



General Orders

Franty's Texas Brigade

Vol. 20
No. 1
Sept,
2008

www.houstoncivilwar.com

NEW INSTRUCTIONS!

MEETING – THURS, Sept 18, 2008

**Briar Club
2603 Timmons Lane @ Westheimer
6:00 Cash Bar
7:00 Dinner & Meeting**

**E-Mail drzuckero@sbcglobal.net
OR call him at (281) 479-1232 to Reserve
by Monday 6 PM Prior to Sept 18 -
Dinner \$30; Lecture Only \$5**

**E-Mail Reservation is Preferred;
No Need to Reserve for Lecture Only**

DR. DONALD E. REYNOLDS AND "THE 1860 SLAVE INSURRECTION PANIC"



Donald E. Reynolds

The great slave insurrection panic of 1860 erupted after several fires broke out in North Texas on July 8, most notably in Dallas, Denton, and Pilot Point. Initial reports indicated that in each instance the fires were accidental and were caused by a combination of extreme heat and new highly unstable phosphorus matches.

Four days after flames destroyed the entire business section of Dallas, Charles R. Pryor, Editor of the Dallas *Herald*, wrote the first of several letters to other editors in which he alleged that the fires were the result of a vast abolitionist conspiracy, the purpose of which was to devastate northern Texas and to free the region's slave population.

Pryor's letters were reprinted by newspapers all over the Lone Star State, and various parties were accused of involvement in the purported conspiracy. Charges were sometimes followed up by quick hangings, with secessionists asserting that the Republican Party had given tacit approval if not active support to the abolitionist scheme. Insurgents repeatedly cited the "Texas Troubles" as an example of what would happen throughout the south if Lincoln were elected as president.

Following Lincoln's election, those who wanted to create a separate southern nation used the panic with great success in advocating their cause—both in Congress and in the state secession conventions. Their exploitation of the "Texas Troubles," is, in the opinion of our speaker, a critical and possibly decisive factor in the Lower South's decision to leave the Union and to join the Confederacy.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT OUR SPEAKER

Donald Reynolds is a native of Munday, Texas. He received B.A. and M.A. degrees in history from North Texas State University (now UNT) and earned a Ph.D. from Tulane in 1966.

Professor Reynolds taught for thirty-one years at East Texas State University/Texas A&M, Commerce. During that time he received the faculty senate's award for distinguished

achievement in 1973, and he also served as chairman of the Department of History from 1982 until 1993. He retired in 1996 and subsequently was named professor emeritus of history by the Texas A&M University Board of Regents.

He has published three books: *Editors Make War: Southern Newspapers in the Secession Crisis* (Vanderbilt U. Press, 1970), which was republished in paperback by the Southern Illinois University Press in 2006 and also received a Texas Writers Roundup Award in 1971; *Professor Mayo's College: A History of East Texas State University* (ETSU Press, 1993); and *Texas Terror: The Slave Insurrection Panic of 1860 and the Secession of the Lower South* (LSU Press, 2007). *Texas Terror* was the winner of the 2008 Kate Brooks Bates Award, an honor presented annually by the Texas State Historical Association.

Texas Terror will be the focus of Professor Reynolds's presentation on September 18. We are very pleased to have him present his topic to us on that date and urge you to join us!



Marsha Franty, President

As the summer days shorten, so, too, does the time before the beginning of our 2008-2009 campaign! I hope that you are as eager as I am to gather for the camaraderie of fellow Civil War buffs and for the information and insights our speakers will bring to us during the year.

One bit of unpleasant but not unexpected news is that we must raise the price of our meeting dinners to \$30. We regret having to do so, but we are all aware of the rising costs of food. Hopefully, this will not be too great a hardship. We are actually very fortunate to have such an accommodating environment, good food, and courteous service in a central location with safe and adequate parking.

Just as school children are often asked to write about what they did over the summer, I thought I would share some of my experiences with you. The summer months enabled me to take a long (6,400+ miles) with routes planned to allow for stops at many historic sites among my social commitments. In winding my way to and from New England, I visited Stones River, Gettysburg, Tredegar Iron Works, Cold Harbor, Malvern Hill, the Confederate White House, the Museum of the Confederacy, Monument Avenue and Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, and also Perryville.

While I did not get to spend as much time as I would have liked at these sites, the visits did enrich my understanding of the course of the War. Also, it was my good fortune to be awarded a Teacher's Scholarship to attend the Chambersburg Civil War Seminar on Gettysburg. Four days of great speakers and wonderful field excursions were organized by Ted Alexander. Ed Bearss was just one of the tremendous experts brought together for the event.

Other stops on my journey were Lincoln's birthplace (KY), the Women's Rights NHP (Seneca Falls, NY), Lowell NHP (MA), Salem Maritime NHS (MA), Minute Man NHP (MA), Independence NHP (Philadelphia), Valley Forge (PA), Washington's Crossing (PA and NJ), and the Eisenhower Farm NHS (PA). Now I can look forward to our October field trip with the fantastic Frank O'Reilly to Chancellorsville and Fredericksburg!

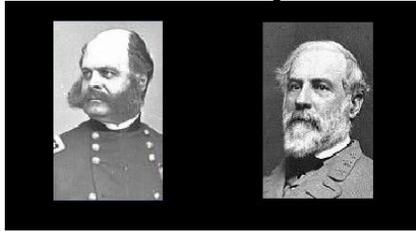
In the meantime, I will be delighted to be with all of you on Thursday, September 18! Don't forget to call Don Zuckero with your reservation by Monday 6 PM, September 15!

HCWRT SPEAKERS 2008 – 2009 CAMPAIGN

Sept 18	Donald E. Reynolds
Oct 16	Gregg S. Clemmer
Nov 20	Stacy Humphreys
Dec 18	TBA
Jan 15	Ed Bearss
Feb 19	Parker Hills
Mar 19	Patrick Falci
Apr 16	Anthony Waskie
May 21	William M. S. Rasmussen

FREDERICKSBURG AND CHANCELLORSVILLE FALL FIELD TRIP UPDATE by *Tony Matt*

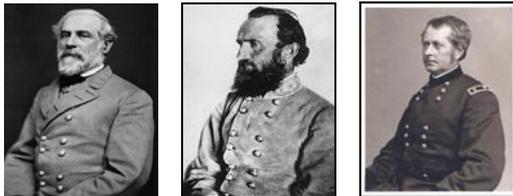
Fredericksburg



Ambrose Burnside Robert E. Lee

We will be flying out of Intercontinental to DC National on Continental. Flight times are subject to change, so please check the departure information yourself before leaving for the airport. The departure flight is Thursday, October 23 on Flight 358 at 10:58 AM, arriving at 2:56 PM. The return flight is Sunday, October 26 on Flight 1859 at 3:45 PM, arriving at 6:05 PM. You must have your trip cost paid by the Round Table meeting on September 18. Send payments to me, Tony Matt, 15811 Spruce River Ct, Sugar Land, TX 77498.

Chancellorsville



R. E. Lee T. J. Jackson Joseph Hooker

Our itinerary includes: Fredericksburg: on Friday, October 24, we meet at the Fredericksburg Battlefield Visitor Center—visits to Chatham, Upper Pontoon Crossing, John Pelham Site, The Slaughter Pen, Prospect Hill (Stonewall Jackson's position), Marye's Heights, Sunken Road, and Stone Wall.

Chancellorsville: on Saturday, October 25, we meet at the Chancellorsville Visitor Center—visits to Chancellorsville and to various battlefield sites, including the First Day's Lick Run, Lee-Jackson Bivouac, Catharine's Furnace, Jackson's Flank March and Attack (end of the Union 11th Corps line), Hazel Grove, and Hooker's Last Line.

On Sunday, October 26, we will visit the National Museum of the Marine Corps.

Those who may be joining the group this year will have the opportunity to walk the fields and learn all the details of these two pivotal engagements from Frank O'Reilly, our speaker in February, 2008. Frank has served with the National Park Service at Fredericksburg and in 1990 published a book on the Fredericksburg Campaign entitled *Stonewall Jackson at Fredericksburg*. This will be another great experience for our field trippers!

SEPTEMBER BOOK RAFFLE by *Mike Pierce*

September book raffle offerings are: *Conquering the Valley* by Robert Krick, *Sheridan in the Shenandoah* by Edward Stackpole, *Fredericksburg* by George Rable, and *Lee's Young Artillerist: William Pegram* by Peter Carmichael, all of which are donated by our esteemed former President Jim Godlove; and *Embattled Confederates: An Illustrated History of Southerners at War* by Bell Irvin Wiley, donated by Norm Lewis. Also, I will have on the registration table some of the many audiotapes that I have on a driving tour of the Battle of Lynchburg.

If you have books, audios, videotapes, magazines, or DVDs to contribute to our book raffle, please let me know. You can contact me at mpiercePC@comcast.net or see me at one of our meetings.



SEPTEMBER QUIZ QUESTION by *Jim Godlove*

On July 8, 1860, fire destroyed most of the business section of a Texas city. This event

seemed to lend credence to the threat of an imminent slave uprising.

Name this city.

One more thing—Liz and I will be in Florida at the time of the September meeting, but I will give Mike the tie-breakers. So, until October!

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.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Phone No _____

How did you Hear About us? _____

Email Address _____

Mail To: **Houston Civil War Round Table**
P. O. Box 4215
Houston, TX 77210-4215

NEW MEMBER

- \$40** – Individual joining in Apr – Dec
- \$20** – Individual Joining in Jan – Mar
- \$45** – Family joining in Apr – Dec
- \$22** – Family joining in Jan – Mar
- \$15** – Student or Out-of-State

RENEWAL

- \$40** – Individual
- \$45** – Family
- \$15** – Student or Out-of-State

FOR THE RESEARCHERS AND GENEALOGISTS AMONG US

Member Ed Cotham has passed along some interesting information for our members and friends who live in the Houston/Harris County area. The Houston Public Library now has the American Civil War Research Database online for library cardholders.

Simply go to <http://houstonlibrary.org>. At the top of the page, click on “Research.” On the next page, click on “Genealogy,” or “History and Social Sciences.” On the next page, scroll down the listing of different databases available and you will see “American Civil War Research Database,” the online resource for researching the soldiers, regiments, and battles of the American Civil War. This database contains indexed, searchable information on over four million soldiers and thousands of battles, together with some fifteen thousand photographs. When you click on this link, you will need to enter your last name and have your library card number available. The American Civil War Research Database has a wealth of abbreviated soldier service data, unit information, and statistics.

For those who are interested in this database but live in other areas of the state or outside Texas, we suggest that you check with your local library to see if it can offer you access to this resource.

THE GETTYSBURG MUSEUM & VISITOR CENTER

Member Harry Bounds has passed along to your newsletter editor a July, 2008 article by Pete Jorgensen of the *Civil War News*. The writer expresses his profound disappointment with the relative paucity of battle artifacts on display at the Museum. He is especially critical of the concept of this facility as a “storyline museum” geared primarily toward presenting to the viewing public a more basic understanding of the battle. His conviction is that not enough artifacts are presented in order to tell the story adequately, and he is critical of commercialism to excess as he sees it in such venues as the \$8 film admission cost to “A New Birth of Freedom” showcased in the facility, as well as outsized emphasis on its Bookstore, Gift Shop, and Refreshment Saloon.



Gettysburg Museum and Visitors Center

Your Editor has not yet visited the new facility, but I have presented this topic in order to elicit any concurring or dissenting views of our readers who have done so and wish to share their opinions with us in a future newsletter issue.

UPCOMING SECOND ANNUAL NATHAN BEDFORD FORREST SEMINAR



Bedford Forrest

We have been advised by Greg Biggs, our September, 2007 speaker here in Houston, that the Clarksville, Tennessee Round Table will be hosting its event on Saturday, October 18, 2008 at Clarksville's Customs House Museum, where the lectures will be presented. The tours will cover Forrest at Ft. Donelson and the Battle of Dover. Lunch is included in the \$40 fee. Participating in the lectures and/or tours will be Tom Cartwright, Jim Jobe, Greg Biggs, and John Walsh. Feel free to email Greg Biggs at Biggsk@aol.com for more information.

MORE SHILOH/CORINTH PHOTOS FROM LAST FALL'S REENACTING EVENT

I promised in our March, 2008 newsletter that I would include in a future issue photos from Ron Featherston's November, 2007 reenacting event in Corinth and Shiloh. These are beautiful photos, especially in the colors and contrasts made possible for online subscribers.



"Bloody Pond" - Nature's Mirror



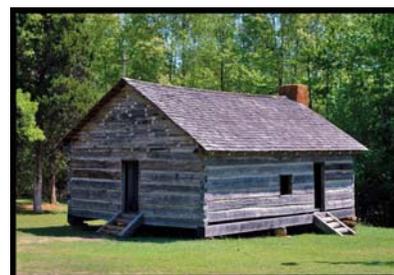
Shiloh's "Hornet's Nest"



Shiloh - Nature's Palette



Pittsburg Landing on the Tennessee River



Shiloh Church - "Place of Peace"

INTERESTING FACTS RELATIVE TO OUR SPEAKER'S TOPIC:

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

- Did you know that the first major insurrection episode in Texas occurred in 1835-36? **Yes**, apprehensive Texas leaders, facing the impending arrival of the forces of Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, accused their enemies of fomenting a black rebellion in the summer of 1835.
- Did you know that a supposed slave-Mexican coalition also aroused anxiety around 1856? **Yes**, the rebellion, suspected first as being caused by vigilantes in Colorado County in September, reportedly spread into neighboring counties to the west and south, but only the alleged conspirators suffered actual damage.
- Did you know that these scares among others followed a consistent pattern? **Yes**, all of them broke out when Texans felt strong outside political or military pressure and became apprehensive about the perceived internal enemies of slavery?
- Did you know that the general lure of freedom made Mexico the common destination of runaways in the 1850s? **Yes**, the Mexican avenue to freedom served as an outlet for slave discontent and removed some potential militants from bondage in Texas. Thus, although slaves resisted individually, the necessary conditions for organized rebellion never completely were achieved in Texas.



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