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General Orders

Altavilla's Brigade

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March
2023



MARCH, 2023 MEETING
Thursday, March 16, 2023

Rudi Lechner's Restaurant
2503 South Gessner Road
6:00 (or sooner) Dinner
7:00 Program Begins

E-mail reservations are preferred. Please
e-mail Barry Brueggeman at
bgbrueg@aol.com or call 281 480-1130
by 6 pm Monday, March 13, 2023

***** Reservations are Required *****

There is no cost for dues-paid members.
\$10.00 charge for visitors.

The HCWRT Presents
Jeffrey Hunt
speaking on:

“Rappahannock Station”

Contrary to popular belief, the Eastern Theater during the late summer and fall of 1863 was anything but inconsequential. In September 1863, the post-Gettysburg stalemate between Lee and Meade dissolved as each transferred parts of their armies to the battlegrounds around Chattanooga. Lee's early October offensive drove Meade backwards 46 miles toward Washington, but came to grief at Bristoe Station in a bloody clash with Meade's

rear guard. Unable to supply his troops so far north, Lee pulled back to Culpeper County, destroying the Orange & Alexandria railroad as he withdrew to slow the Union pursuit.

As the Army of the Potomac inched forward, Lee undertook a bold strategy to hold the Rappahannock line and lure Meade into a deadly trap. Pressured by Washington to fight but denied strategic flexibility, Meade launched a risky offensive to force his way over the river and bring on a decisive battle. That effort saw the Federals win a handy victory at Kelly's Ford and a stunning triumph at Rappahannock Station, where they destroyed two entire Confederate brigades. Newly uncovered evidence shatters many of the myths surrounding Rappahannock Station, making it possible to reveal how the fight actually unfolded, the real reason for Confederate defeat, how close Lee came to winning, and why Meade failed to exploit his unexpected victory despite gaining, however briefly, the upper hand in his deadly duel with Lee.



Jeffrey Hunt

About Jeffrey Hunt

Jeffrey William Hunt is the Director of the Texas Military Forces Museum at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas, which is the official museum of the Texas National Guard, and an Adjunct Professor of History at Austin Community College, where he has taught since 1988. Prior to taking the post at the Texas Military Forces Museum in 2007, he was the Curator of Collections and Director of the Living History Program at the Admiral Nimitz National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, Texas for 11 years.

He holds a bachelor's degree in government and a master's in history, both from the University of Texas at Austin, and is a veteran reenactor, with 35 years of experience conducting, participating in and hosting a wide variety of events ranging from the War of 1812 through the Vietnam War.

Jeff is the recipient of the Gettysburg Civil War Round Table's 2018 Distinguished Book Award, and the Chicago Civil War Round Table's Edwin Cole Bearss Award for Outstanding Civil War Scholarship in 2022. In 2013, Mr. Hunt was appointed an honorary Admiral in the Texas Navy by Governor Rick Perry, in recognition of his efforts at the Texas Military Forces Museum to tell the story of the Texas Navy during the period of the Texas Revolution and Republic.

Mr. Hunt's is the author of *The Last Battle of the Civil War: Palmetto Ranch, Meade and Lee at Bristoe Station, The Problems of Command and Strategy After Gettysburg, From Brandy Station to the Buckland Races, August 1 to October 31, 1863, and Meade and Lee at Rappahannock Station: The Army of the Potomac's First Post-Gettysburg Offensive: From Kelly's Ford to the Rapidan, October 21 to November 21, 1863.*

Mr. Hunt is also a contributor to the *Essential Civil War Curriculum, The Revised Handbook of Texas, The Gale Library of Daily Life, American Civil War, and North & South Magazine.*

The final book in his post-Gettysburg Series, *Meade and Lee at Mine Run*, is forthcoming from Savas Beatie later this year.



PRESIDENT'S POST

By Keith Altavilla

Hello again to everyone at the Round Table. Like many of you, I was stunned to be flipping the calendar to March, all of a sudden into the third month of the year! Time does fly when you have good speakers and good company, and I am happy to have spent the last several months leading this organization, enjoying your company and the presentations of our speaker lineup.

Those who were able to join us in February saw Shane Makowicki give a detailed and entertaining presentation on Ambrose Burnside and the North Carolina coast. While Shane was a late addition to the schedule, it was an outstanding evening, the kind our Round Table always seeks to provide. Coming in March is Jeff Hunt, following up on his 2021 presentation by looking at Rappahannock Station, another important sequence in the fall of 1863. Those of you who saw Jeff on that occasion will remember he has much to tell us about a period where it only seems as if little happened.

With this year's campaign coming to a close in just a few more meetings, now is the time to start thinking about next campaign. We will be continuing our drive for membership renewals, so please get ahead of the game and turn in your dues for next year to Barry, either in person at the meeting or by mail (Barry's address is on the membership application). I also want to reiterate my call from last time about joining Round Table leadership. We always want to make sure our board represents our members,

and takes advantage of their backgrounds and skills. If you have an interest in stepping into such a role, please let us know.

I look forward to seeing everyone at Rudi's!

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

By Michael Clennan

Thursday March 16th is coming! Let's celebrate with a hearty German meal and beer. Winter will be over soon and spring will be breaking out!

Arrive early to visit with our old and new members. There's always plenty to talk about and enjoy. Bring an old or new friend for this event; they will appreciate your invitation. This is a great time to join for a 12-month Houston Civil War Round Table membership and get 15 months. President Keith has another outstanding Civil War lecture picked out for us. Don't sit at home and miss this evening!

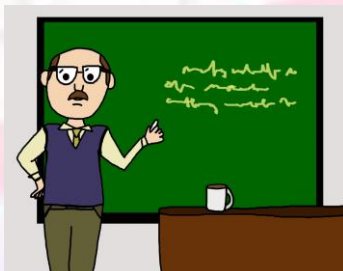
Finally, please be sure to RSVP with Barry no later than 6 pm Monday, March 13th.

MARCH QUIZ

By Jim Godlove

Question: The commander of the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division of Wright's VI Corps was a 24-year old West Point graduate. His most famous service in the Civil War occurred on May 10, 1864 during the Battle of Spotsylvania where he led 12 regiments in a temporary breakthrough against the "Mule Shoe."

Who was this New Yorker?

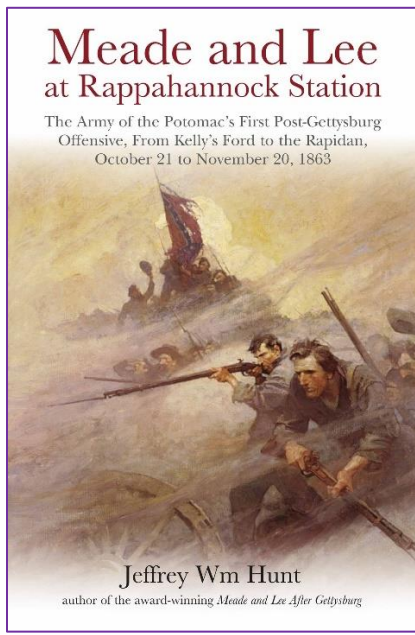


PERSONALITIES OF THE CIVIL WAR: **JOHN BANKHEAD MAGRUDER**

John Bankhead Magruder, born in Port Royal, Virginia in 1807, graduated from the U. S. Military Academy in 1830. Magruder, known as "Prince John" due to his flamboyance and theatrical flair, attained a reputation for his social graces and etiquette. He served in various capacities over the next 31 years, including action during the Mexican War, where he learned the value of deceiving and flanking forces outnumbering his own. Magruder also began practicing law while stationed in San Diego in the 1850's.

Once Virginia seceded from the Union, he resigned his commission and was appointed a colonel in the Confederate Army. Due to his actions in Virginia early in the war, Magruder was promoted to major general. During the 1862 Peninsula Campaign, Magruder skillfully utilized the tactics he learned in Mexico by constantly marching his forces to deceive the enemy and ordering sporadic artillery barrages. Later that year, he was reassigned to command the District of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. Magruder soon began making plans to retake Galveston from Union forces. These plans culminated in a Confederate victory at the Battle of Galveston in 1863.

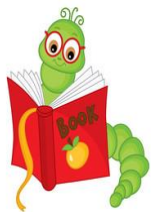
Following the war, Magruder spent time in Mexico, then returned to the U. S. He died in Houston in 1871 at the age of 63, and is interred at Galveston's Episcopal Cemetery.



BOOK RAFFLE By Donnie Stowe

For those of you that missed our last meeting, all I can say is you missed a great presentation and speaker with Shane Makowicki and his talk on General Ambrose Burnside's genius commanding combined operations in North Carolina. So please try and make this month's meeting; we'd love to see you!

And speaking of this month's meeting, I'm starting off the raffle with **HOOD'S TEXAS BRIGADE IN POETRY AND SONG** by Colonel Harold B. Simpson. This volume should interest not only the Civil War historian, but also the Texas collector, the poet, and the musician. Another book this month is **REMINISCENCES OF CONFEDERATE SERVICE,**

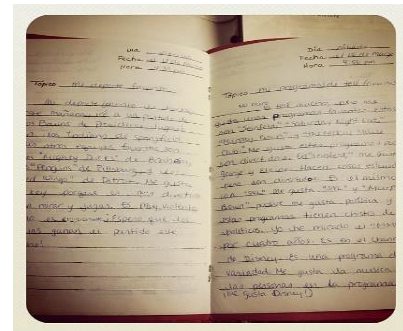


1861-1865 by Captain Francis W. Dawson, C.S.A. and edited by Bell I. Wiley. As is noted in the introduction, this is the only book-length memoir of an English officer in Confederate service and is a donation from Rice University's Jefferson Davis Association c/o Lynda Crist. Our next selection is **GETTYSBURG: A JOURNEY IN TIME** by William A. Frassanito. This book is described as a "unique example of photographic detective work" whereby the battle

is re-created as if it was a contemporary news event. Another offering this month is **THIS REPUBLIC OF SUFFERING** by Drew Gilpin Faust. This volume is an eye-opening study of America's shock and struggle to comprehend the meaning and stark reality of the carnage of the Civil War. Another book along similar lines is **NOT WAR BUT MURDER: Cold Harbor 1864** by Ernest B. Furgurson.

For biographies, we have **JEFFERSON DAVIS: The Man and His Hour** by William C. Davis. This book is from the estate of Dale Troth, a former member of the HCWRT. Also being offered this month is **THE ROAD TO GLORY** by Samuel J. Martin. This is about Confederate General Richard S. Ewell and is a donation from Lynda Crist.

Other books in this month's raffle are **THE ARMY of TENNESSEE, RICHMOND REDEEMED: The Siege at Petersburg, THE COMING FURY, A SCYTHE of FIRE,** and more. To see the entire offering and get a chance to take a couple home, please come to the meeting and bring a friend.



SUBMISSIONS WANTED By Roland Bienvenu

I wanted to take this opportunity to invite our members to consider submitting materials to me for possible inclusion in upcoming newsletters.

In the past, we've published reviews of Civil War, military, or history museums, poetry, members' photos, soldiers' journals or diaries, book reviews, and other articles of interest to Civil War "buffs." If interested, please contact me at newsletter@houstoncivilwar.com.



HOUSTON CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

The Houston Civil War Round Table is dedicated to the study of the civilian, military, and cultural aspects of United States history during the period of 1861 – 1865 and to the preservation of historical sites and artifacts. For additional copies of this form please go to www.HoustonCivilWar.com

Membership Type

(CHECK ONE BOX ONLY.)

- \$50 – Individual
- \$60 – Family
- \$25 – Student/Faculty or Out-of-Town
- Existing Member - Address / Information Update Only

JOINING BETWEEN JANUARY 1 AND MAY 31

NON-RENEWING MEMBERS JOINING IN THE MONTHS OF JANUARY THROUGH MAY WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE ENROLLED AS MEMBERS FOR THE CURRENT AND FOLLOWING YEAR'S SPEAKERS' SERIES ("CAMPAIGN").

Name: _____
(FIRST, MIDDLE, LAST)

Address: _____

City: _____ St _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____ Cell Home Work

Email Address: _____

In which format would you like to receive your newsletter?

Email (PDF) U.S. Postal Service (Printed)

How did you learn about us? _____

FOR FAMILY MEMBERSHIPS ONLY

Family Member Name: _____
(FIRST, MIDDLE, LAST)

Relationship to Applicant: _____

Phone: _____ Cell Home Work

Email Address: _____

Note: For memberships or subscriptions outside the U.S., extra cost of postage to mail the newsletter may be added. Cost will vary; please write or email to inquire.

Mail your completed application and dues to: Houston Civil War Round Table
C/O Barry G. Brueggeman
3706 Lonnie Wood Drive
Houston, TX 77059

2022 – 2023 SPEAKERS CAMPAIGN

Mar. 16, 2023 Jeffrey Hunt: *“Rappahannock Station”*
Apr. 20, 2023 Jonathan M. Steplyk: *“Fighting Means Killing: Civil War Soldiers and the Nature of Combat”*
May 18, 2023 Reserved for the 2023 Vandiver Award Recipient

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