completely satisfactory and, in common usage, "War Between the States" and "Civil War" for nearly a century despite the fact that they both refer to the same set of events and that neither is particularly accurate. A civil war is a dispute over control of the state, which was not at all the issue, since, aside from a few extreme fanatics, the South did not wish to take control of the United States but merely to secede from it. Similarly, "The War Between the States", aside from being grammatically poor, presupposes the Confederate political agenda.

The "War of Southern Independence" is accurate, whether one agrees or disagrees with the instigators of the War. The "War of the Slaveholders' Rebellion" is also accurate given the leadership of the secession, although neither of these would be satisfactory to all.

There is, of course, a perfectly accurate and politically neutral name that has never found much favour – the War of Secession!

- Source: *North and South, Volume 5, No.7*

This publication is the official newsletter of the New South Wales Chapter of the American Civil War Round Table of Australia. All inquiries regarding the Newsletter should be addressed to Brendan O'Connell, Secretary/Treasurer of the Chapter, by telephone on (02) 9449 3720, by post to PO Box 200, St Ives, NSW, 2075 or by e-mail to secretary@americancivilwar.asn.au