



General Orders

Barnes' Texas Brigade

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2012

www.houstoncivilwar.com

OCTOBER 2012 MEETING
Thursday, October 18, 2012

The HESS Club
5430 Westheimer Rd @ Westheimer Way
6:00 Cash Bar
7:00 Dinner & Meeting

E-Mail Reservation is Preferred;
at drzuckero@sbcglobal.net
or call Don Zuckero at (281) 479-1232
by 6 PM on Monday Oct. 15, 2012
Dinner \$28; Lecture Only \$10

***** Reservations are Required *****
FOR BOTH DINNER and LECTURE ONLY

THE HCWRT PRESENTS

Craig L. Symonds, Ph.D.
Speaking on
"Lincoln and His Admirals"

The Houston Civil War Round Table is pleased to present Dr. Symonds. The topic of discussion will be "Lincoln and His Admirals".

Abraham Lincoln began his presidency admitting that he knew "but little of ships," but like many other spheres of knowledge, Lincoln knew more than he let on. He had spent time as a riverboatman in his youth, and in fact was the only president ever to hold a patent, on a device to lift riverboats over shoals.

What knowledge he had he put to best use. He came quickly to preside over the largest national armada to that time, not eclipsed until World War I. Written by naval historian Craig L. Symonds, *Lincoln and His Admirals* unveils an aspect of Lincoln's presidency unexamined by historians until now. It reveals how he managed the men who ran the naval side of the Civil War, and how the activities of the Union Navy ultimately affected the course of the war.

Beginning with a gripping account of the attempt to re-supply Fort Sumter -- a comedy of errors that

shows all too clearly the fledgling president's inexperience -- Symonds traces Lincoln's steady growth as a wartime commander-in-chief. Absent a Secretary of Defense, he would eventually become de facto commander of joint operations along the coast and on the rivers. That involved dealing with the men who ran the Navy: the loyal but often cranky Navy Secretary Gideon Welles, the quiet and reliable David G. Farragut, the flamboyant and unpredictable Charles Wilkes, the ambitious ordnance expert John Dahlgren, the well-connected Samuel Phillips Lee, and the self-promoting and gregarious David Dixon Porter.



Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles

Lincoln was remarkably patient; he often postponed critical decisions until the momentum of events made the consequences of those decisions evident. But Symonds also shows that Lincoln could act decisively. Disappointed by the lethargy of his senior naval officers on the scene, he stepped in and personally directed an amphibious assault on the Virginia coast, a successful operation that led to the capture of Norfolk, and the Confederate decision to abandon the ironclad *Merrimack/Virginia*. The man who knew "but little of ships" had transformed himself into one of the great naval strategists of his age.

About Dr. Symonds



Dr. Craig L. Symonds

Dr. Craig L. Symonds is Professor Emeritus of History at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. The first person to win both the Naval Academy's "Excellence in Teaching" award (1988) and its "Excellence in Research" award (1998), he also served as chairman of the History Department from 1988 to 1992, and received the Department of the Navy's Superior Civilian Service medal three times.

He was Professor of Strategy at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island from 1971 to 1974, and at the Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth, England (1994-1995). Symonds is the author or editor of 25 books, including prize-winning biographies of Joseph E. Johnston (1992), Patrick Cleburne (1997) and Franklin Buchanan (1999), as well as the American Heritage History of the Battle of Gettysburg (2001). *Decision at Sea: Five Naval Battles that Shaped American History* won the Theodore and Franklin D. Roosevelt Prize for Naval History in 2006.

His 2008 book, *Lincoln and His Admirals: Abraham Lincoln, The U.S. Navy, and The Civil War* won the Barondess/Lincoln Prize as the best Lincoln book of the year from the Civil War Round Table of New York, the Laney Prize, the Lyman Prize, the Lincoln Prize, and the Abraham Lincoln Institute Book Award. He also won the Nevins-Freeman Award in 2009. His latest work is *The Battle of Midway*, published by Oxford University Press in October 2011.

OCTOBER QUIZ

By Jim Godlove

One of Lincoln's admirals was the son of the Commodore who captured the HMS Essex in the War of 1812. Joining the US Navy in 1829, he steadily moved up in rank. He was named commander of the Mississippi River Squadron in 1862 and was active in supporting Grant's Vicksburg Campaign. His promotion to Rear Admiral was dated July 4, 1863 – the day Vicksburg surrendered.

Leading the Squadron in the 1864 Red River Campaign, he became one of the most successful cotton thieves of the Civil War. Carrying stencils with "CSA" and "USN" on them, his sailors would seize cotton bales after marking them. They would then claim they were seizing Confederate government property, which could be sold under the navy's prize laws.



A foster brother of Adm. Farragut, who was the head of the "Cotton Stealing Association of the United States Navy"?

COMMANDER'S CORNER

By John Barnes

Next month's meeting on November 15 will be unique in the annals of our Round Table, at least as far as I know. It will be held "offsite," at the Nau Civil War Collection at Silver Eagle Distributors, 7777 Washington Avenue, Houston, TX 77007. Our meeting will begin at the normal time of 6 p.m. Cocktails and dinner will be served. There will be valet parking.

John L. Nau, III, our Vandiver Award honoree earlier this year, won't be able to join us, unfortunately. However, his curator, Dr. Sally Anne Schmidt, will serve as our hostess and will deliver a talk, "Collecting the Civil War: Highlights from the Nau Civil War Collection."

Next month's newsletter will contain more information. One of the examples we will be seeing is an extremely rare original example of the Davis Guard medal, the only medal for valor ever awarded by the Confederacy. It was struck in commemoration of the stunning Confederate victory at Sabine Pass, Texas on Sept. 8, 1863.

We will need as accurate a count as possible for those who plan to join us. So if you are coming, either let us know at this month's meeting, or you can send either me or Don Zuckero an email at John.Barnes2@bp.com or drzuckero@sbcglobal.net respectively.

Thanks very much and I look forward to seeing you there.

OCTOBER BOOK RAFFLE

By Donnie Stowe

I hope I'm not alone in thanking the HCWRT Board in picking the HESS Club as our new meeting place. I certainly think it is a much better venue for the money than the Briar Club.

But on to our October book raffle; beginning with **THE CIVIL WAR SOURCEBOOK – A Traveler's Guide**, by Chuck Lawliss. The second book for this month is **THE EMERGENCE OF LINCOLN: Prologue to Civil War 1859-1861** by Allan Nevins and is donated by James Godlove. Also included in this month's raffle is **The New York Times COMPLETE CIVIL WAR 1861-1865** which is the complete coverage of every campaign and battle. Included in this volume is 104,960 Eyewitness Accounts & Articles, and the companion DVD-ROM. The fourth and final selection is **THE FREDERICKSBURG CAMPAIGN** by Frank O'Reilly – Donor is Martha Campbell.

Members are encouraged to donate some of your well-read books or a small monetary donation for purchase of books to continue a valuable support to the HCWRT Raffle.

BITS AND PIECES

By Donnie Stowe

Did You Know? - The second major clash in the region of Manassas, Virginia, lasted for two full days of about fourteen hours each. Such was the fury of the Second Battle of Bull Run (August 29-30, 1862) that every minute of the conflict saw an average of fourteen men killed or wounded.

Civil War Quote: "The evening (of Lincoln's assassination) was Good Friday, the saddest day in the whole calendar for the Christian Church, henceforth in this country to be made sadder, if possible, by the memory of our nation's loss."

- Matthew Simpson, Methodist Episcopal Church bishop, in his speech at Lincoln's funeral, May 4, 1865.

Strange Fact - Federal guards picked up a pretty girl who was smuggling quinine through the line to rebels in Fauquier County, Virginia, carrying the medicine sewn into her skirts. She landed in Washington's Old Capital Prison but was released when she was discovered to be Louisa P. Buckner, niece of the postmaster general of the United States, Montgomery Blair.

Letters from the Field - Oh, the responsibility for the lives of such men as these! Well, my darling, their fate and that of our beloved Southland will be settled where your glorious brown eyes rest on these scraps of penciled paper – your soldier's last letter, perhaps.

- Confederate Major General George E. Pickett, in a letter to his future wife, Sally, July 3, 1863, just before his disastrous charge at Gettysburg on the same day.

Strange Fact - At the First Battle of Bull Run (First Manassas) on July 21, 1861, Frederick Hubbard of the Washington Artillery of New Orleans, who wore gray, was reunited with his brother, Henry Hubbard of the 1st Minnesota infantry, who wore the blue. The brothers were wounded, and by coincidence placed side by side in a stable, which served as a hospital. It was the first time they had seen each other in seven years.

Did You Know? - The legendary Wild West gunfighter James Butler "Wild Bill" Hickok fought alongside Union supporters in Bloody Kansas before the Civil War. After the Confederacy was formed, he served as a Union scout.



**SEE YOU AT
THE HESS CLUB !**

2012 - 2013 SPEAKERS CAMPAIGN – THE HESS CLUB

Oct 18, 2012 Craig Symonds - "*Lincoln and His Admirals*"

Nov 15, 2012 Sally Anne Schmidt – Collecting the Civil War: Highlights from the Nau Civil War Collection. *** (At Silver Eagle Distributors, 7777 Washington Ave., Houston, TX.)

Dec 13, 2012 John C. Waugh – "*Re-electing Lincoln*"

Jan 17, 2013 Ed Bearss - *To Be Announced*

Feb 21, 2013 Carol Berkin - "*Civil War Wives*"

Mar 21, 2013 James Morgan - "*The Battle of Ball's Bluff*"

Apr 18, 2013 Peter Mullen - "*Civil War Medicine*"

May 16, 2013 Scott Bowden - "*Robert E. Lee*"

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Houston Civil War Round Table
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