

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 www.americancivilwar.asn.au

A Message from the Chairman –

Although our first meeting for 2010 had the largest attendance for two years our last meeting in May was even larger! Bruce Dennett really wowed us with his most provocative but disarmingly logical presentation. I can only think how great it would have been if I had a teacher like him to teach me History at school.

The good news is that Bruce has agreed to speak to us again later in the year and his topic will be more than a little controversial. We are negotiating a presentation titled – *In Defence of George McClellan*. I'm sure that this will be a great night to round our year off in October/November. Please stay tuned for the notice for this meeting. I'm hoping that our series of great presentations will continue for our August meeting with our being able to get Paul Spencer, one of our members from South Australia, to leave Adelaide and come over to NSW to speak to us. Paul is a very knowledgeable Civil War scholar whose understanding of civil War issues underpins what will be a most informative and entertaining presentation. Details of the meeting are presented in the adjoining column of this Newsletter.

The second event is a garage sale and barbeque scheduled for the following Saturday at my home, when I hope will be able to provide members with some books to enhance their Civil War collection. These books and magazines that are for sale have been donated by Mr Alec Dalgleish and full details of the books and their sale are presented as the enclosure to this Newsletter.

Lastly, your Committee is after ideas for something different for our Christmas / End-of-Year function, which is normally held in late November or early December. Although we may not be able to surpass the function organised by Roger Dixon at the vineyard in the Hunter Valley, it would be great to have something we have not done before. Ideas to Brendan O'Connell, please. .

I hope to see you at our next meeting on August 23 and at the barbeque the following Saturday.

Our Next Meeting

Our next regular meeting for 2010 will be held at the **Roseville Memorial RSL Club, 64 Pacific Highway, Roseville** will be held on **Monday, August 23**. As is our custom, the meeting will commence with a bistro-style meal from 6pm with the meeting proper to start at 7:30pm.

As foreshadowed in the message to members in the adjoining column, our guest speaker for this meeting will be **Paul Spencer**, one of our members from South Australia whose presentation has the title:

Defenders of the Hornets' Nest

Come prepared to have your thoughts challenged and have a great time!

As is our custom, we will be seeking to provide a paper bringing together the proceedings of the meeting. To this end we propose to record Paul's presentation and develop a paper from this record of the meeting. What success we have in this regard will be sent to members with the next edition of our Newsletter.

Please make a special effort to come to this meeting and, if possible, bring a guest. You may be assured that the effort will be well worth it!

John Cook

It Happened in August

HATCHES AND DESPATCHES

August 6, 1811 – Judah Philip Benjamin, Attorney General and Secretary of State of the Confederacy is born in St Thomas, British West Indies;

August 27, 1811 – Hannibal Hamlin, US Vice-President under Lincoln is born in Paris Hill Maine;

August 31, 1822 – Fitz-John Porter (USA) is born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire;

COMMAND AND POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS

August 1, 1864 – Philip Sheridan is named Commander of the Army of the Shenandoah and charged with ridding the valley of Confederates especially Jubal Early

August 17, 1862 – JEB Stuart is assigned command of all cavalry of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia;

August 20, 1861 – Major General George B McClellan assumes command of the newly organised Department and Army of the Potomac.

WANTON KILLING AND DESTRUCTION

August 7, 1861 – The village of Hampton, Va, near Fort Monroe, is burned by Confederate forces;

August 13, 1831 – Nat Turner slave insurrection begins in Southampton County, Va, with 55 whites and about 100 blacks killed;

August 21, 1863 – Confederate guerrillas under command of Quantrill sack Lawrence, Kansas, killing about 150 men and boys and destroying over \$1.5 million in property;

August 25, 1863 – Following Quantrill's raid on Lawrence, Federals force some 20,000 people in Missouri from their homes which are then burned;

BATTLES / MILITARY ACTIONS

August 5, 1864 – Union forces under Admiral David Farragut defeat Confederates at the Battle of Mobile Bay;

August 9, 1862 – The Federal Army of Virginia under John Pope clashes with Stonewall Jackson's corps at the Battle of Cedar Mountain;

August 10, 1861 – Confederate troops are victorious at the Battle of Wilson's Creek, the major battle of the Civil War in Missouri;

August 11, 1862 – In a daring raid, Confederate guerrillas capture Independence, Mo.

BATTLES /MILITARY ACTIONS cont'd

August 15, 1864 – Federals capture the English-built Confederate cruiser *Georgia* off Lisbon, Portugal;

August 18, 1864 – The Battle of the Weldon Railroad in Virginia begins;

August 22, 1862 - In a raid on Catlett's Station, Virginia, JEB Stuart captures Union General Pope's baggage train, including Pope's papers;

August 26 – 30, 1862 – The Second Bull Run (or Manassas) Campaign ending in a Confederate victory;

OTHER SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

August 2, 1861 – Federal Congress passes the first national income tax measure calling for 3% of income over \$800:

August 4, 1861 – a meeting is held in New York to combat intemperance in the Federal army;

August 8, 1863 – In the wake of the Confederate defeat at Gettysburg, Lee offers to resign as Commander of the Army of Northern Virginia. Davis rejects the offer;

August 14, 1861 – Major General John C Fremont declares martial law in St Louis city and county;

August 19, 1861 - Confederate Congress agrees to an alliance with Missouri resulting in Missouri having two state governments, Federal and Confederate;

August 29, 1863 - The Confederate *H L Hunley* sinks in Charleston Harbour, the five-man crew of the submarine are lost.

Some Sayings from the End of the War ...

"War is cruelty and you cannot refine it ... when peace does come, you may count on me for anything. Then I will share with you my last cracker"

General William T Sherman, 1865

"The people must be left with nothing but their eyes to weep with over the war"

General Philip Sheridan, 1865

Obviously, two very different officers!

Books from Amazon.com...

If you are interested in purchasing books and/or DVDs on Civil War topics, it is always worth a look at Amazon's website www.amazon.com. In recent times a number of interesting titles have been shown and it is considered worthwhile to share these with members. One of these is a hardcover book authored by Donald Stoker and published by Oxford University Press USA, which is titled:

The Grand Design: Strategy and the U.S Civil War

The author gives informed opinion on the North and the South's military and political linkages. It is a superbly written, well-researched and detailed analysis of how the Union strategy of simultaneous strikes at the Confederacy's critical points and its centre destroyed the Confederacy's capacity to fight and helped lead to its defeat. In particular, the latter part of the book provides a good summary of the strategic forces at work that led to Union victory. This is not a book for anyone whose Civil War interests focus on the individual soldier in battle or the military arms and equipment used throughout the War. Rather the book focuses on the critical roles played in conducting the actual War as played effectively by President Lincoln and ineffectively by the Confederacy's Jefferson Davis.

Priced at **\$US18:45**, (plus postage) this book offers a Civil War study that reveals why strategy mattered to Union victory. Clearly and forcefully this book shows how the Union learned to use its military force in pursuit of its political objectives.

It is worth considering the comments on this book from a couple of the leading historians and authors:

"Stoker's grand overview of strategy is a welcome introduction to the big picture of the Civil War. Too often, the American Civil War is read as an ill-fitting string of tactical incidents, determined almost entirely by the personalities of successful generals. Looked at in Stoker's bird's-eye fashion, the large-scale strategic picture, as well as the large-scale strategic mistakes, finally begin to become clear."

-- Allen C. Guelzo, Director, Civil War Era Studies at Gettysburg College, author of Lincoln and Douglas

"Donald Stoker's book offers a new way of looking at both the military and political history of the Civil War, and does so from a strategic vantage point far above that to which we have been accustomed. The Grand Design represents an important advance in our understanding of this momentous event."

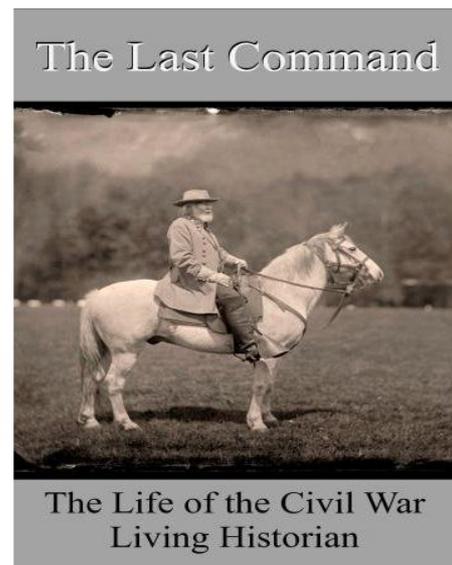
- Steven E. Woodworth, Texas Christian University, author of Nothing but Victory: The Army of the Tennessee, 1861-1865 and co-author of The Oxford Atlas of the Civil War

Should any member wish to find out more about the focus of this book, an excellent "sampler" by the author is provided as the first article in the latest publication of North and South, (Vol 12, No. 3, September 2010).

Amazon's DVDs

Perusal of the Amazon website has revealed a most interesting DVD involving various interviews and presentations of living historians, viz., reenactors, portraying figures from the American Civil War. This DVD, which is reasonably priced at **\$US15:00** (plus postage) is manufactured on demand when ordered through Amazon, which usually involves an additional 1 – 2 days for processing order.

Presented below, is the cover for this DVD showing a living historian in the role of Robert E Lee.



This DVD will have an obvious attraction to reenactors, but will likely have an appeal to other Civil War enthusiasts who might wish to learn more about the activities of living historians. Really, for \$15 you can't go wrong, even though it is in American currency.

Annual Subscriptions

Our Secretary/Treasurer, Brendan O'Connell, has advised that the annual subscription for the NSW Chapter of ACWRTA is now due. The current rates are:

\$40 pa for members living in the Sydney Metropolitan Area, Which includes a \$10 venue hire charge;

\$30 pa for all other members.

As has been our policy in previous years, payment of this subscription covers all members of the one family.

Members will receive an account for this annual subscription by mail in the coming weeks and you are asked to respond with early payment to Brendan O'Connell by mail at PO Box 200, St Ives 2075, thus facilitating the smooth and efficient conduct of our Chapter's activities.

Henry Wager Halleck

Henry Halleck had the nickname “Old Brains” because of his supposed intellectual acumen. This was thought to stretch especially to his military knowledge and understanding, particularly the writings of Henri-Antoine Jomini. The Swiss-born veteran of Napoleon’s campaigns was the military theorist with which Civil War commanders were most familiar. His classic work, *The Art of War*, first published in 1837, was accessed by 19th Century West Point trained officers who knew French and was translated into English, albeit as a bad translation, in 1854.

The debate over how and to what degree Jomini’s writings influenced the military events of America’s Civil War is unlikely to ever be fully settled. We do know, however, that they did have a significant impact on Henry Halleck (pictured below).



Halleck wrote his own version of Jomini’s *Art of War* when in 1846 he published his *Elements of Military Art and Science or Course of Instruction in Strategy, Fortification, Tactics of Battles, Etc.* This publication reveals Halleck’s a serious misunderstanding of Jomini’s teachings where he writes:

“Strategy is defined to be the art of directing masses on decisive points or the hostile movement of armies beyond the range of other’s cannon”

Jomini, in his short definition, writes that strategy:

“...is the art of making war upon the map and comprehends the whole theatre of operations.”

Halleck’s vision of what constitutes strategy rests largely in what Jomini would term “Grand Tactics”. It includes, also, a little what, today, we might define as the operational level of war. Jomini’s vision as specified by his definition, lies largely in the operational realm but also reaches into what present day thinking would deem to be the strategic arena.

Halleck possessed a too narrow view and failed to grasp what Jomini tried to convey!

Did You Know?

- In 1810, the then Captain Winfield Scott, having remarked that in the event of war he would have to go into battle with two pistols, one for the enemy and one for the general. He was promptly charged with mutiny by the officer to whom he was referring – the corrupt, pusillanimous and traitorous Major General James Wilkinson. Winfield Scott was convicted by a not unsympathetic court Martial and given the sentence of being suspended from active duty for one year.
- Chief Justice Roger Taney, who wrote the majority view in the infamous Dred Scott case in 1857 and who though a staunch Unionist opposed some of Lincoln’s emergency war measures, was married to Anne Key, the sister of Francis Scott Key, who wrote the *Star Spangled Banner*.
- David Bailey Freeman, born in Georgia on May 1, 1850 or 1851 (both years are recorded in the records), is generally cited as the youngest Confederate soldier in the Civil War. He enlisted on May 16, 1862 and served three years as a regular private in Company D of the 6th Georgia Cavalry. He survived the War and lived to 1929.
- Asked to help escort President Elect Lincoln to Washington for his inauguration in 1861, Ward Lamon, one of Lincoln’s oldest friends, armed himself well. He carried no fewer than six weapons, two revolvers, two derringers and two knives.
- During the 1850s, the New Orleans militia included companies of German Jaegers, Spanish Cazadores, French Lancers and Creole Grenadiers as well as Native American Artillery. In those times the *Native American* title was used by the white Anglo-Saxon Protestant Americans when they weren’t using the term Real Americans.

The Privileges of Rank?

There was an orderly in one of our regiments and he and the corporal always slept together. Well, the other night, the corporal had a baby, for the corporal turned out to be a woman! She’d been in three or four fights!

- Union soldier Solomon Newton
10th Massachusetts Infantry

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 the Secretary/Treasurer of the Chapter by telephone on 9449 3720 or at PO Box 200, St Ives, NSW, 2075 or by e-mail to secretary@americancivilwar.asn.au