

The Dispatch

Newsletter of the

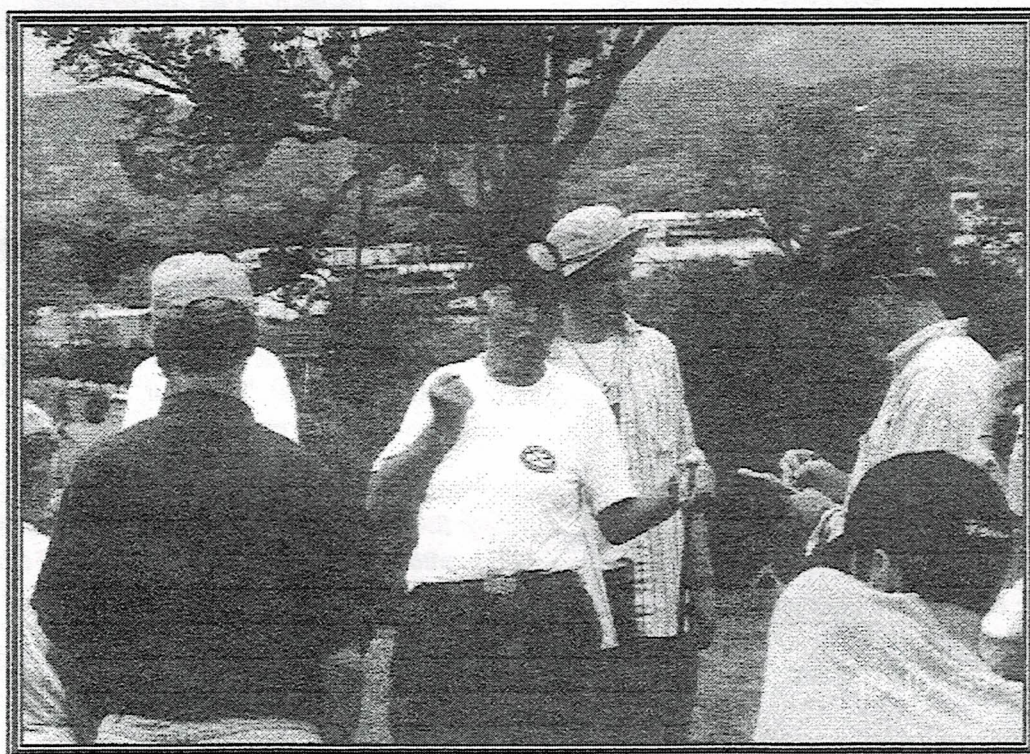
Capital District Civil War Round Table

P.O. Box 14871, Albany, NY 12212-4871

CDCWRT's web site: www.timesunion.com/communities/cdcwrt.htm

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November, 1999



The venerable and energetic Ed Bearss (center) uses body-english to describe the situation at Orchard Knob Reservation in Chattanooga, at the foot of Missionary Ridge. It was at this location that General Grant watched with General Thomas as the Army of the Cumberland, stormed the rifle pits at the base of Missionary Ridge. Once captured, rifle and artillery fire from above made the pits a death trap. Ignoring orders, the Union regiments surged up the steep ridge, losing unit cohesion, but following any officer who was headed toward the enemy. A dozen regiments claimed to be the first to reach the top. Among them is Maj. Arthur MacArthur, carrying the National Colors, exhorting his men with the cry, "On Wisconsin!" Hearing Ed describe the action, is like being there and living it.

The November Meeting
November 12-13, 1999

RAMADA INN - ALBANY, NY
1228 WESTERN AVE.
ALBANY, NY

November 14, 1999
PROCTOR'S THEATER
SCHENECTADY, NY

CDCWRT MEETING

Our next meeting of the year is the 2nd Annual Northeast Conference on the Civil War, "PERSPECTIVES AND INFLUENCES ON THE CIVIL WAR 1861-65."

The conference will start at the Ramada Inn on Western Avenue in Albany of Friday night, November 12th. Saturday's talks will start at 9:00 AM at the same location, and will finish at 4:30 PM. Our Fall banquet will be held in the same location that night, starting at 6:30 PM. Sunday's events will occur at Proctor's Theater in Schenectady, starting at 11:30 AM. There will be a showing of the digitally re-mastered movie, GONE WITH THE WIND, starting at 2:00 PM.

All the details of the weekend are in this newsletter. You may attend any part of the weekend activities, but when you read about the details, I am certain you will want to attend ALL the events. At the banquet there will be the opportunity to buy at discount, books written by our esteemed presenters. There will be a print raffle (\$5.00 per ticket), our regular book raffle, and a 50/50 raffle.

The print is entitled "CITY POINT, VIRGINIA-MARCH 31, 1865 by William R. McGrath. It is a signed print, and is valued at \$150. It is numbered 399 of 950. This has been generously donated by Sue Engoltz. Thank you, Sue!!

★ ★ ★

CDCWRT NEWS

The October meeting of the CDCWRT featured Ed Cotter, widely recognized expert on John Brown. Ed covered Brown's life, from childhood to his interment at the John Brown farm near Lake Placid. His excellent presentation was accompanied by a slide show that complimented the presentation. The 75 people in attendance were also treated to a brief presentation by Dale Blair from the American Civil War Round Table of Australia in Melbourne. Dale spoke about the reasons for the great interest in Australia over our Civil War. There were questions aplenty for both speakers

There were the regular book raffle and 50/50 raffle. The cachet sets that were available, were also a great success with over \$300 raised for preservation activities. There will be other sets available at the November meeting. These are described in detail later in this newsletter.

If you missed the meeting, here are some facts that were presented by the speakers. There was considerable public and private support for Brown, including the likes of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Victor Hugo, and Henry Thoreau. Beecher's bibles were Sharps carbines that were shipped in boxes marked as 'BIBLES.' The song, *John Brown's Body*, was a drinking song written about a Bostonian Scotsman, also named John Brown. As the song spread, other thought is was written about *the John Brown*.

John Brown committed a Federal crime, but President Buchanan turned the case over to the State of Virginia to prosecute as treason – a hanging offence. But Brown could only be tried for treason in Virginia if he was a citizen of Virginia, which he obviously was not. Nonetheless he was tried and hanged illegally. His son, Watson Brown, was also killed in the Raid, but his body was used at the Winchester Medical School, was later captured by Union forces, and eventually was buried at the John Brown farm in 1882. Ten

of Brown's followers were exhumed forty years after the raid and were also reburied at the farm in 1899. Finally, the event in Australia that sparked great interest in the American Civil War was the PBS series produced by Ken Burns. Membership in the Melbourne RT swelled and Dale reports that new round tables are being formed in Sydney and Brisbane.

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING

TREASURER'S REPORT

Joe Stracuzzi reported that the balance in the regular account was \$4865.88, while the balance in the preservation account was \$9748.24. A portion of this account will be distributed before the end of the calendar year.

PROGRAM CHAIR

Sue Knost reported on the schedule for the 2nd Annual Northeast Conference on the Civil War. (Please see the enclosed flyer for details.) There were additional details about the December meeting, scheduled for *Saturday, December 4th* at the Holiday Inn in Latham. The Fall trip to Chattanooga and Chickamauga Battlefields was an unqualified success, if the weather was ignored (see below).

HISTORIAN

Ray Smith informed the Board of his intent to step down as historian. Fran McCashion has graciously agreed to become the historian for the Round Table. She will maintain a record of the Round Table Activities and a file of previous newsletters. Any member who has photographs of interest, is encouraged to send a copy to Fran. The photos should be identified as to date and activity, and if possible, the identities of any people in the photos.

BY-LAWS UPDATE

In reviewing the by-laws of the organization several months ago, the Board decided to update the by-laws, and to make some recommended changes. The single major

change is an increase in the number of members on the Board. Enclosed in this newsletter is a copy of the by-laws with proposed deletions and replacement words or phrases. These changes will be voted upon at the December meeting. Please familiarize yourself with the articles. Additional changes may be made after this newsletter, but the finalized version that will be voted upon, will be mailed out at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

WEBMASTER RETIRES

Until recently, the Round Table has had two web-sites, one a Prodigy site maintained by Gene Allison, and the *Times Union* web-site maintained by Jon Olson. Gene has decided to retire and shut down his web-site. The Board would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Gene for his efforts. Thanks to Gene, we were the first Round Table in the state to have its own web-site. Gene was responsible for signing us up with the *Times Union* web-site to increase our exposure in the community. The Prodigy web-site will be shut down, and the *Times Union* site (whose address is under our letterhead) is our official web-site. Jon Olson will continue to serve as webmaster for the TU site.

WEB SITE NEWS

By Jon Olson

The *Times Union* Web-site has many unique features which members can utilize. This is the first in a series of articles that will address the capabilities of these features.

A main feature that has caused some confusion, is that one can become a member of our online community group in addition to being a 'regular, full-fledged' member. Here's how it works.

On the navigational rail on the left-hand side of our Home Page under the heading, **Explore the Site**, there is a link called, 'Want to Join?' If one clicks on this link and follows the instructions on how to join, I send him/her an e-mail notifying him/her that he/she has been 'approved' for membership in our online community group. I also invite him/her to

become a 'regular, full-fledged' member by submitting name and address to our PO box and a check for dues.

There are two basic reasons for joining the online community group. First, when one logs on again, a direct link to the CDCWRT appears under the "My Groups" heading on the Community Home Page, by-passing a search for the address. Of course if you've bookmarked our page, then you would not have to log on via the Community Home Page in the first place.

Second, and most important, I'm able to send e-mails to all members in inform them of updates to the Web site, remind them of upcoming special events and meetings, and notify them of a cancellation due to inclement weather, to name a few. Only I can send these e-mails. A member cannot send e-mails to other members.

Therefore, even though you are presently a regular member, I strongly recommend you join the online community group. Your name will appear on the 'Member List' page and I can include you on e-mail messages which are sent to all members of the online community group.

There are other special features of the *Times Union* Web site and customized pages that I will discuss in future columns. Please contact me if you have any questions. Call 785-1700, or e-mail jonolson@nycap.rr.com, or write to: P.O. Box 671, Newtonville, NY 12128.

Chattanooga-Chickamauga Battlefield Tour Report

Despite rainy weather, the Fall trip to the Chattanooga-Chickamauga Battlefields was a great success. This was the first long distance trip that required air travel, but everything worked out remarkably well. This reflected the efforts of Jeff Sauter who planned the trip with careful detail. The flight to Atlanta was on time although one of our members forgot to bring a photo ID to the airport. There were some anxious moments while a spouse was disturbed in the shower and had to rush to the airport. The ID arrived as the gate to the plane was being

closed. Lesson #1: Remind all members to bring ID to airport when we fly again.

After meeting our bus driver, Frankie, the group checked in at a very nice, new motel and then left for Kennesaw Mountain. Mr. Bill Scaife, authority on the Atlanta campaign was the guide.

Saturday brought a steady rain all day, but that did not slow down Ed Bearss. Lesson #2: Having a weatherman in your tour group is not good insurance against foul weather. Ed covered the battle of Chickamauga in great detail, and provided insight into the poor relationship between Gen. Bragg and his some of his commanders. We visited the sight of Gen. Longstreet's attack as the 'Bull in the woods.' Despite the rain, many climbed to the markers on Snodgrass Hill where Union Gen. Thomas earned his sobriquet, 'the Rock of Chickamauga.' However to some of the group, the most memorable landmarks were the Widow Kelly's house and the Brotherton house, both of which were passed numerous times as the bus traveled the park roads.



Bag ladies in the rain at Chickamauga

Saturday the group traded rain for fog at Chattanooga. Lookout Mountain was above the fog and low clouds, but at opportune moments the clouds broke to reveal glimpses of Chattanooga and the Tennessee River below. Gen. Hooker's forces captured Lookout Mountain in the 'Battle above the Clouds,' and this is portrayed on a 13'x30' mural by military

The 1999 Northeast Conference on the Civil War
"PERSPECTIVES AND INFLUENCES ON THE CIVIL WAR 1861-65"
November 12 - 14, 1999

This year's conference examines a variety of topics including some of the influences that the Civil War brought about then and now that changed the face of warfare and our society forever. Presentations by top experts will particularly interest today's collector, as well as students of the war and its impact upon American society.

Original artifacts highlighting the Civil War

Talk with Authors and Historians

Bring your collectibles to share with other enthusiasts

Conference location and Headquarters:

Friday & Saturday - Ramada Inn 1228 Western Ave, Albany NY 12203 518-489-2981

Conference location Sunday: Proctor's Theatre State St, Schenectady NY 12305

Registration: Friday night 6:30 - 10 pm and Saturday morning from 8:00 - 9:00 am

Book sales (Fri. & Sat. only): **CONFERENCE DISCOUNTS** Thomas Publications Edmonston Publishing

Original artifacts courtesy of NYS Division of Military and Naval Affairs

Conference Presentations

Friday night: Doors open at 6:30 with Book sales and displays Program begins 7:15 pm
(FRIDAY NIGHT OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS WITHOUT CHARGE - SPONSORED BY THE NYS ARCHIVES)

"Behind The Union Preserved." Dan Lorello, Associate Archivist, NYS Archives

An informal discussion concerning the history and compilation of "The Union Preserved: A Guide to Civil War Records in the New York State Archives," which was over ten years in the making. Dan will discuss some of the obstacles and philosophical differences that were confronted and eventually overcome during the production of the guide. Dan will also provide his insights on how some of the documents and artifacts were selected for illustrations in the guide.

Saturday 9 - 4:30 Ramada Inn Conference Room (Coffee, books & displays 8 am; Lunch at noon)

The Hudson-Mohawk Region: The Silicon Valley of the Nineteenth Century Thomas Carroll, Ph.D., Director, Hudson-Mohawk Industrial Gateway. Sweeping cultural transformations sometimes accompany the kinds of technological changes and institutional innovations that began here in the 19th century - A close-up look at how it all began!

War Financing - Lincoln's Stamp Tax Legacy presented by one of the country's top experts on revenue stamps, John Nunes, Ph.D. Ever wonder about the stamps collectors find on CDVs and items of the period? Here's the answer! Bring in your items for an explanation of the samples in your collection.

An Overview of Civil War Small Arms Ammunition, and demonstration of Confederate cartridge making, by Dean Thomas, Historian, author and publisher. A not-to-be-missed session for the novice and expert alike!

Mounted Victory: The Emergence of the Federal Cavalry as an Offensive Force Within the Army of the Potomac" by Clark "Bud" Hall, Historian, Brandy Station. A study of the success of the Union Cavalry as a decisive factor in the war. Especially significant for the birthplace of Phil Sheridan.

Sallie Myers: Volunteer Nurse at Gettysburg by Sarah Thomas, author. Sallie Myers was a civilian in Gettysburg, who nursed the wounded from July to November 1863. This session explores the civilian experience in the aftermath of the Battle of Gettysburg, based on the actual writings of a woman who was an eyewitness and nurse.

Conference closes for the day and reconvenes **Saturday night 6:30 pm**

FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY of the CAPITAL DISTRICT CWRT BANQUET

Celebrate a special evening as we close out our fifteenth year and honor our friends and associates for their achievements
Awards Reception, Banquet, and Cocktail Hour Cash Bar from 6:30 to 8:30 pm
Cocktail hour, book sales and displays begin at 6:30 pm
Dinner served at 7:30 pm

FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY BANQUET PROGRAM & AWARDS

Capital District Civil War Round Table Service Recognition Awards

Our Service Recognition Awards are being given for the first time in recognition of achievement and commitment to furthering knowledge about our Civil War heritage and preservation through education and communications

Recipients: Sue Greenhagen, Technical Librarian, SUNY Morrisville Communications Award
Howard Young, 125th NY Regimental Assn., CDCWRT member Education Award

Program: "Longstreet: Lee's Tarnished Lieutenant"

Dr. William G. Piston, Professor, Southwest Missouri State University

James Longstreet was a very controversial Confederate officer, yet he was a good friend of General Grant and was even in his wedding! Find out why Longstreet became the scapegoat for the fall of the Confederacy and why only today he is gaining back the recognition he lost so long ago. Dr. Piston will explain why James Longstreet earned his reputation as the tarnished Lieutenant of the Confederacy. The author will be available for signing books after the banquet.

Sunday 11:30 - 6 pm Proctor's Theatre Schenectady

Gone With The Wind 60th Anniversary Screening

Special Screening of digitally remastered Gone With The Wind, Civil War Show and Concert

Civil War Displays, Interest Groups, Artifacts & Exhibits 11:30 - 1:30 pm

Concert with the 77th NY Regimental Band 1:15 - 1:55 pm live on Proctor's Theatre stage in Schenectady, NY

November 14, 1999 2 pm Screening of the movie **Gone With The Wind**

"Gone With the Wind" The Sixtieth Anniversary showing of one of the most famous movies of all time in digitally remastered film, shown on the largest screen in the Northeast (48') in a restored vaudeville theatre on the National Historic Register. Concert by the 77th NY Regimental Band at 1:15; movie shown at 2 pm. Private reception with light refreshments for Conference attendees immediately follows the movie in the Guild Room.

COMPLETE CONFERENCE (includes breaks, lunch, and all conference materials plus **BANQUET**) -

All three days \$75 register by November 10 - Save \$10 for all Round Table Members!**

**Student members: Special price all three days \$50

Single Sessions:

Friday night 7:15 pm Open to all members without charge - Sponsored by NYS Archives

Saturday Only (includes breaks, lunch, and all conference materials for regular and student members)

Regular member: \$49 by November 10 After this date \$59 Student member \$25

Saturday night banquet only - \$24.50 price for all members (Dinner Banquet, Reception, and Speaker Program)

For questions and credit card registrations, call Sheila Smith at 489-6542.

Send your registrations with your checks **MADE PAYABLE TO CDCWRT**, PO Box 14871, Albany NY 12212.

Banquet Choice: Chicken Marsala _____ or Roast Top Sirloin _____ ** Vegetarian available upon request - please circle

Complete conference (includes food) - All three days \$75 _____ Student special \$50 _____

Saturday Day Only (includes lunch only) - \$49 by November 10 _____ Student \$25 _____

Evening Banquet only - \$24.50 Dinner Banquet and Speaker Program _____

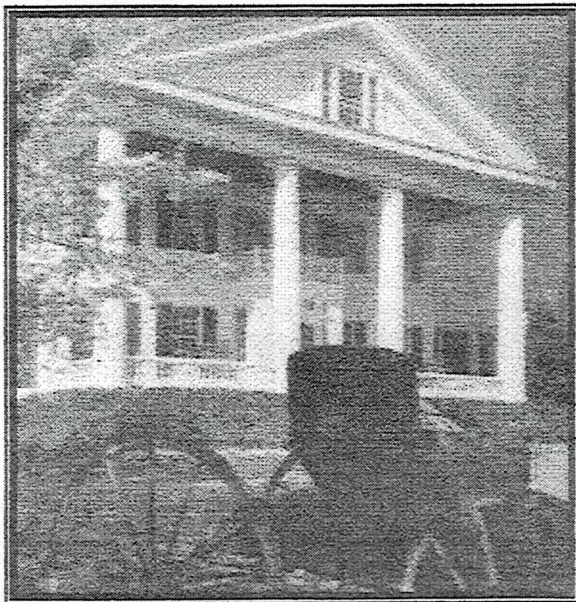
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CREDIT CARD # AND EXPIRATION DATE: MC VISA (circle one) _____

artist, James Walker. Next Ed took the group to Orchard Knob and Missionary Ridge. Many of the homes atop the Ridge have Civil War cannon permanently placed on their lawns and maintained by the Park Service. After the busy day, the group attended a banquet at the 1848 House, which served as a hospital during the Atlanta campaign and now is one of Atlanta's most interesting restaurants for those interested in the War of the Rebellion. Lesson #3: Before serving she-crab soup and quail salad, warn the group that the soup is very rich, and the quail might look like frog.

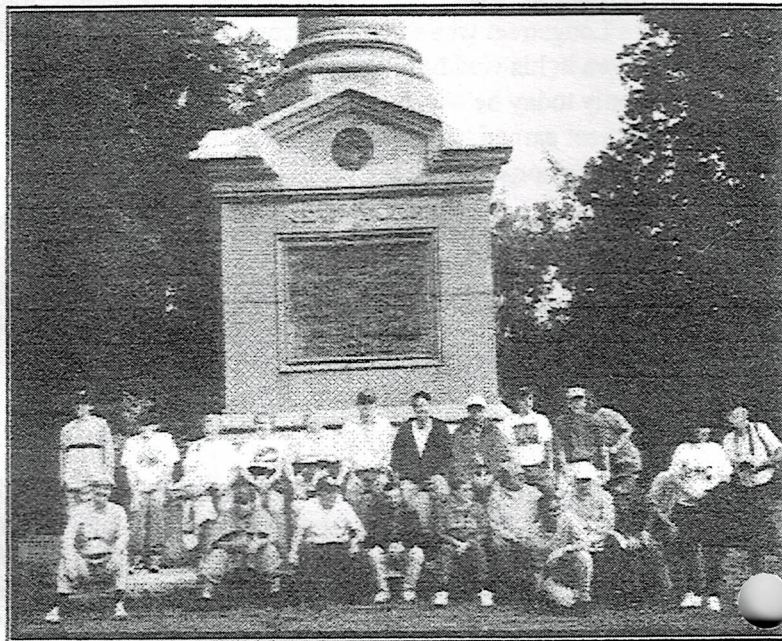


The 1848 House

On the last day in Atlanta, the Round Table visited the Cyclorama and the Atlanta History Center's Civil War exhibit. This superb exhibit was pronounced by our own Robert Mulligan as possibly the best Civil War exhibit we would ever see. The artifacts were outstanding, and the presentation was both accurate and balanced. The exhibit covered all aspects of the war from ideology and causes, to weapons, strategy, the home front, and the cost of the War.

Finally, a few words about Sally Buck Preston, one of the belles of Richmond. She was engaged to be married to Gen. John Bell Hood, but after his serious wound at Chickamauga, the engagement was called off. As Ed Bearss told the story, he began to refer to our Program Chair as Sally Preston. Sue took this good-natured

ribbing in style. In the RT announcement about our conference which was mailed out two weeks ago, the name of Program Chair was changed to Sally Buck Preston. Those of you who caught that item should congratulate yourselves. Sue didn't know until it was pointed out to her!



Thank you, Jeff Sauter!

CACHETS, MORE CACHETS

At the November conference, several sets of cachets will be available for purchase. Gen. James Longstreet will be featured in each set. This will tie into the banquet speaker, Dr. William Piston, who will discuss Longstreet at Lee's tarnished lieutenant.

The **Army of Northern Virginia Set** was described in detail in last month's newsletter. It consists of five cachets: Lee, Longstreet, Ewell, Hill and Stuart as army and corps commanders. This fine set is priced at \$20.00.

The **1st Corps, ANV Set** is a four cachet set featuring Longstreet as corps commander with cancellation stamp of the 135th or 136th anniversary of Gettysburg. The make-up postage stamp for the 136th is the South Carolina stamp, since Longstreet was born there. Lafayette McLaws commanded the 1st Division, George Pickett commanded the 2nd Division, and

John Bell Hood, the 3rd Division. Biography cards accompany each cachet. This set sells for \$16.00 and a limited supply is available.

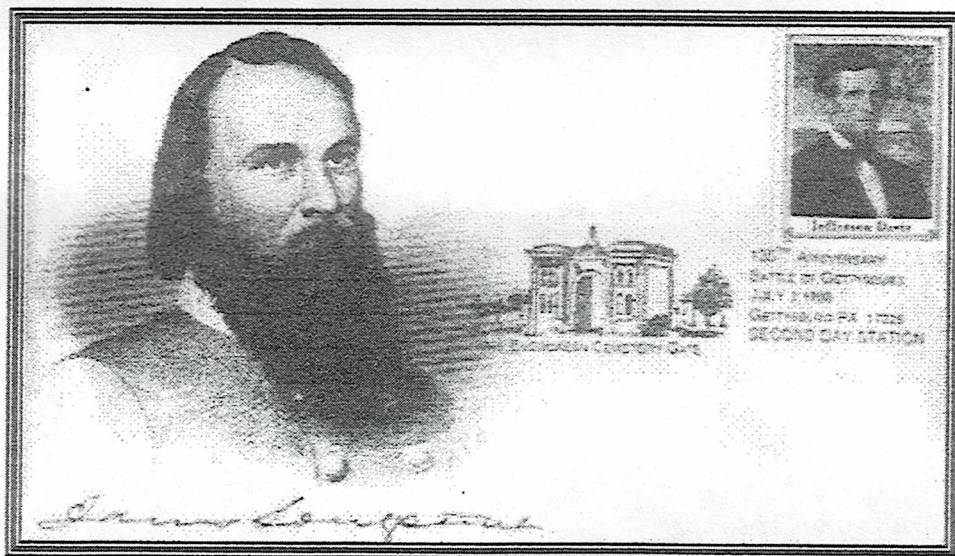
A two cachet set is available for \$8.00 and features Longstreet and Winfield Scott Hancock. These two generals faced each other at Gettysburg on the third day. A single Longstreet cachet is also available for \$4.00.

Finally, two other Longstreet items will be available for \$5.00 each. The first is a copy of only surviving full length photograph of James Longstreet in uniform. The postal stamps include Grant, Lee or Hancock. The cancellation stamp is from the 135th anniversary of Gettysburg and commemorates Longstreet on the day the Longstreet statue was dedicated. The second item is a photo of the life-sized painting of Longstreet by Howard Chandler Christy, commissioned by his wife in later life.

activities will receive donations at year's end. If any member has a recommendation for such donations, please contact a board member or write to Matt Farina, Chair. A list of groups that the Round Table has supported in the past will be available at the November banquet.

SPEAKER'S BUREAU

A number of inquiries have been made in regards to speakers for various groups or organizations. If you are interested in talking about Civil War or historical topics, please let Matt Farina or Sue Knost know. Your name will be provided to these groups when requests arise. This is a great way to obtain experience in speaking as well as recruiting new member for the Round Table. At the same time you will represent the Round Table in its mission of educating and stimulating interest in the period.



THANKYOU, THANKYOU

The Round Table owes a special thanks to members Joseph Stracuzzi and Robert Retallick. Both men attend Shrine Club events in re-enactor uniforms, and in compensation for their presence, the Shriners make a donation to the Round Table at the request of both men. To date this year, over \$1000 has been donated to the Preservation Fund.

The Board will be meeting next month to decide which organizations or preservation

