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# General Orders

## *Altavilla's Brigade*

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Jan.  
2024



**JANUARY, 2024 MEETING**  
Thursday, January 18, 2024  
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](mailto:bgbrueg@aol.com) or call (281) 480-1130 by 6 pm Monday, January 15, 2024

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

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

## The HCWRT Presents Richard McCaslin Speaking on:

### **“Lee in the Shadow of Washington”**

Robert E. Lee spent his fifty-fourth birthday, January 19, 1861, in his room at Fort Mason, Texas, reading Edwin Everett's recently published biography of George Washington. Why? Because Lee lived within the shadow of Washington, who had been presented to him from birth as a proper role model. When Lee faced a similar call for revolution, he read this most recent work on Washington for an answer to the riddle of what to do as the country divided.

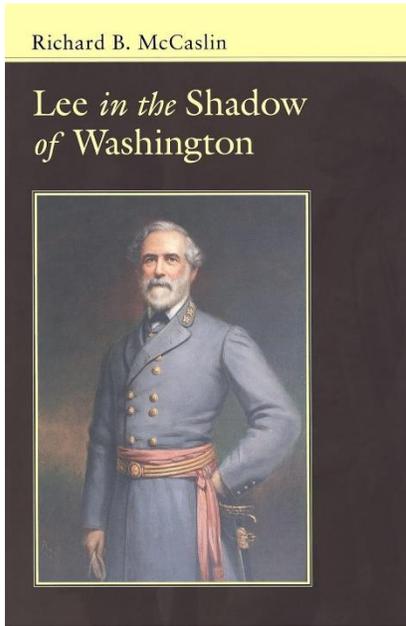
Called to lead, Lee made himself the principal military leader in an effort to establish a new nation, like Washington. In doing so, he wore a colonel's uniform like Washington, rode a horse bearing the name of one of his idol's favorite mounts, Traveller, and carried one of Washington's swords with him. Defeated, Lee devoted the rest of his life to enhancing his idol's legacy as president of Washington College.

Three issues dominate the voluminous historiography of Lee: his decision regarding secession, his military operations, and his conduct in defeat. Many authors have briefly noted Lee's reverence for Washington, but few have fully explored the impact of this. Raised with Washington as his model, Lee obeyed the call to lead his people in a revolution as Washington had done. He made his army the focus of the war, and he tried to win like Washington. The key to winning the war for Lee, as for Washington, was to force his foe to



*Richard McCaslin*

negotiate before his own support dissipated. To this end, Lee sought decisive battles that he assumed would win the war while publicly invoking the legacy of the Revolution to motivate his dwindling army. Defeat crushed Lee because it meant that he had failed to meet the standard set by the man he revered.



## About Richard McCaslin

Richard B. McCaslin, Director of Publications for the Texas State Historical Association (TSHA), retired as the TSHA Professor of Texas History at the University of North Texas as the author or editor of nineteen books. The list includes *Lee in the Shadow of Washington*, which won a Laney Prize and Slatten Award and was nominated for a Pulitzer, *Tainted Breeze: The Great Hanging at Gainesville, Texas, October 1862*, which earned a Tullis Prize and AASLH commendation, *Fighting Stock: John S. "Rip" Ford of Texas*, which received a Pate Award and Bates Award, *At the Heart of Texas: One Hundred Years of the Texas State Historical Association, 1897-1997*, which won an Award of Merit from the Texas Philosophical Society, and *Saratoga on the Cibolo: Sutherland Springs, Texas*, and *Texas Ranger Captain William L. Wright*, each of which got a

Publication Award from the San Antonio Conservation Society. The Wright book also received an Honorable Mention in the competition for the Locke Award. His Tennessee volume for the Portraits of Conflict series received the Douglas Southall Freeman Award, and the series, for which he wrote three volumes, earned an AASLH commendation. McCaslin's edited works include an annotated edition of Joseph B. Polley's Civil War letters, and he has published more than two dozen journal articles and book chapters.

A Fellow of the TSHA and Admiral in the Texas Navy, Richard has commendations from the Civil War Round Tables in Dallas, Fort Worth, and Shreveport for his academic work. He has co-authored a book on the Texas cotton trade during the Civil War being reviewed by Texas A&M University Press, and is writing a book on Pompeo Coppini, the prolific sculptor whose works in Texas include the Alamo Cenotaph.



## PRESIDENT'S POST *By Keith Altavilla*

Happy 2024 to the Houston Round Table! Before we look ahead to this new year, I want to look back and pay brief tribute to long-time member Gary Chandler, who passed away in December. Gary was a fixture at Round Table meetings and in our leadership, and a key reason why I ended up in this position. His counsel, humor, and love for studying the Civil War will be missed by me, and, I am sure, many

others. An article about Gary appears on page 4 of this newsletter.

There was a great crowd in December to see Dru Sanders, our first graduate student award winner. His talk unraveling the complexities of Matamoros and the Texas-Mexico border during the Civil War was a great example of the work being done in Houston, and hopefully this is a tradition we can continue in the future. This month, we are reaching back into our past, welcoming back Richard McCaslin. He will be talking about Robert E. Lee and George Washington in what should be a great kick-off to the new year.

If you are looking to help out a friend with their resolutions, consider having them get in the habit of coming to the Round Table. Remember that any new members who sign up in January or later are automatically enrolled for next year's 2023-2024 campaign.

Happy New Year everyone, and I hope to see many of you at our January meeting!

## **GALVESTON TOUR**

On Wednesday, January 10, 2024, Ed Cotham will conduct a brown bag presentation for the Galveston Historical Foundation at Ashton Villa in Galveston. The subject of the presentation is U. S. Grant's 1880 visit to Texas. The program is set for 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. It will be a unique experience hearing this presentation in one of the only homes that Grant visited during his visit to the island.

For additional information, visit [Galvestonhistory.org](http://Galvestonhistory.org), go to "Events" then click on "Calendar of Events."

## **MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

*By Michael Clennan*

Happy New Year 2024! It's the time for new friends, members, and activities. Please grasp this wonderful opportunity: invite a friend to attend our January meeting/lecture for free. They can then join for the next 18 months for the regular one-year membership fee! Over the next thirteen meetings, they can join in

fellowship, a hearty meal at Rudi's, and an award-winning lecture about the American Civil War. Our Round Table also has a monthly book raffle as well as a Civil War fun quiz for all to enjoy. Even more important, a new member will find themselves around many associates who are eager to share their interest in, and love for, U. S. history.

Feel free to call me any time at (713) 864-1204 for more details regarding membership. We have a spot saved for you!

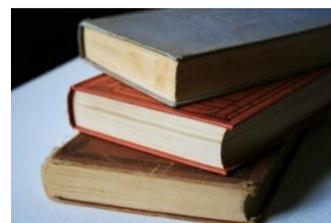
## **BOOK RAFFLE**

*By Rita Campbell*

Start the New Year curled up in front of the fireplace with a captivating Civil War book. Starting off, we have **STONEWALL IN THE VALLEY** by Robert Tanner. Other books being offered this month include **VICKSBURG: GRANT'S CAMPAIGN THAT BROKE THE CONFEDERACY** by Donald Miller, **SHERMAN'S MARCH** by Burke Davis, **THE FREDERICKSBURG CAMPAIGN: WINTER WAR ON THE RAPPAHANNOCK** by Frank O'Reilly (a New York Times bestseller), **THE LAST FULL MEASURE** by Jeff Shaara, and **THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR: THE WAR IN THE EAST** by Gary Gallagher. Finally, we have a very special book set being offered, the four-volume series **ORDEAL OF THE UNION: 1847 To 1865** by Allan Nevins,

I'd like to extend a very special thank you to Donnie Stowe for coordinating the book raffle for the past 14 years! Thanks to Donnie and his efforts, the books we'll be raffling are in pristine condition!

Please take the time to purchase some tickets at our January meeting. Your purchases help to support the Round Table and cover its operating expenses.





*Gary with Marsha Franty and Ed Bearss*

## **GARY CHANDLER, 1945 - 2023**

As Keith indicates in his column above, Gary Chandler passed away on December 9, 2023 at the age of 78 following a lengthy illness. Gary served as a three-time president of our Round Table and most recently as Programs Chair.

Gary proudly served in the U. S. Army Medical Services Corps. He was an avid history enthusiast with a special interest in the Civil War.

A visitation will be held on Monday, January 8, 2024 at St. Ignatius Loyola Catholic Church (7810 Cypresswood Drive) in Spring, Texas from 10 – 10:30 am, followed by the Rosary at 10:30, and Funeral Mass at 11:00 am. Burial will be at Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio the following day at 1:00 pm.

For a full obituary, including information on arrangements, see the Klein Funeral Home’s website: [kleinfh.com/obituary/gary-chandler](http://kleinfh.com/obituary/gary-chandler).



## **JANUARY QUIZ** *By Jim Godlove*

Upon the death of George Washington in 1799, a congressman eulogized him as “first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen.” Who was this congressman and what was his relationship to Robert E. Lee?



*December’s Speaker Dru Sanders*



## 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](http://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 SPEAKER 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 Lonniewood Drive  
Houston, TX 77059

## 2023 – 2024 SPEAKERS CAMPAIGN

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Jan. 18, 2024 | Richard McCaslin: “Lee in the Shadow of Washington”   |
| Feb. 15, 2024 | Chris Mackowski, 2023 Vandiver Award Recipient: “Grant’s Next Chapter: Vicksburg, Chattanooga, and the Rise of U. S. Grant” |
| Mar. 21, 2024 | Fay Yarbrough: “Choctaw Confederates: The American Civil War in Indian Country”   |
| Apr. 18, 2024 | Stephen Kinnaman: “The Abandonment and Destruction of the Gosport Navy Yard”  |
| May 16, 2024  | TBA: 2024 Vandiver Award Recipient  |

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c/o Barry G. Brueggeman  
3706 Lonnie Wood Drive  
Houston, TX 77059

