



Founded at Fort Harrison
on February 8, 1951

RICHMOND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

APRIL 2024

“The Civil War was the biggest thing that ever happened to us. It was our Iliad and our Odyssey – and it remains our least understood war.”

Bruce Catton

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April 9, 2024

7:30 p.m.

At First Presbyterian Church

4602 Cary Street Road

Richmond, VA 23226

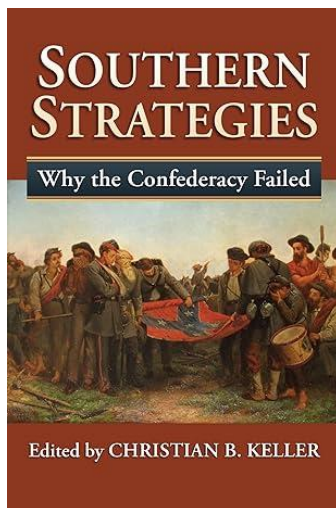
(The parking lot is behind the church; go up the steps to fellowship hall on the left)

DR. CHRISTIAN B. KELLER

**“SOUTHERN STRATEGIES:
WHY THE CONFEDERACY FAILED”**



Why the Confederacy failed in its bid for independence has been a topic since 1865. Generations of historians have argued about lapses in political and military leadership, defeat in key campaigns, the erosion of home front support, and other factors, but few have examined the phenomenon of rebel disaster in its totality at the strategic level of war. Utilizing classical and modern strategic theory as interpretative lenses, Dr. Keller will evaluate the critical diplomatic, informational, military, and economic mistakes that, when coupled with the Union's better strategic acumen and plain old fashioned luck,



resulted in the historical outcome. This presentation is largely based on the conclusions he and his contributors arrived at in his most recent book, *Southern Strategies: Why the Confederacy Failed*.

Since 2011, Dr. Christian B. Keller has been Professor of History in the Department of National Security and Strategy at the United States Army War College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, where he teaches courses for senior leaders on the theory of war and strategy, national security policy and strategy, and the American Civil War. In 2017 he was named the General Dwight D. Eisenhower Chair of National Security and in 2019 became the Director of the Military History Program for the school.

Previously, he served as Professor of Military History for five and a half years at the Army Command and General Staff

College, Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, and has also taught at numerous civilian institutions, including Shippensburg University, Gettysburg College, Dickinson College, and Washington and Lee University. In 2001-2002, after completing his Ph.D., Dr. Keller was a Fulbright Professor of American History at the University of Jena, Germany.

Along with many scholarly articles focusing on strategic, operational, and ethnic topics in the Civil War, he is the author of several books, including *The Great Partnership: Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and the Fate of the Confederacy*; *Chancellorsville and the Germans: Nativism, Ethnicity, and Civil War Memory*; and *Damn Dutch: Pennsylvania Germans at Gettysburg*.

Dr. Keller's next project, a new narrative of the Army of Northern Virginia based on dozens of previously unpublished wartime letters written by generals and staff officers, is currently in the final research phases with a prospective publication date in early 2024.

A native of Carlisle, Dr. Keller lives with his wife, Kelley, in an antebellum house that witnessed the occupation of Carlisle Barracks by Confederate troops at the end of June 1863.

PLEASE NOTE:

THE FELLOWSHIP HALL WHERE WE USUALLY MEET WILL BE OCCUPIED FOR A CHURCH FUNCTION. WE WILL MEET INSTEAD IN THE DOWNSTAIRS MEETING ROOM.

UPON ENTERING THE CHURCH, GO DOWN THE STAIRS IMMEDIATELY TO YOUR LEFT.

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

At our last meeting, I mentioned the feeling that I get each time I pick up the gavel. The name on it, Alfred P. Goddin,

reminds me of all of the really distinguished people who have wielded that gavel before me – those who are still with us and still active in our Round Table and those from almost four score years ago and on whose shoulders we now stand.

The year on the gavel is 1959. I had joined the Franklin Civil War Round Table two years earlier and the nation was preparing for the Centennial of the Civil War. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower was in the Oval Office where he proudly displayed a picture of Robert E. Lee. When asked why he did so, Eisenhower replied, *“General Robert E. Lee was, in my estimation, one of the supremely gifted men produced by our Nation. He believed unswervingly in the Constitutional validity of his cause which until 1865 was still an arguable question in America; he was a poised and inspired leader true to the high trust reposed in him by millions of his fellow citizens; he was thoughtful yet demanding of his officers and men, forbearing with captured enemies but ingenious, unrelenting and personally courageous in battle, and never disheartened by a reverse or obstacle. Through all his many trials he remained selfless almost to a fault and unfailing in his faith in God. Taken altogether, he was noble as a leader and as a man, and unsullied as I read the pages of our history.”* Today, that would not be said by any occupant of the Oval Office.

The Centennial itself was a grand celebration of the reunited North and South. The men who fought on both sides were remembered then as loyal and courageous, willing to sacrifice all in order to do their duty for causes that they each thought right. There was only one problem. The “two sides,” as acknowledged in the 1960s were both white men. The war was not fought about slavery and African

Americans played only a minimal role. Today, many would have us believe that the war was fought entirely by African Americans against all of whom were racists and all of whom wore one of two colors – gray or butternut.

But the date on the gavel is April 9th, and our next meeting will be on April 9th, and I will follow our long tradition of reading General Order #9 at the meeting.

When I was President of the Museum of the Confederacy, we opened our new museum out at Appomattox. I was often there, and I often had time to reflect on what had happened there. And I always, and that’s not an exaggeration, I always was hit by a sense of reverence. There and then, two warring parties, each of whom had sacrificed all in the earnest belief that they were doing their patriotic duty by trying their best to kill the other guy, came together to end the hostility. There was no hangman’s noose or guillotine on one side. There was no denial of conclusion and escape to the hills to continue the fight on the other.

What was there? Grant was there and his magnanimous agreement with Lee was that the starving men in his army could simply go home and agree on their honor not to fight again. Joshua Chamberlain was there on the 12th when he called his men to attention and then saluted the Confederates as they trudged up the lane to lay down their arms and flags. John Gordon was there when he called out the order to the boys in gray to return the salute. It was magical. It had never before happened in world history and has not happened since that two sides respected each other so much that they behaved that way. Yes, they respected each other.

It kinda makes you wish that we could revert to those days when the

behaviors of the day were honor and duty and respect and willingness to accept defeat and willingness to honor the defeated.

It gives me a lot to think about when I see April 9th on that gavel.

Waite

PARK NEWS
By Bert Dunkerly

Adopt-A-Monument Help at Cold Harbor: As part of the Round Table’s adoption of the Connecticut Monument at Cold Harbor battlefield, volunteers are needed to check on the monument and



to do light cleaning. It is time for someone to check on things.

Please email bert_dunkerly@nps.gov if you’re interested.

Park Events:

April 4, 6 p.m.: “Abraham Lincoln in Richmond” presentation at the East End Library, 25th Street, Richmond.

April 6, 1 p.m.: Ranger Mike Gorman will be giving a Lincoln in Richmond walking tour.

April 20, 11 a.m.: “The Fall of Richmond” presentation at the East End Library, 25th Street, Richmond

May 18, 10 a.m.: “Captured Only In Photographs” walking tour of Drewry’s Bluff and Art Session with Artist in Residence

May 25, 10 a.m.: “Battle Front and Home Front” Totopotomoy Creek walking tour and Art Session with Artist in Residence

Memorial Day to Labor Day: Daily Walking Tours at Cold Harbor, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

For more information: <http://www.nps.gov/rich>.

APPOMATTOX COURT HOUSE
APRIL 12, 1865

“The momentous meaning of this occasion impressed me deeply. I resolved to mark it by some token of recognition, which could be no other than a salute of arms. Well aware of the responsibility assumed, and of the criticisms that would follow, as the sequel proved, nothing of that kind could move me in the least. The act could be defended, if needful, by the suggestion that such a salute was not to the cause for which the flag of the Confederacy stood, but to its going down before the flag of the Union. My main reason, however, was one for which I sought no authority nor asked forgiveness. Before us in proud humiliation stood the embodiment of manhood: men whom neither toils and sufferings, nor the fact of death, nor disaster, nor hopelessness could bend from their resolve; standing before us now, thin, worn, and famished, but erect, and with eyes looking level into ours, waking memories that bound us together as no other bond; - was not such manhood to be welcomed back into a Union so tested and assured?”

Instructions had been given; and when the head of each division column comes opposite our group, our bugle sounds the signal and instantly our whole line from right to left, regiment by regiment, in succession, gives the soldier’s salutation, from the “order arms” to the old “carry” - the marching salute. Gordon at the head of the column, riding with heavy spirit and downcast face, catches the sound of shifting arms, looks up, and, taking the meaning, wheels superbly, making with

himself and his horse one uplifted figure, with profound salutation as he drops the point of his sword to the boot toe; then facing to his own command, gives word for his successive brigades to pass us with the same position of the manual, - honor answering honor. On our part not a sound of trumpet more, nor roll of drum; not a cheer, nor word nor whisper of vain-glorying, nor motion of man standing again at the order, but an awed stillness rather, and breath-holding, as if it were the passing of the dead!”



Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, 1915
The Passing of the Armies

*LEE'S FAREWELL ADDRESS
TO THE ARMY OF
NORTHERN VIRGINIA*

GENERAL ORDER #9

“After four years of arduous service marked by unsurpassed courage and fortitude, the Army of Northern Virginia has been compelled to yield to overwhelming numbers and resources.

I need not tell the brave survivors of so many hard fought battles, who have remained steadfast to the last, that I have consented to this result from no distrust of them; but feeling that valor and devotion could accomplish nothing that could compensate for the loss that must have attended the continuance of the contest, I determined to avoid the useless

sacrifice of those whose past services have endeared them to their countrymen.

By the terms of the agreement, officers and men can return to their homes and remain until exchanged. You will take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from a consciousness of duty faithfully performed; and I earnestly pray that a Merciful God will extend to you His blessings and protection.

With an unceasing admiration of your constancy and devotion to your Country, and a grateful remembrance of your kind and generous consideration for myself, I bid you all an affectionate farewell.”



IN MEMORIAM

It is with regret and sadness that we learned of the passing of long-time Round Table member, The Honorable Douglas O. Tice, on February 28, 2024.

Doug Tice was very active in the Round Table, wrote several books, and portrayed Robert E. Lee on occasion. He was one of only five current life members of the Richmond CWRT.

Our sincere condolences and sympathy to his family and friends.

**SPECIAL COLLECTIONS TOUR AT
ACWM**

In March 2023, we had the unique opportunity to tour the Special Collections at the American Civil War Museum. We are pleased to announce that we have arranged another tour with Robert Hancock, Director of Special Collections, on **April 27, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.**

Attendance is limited to 15 participants on a first come, first served basis. Email Waite Rawls at waiterawls@gmail.com to go on the list.

EVENTS OF INTEREST

April 6 and 7: “Lee’s Retreat Through Amelia,” 159th Anniversary Bus Tour. Four ranger-led bus tours covering the route of General Lee’s retreat through Amelia County will be offered beginning at the Visitor Center at Sailor’s Creek Battlefield, at 9 a.m. and 1 p.m., 6541 Sayers Creek Road, Rice, Virginia. Tours are free. For more information, call 804-561-7510.

May 11: The Battle of Yellow Tavern 160th Anniversary Ceremony, 10112 Telegraph Road, Glen Allen, Virginia, 11:00 a.m. Guest speaker will be Patrick Falci as General A.P. Hill.

June 9: 158th Annual Commemoration of The Battle of Old Men & Young Boys of Petersburg, June 9, 1864, 6 p.m., presented by the Ladies Memorial Association of Petersburg at Blandford Church. Speaker: Melody Bage.

September 13-15: Central Virginia Battlefields Trust Annual Conference, “Seventy Square Miles of Hell!” – The Mine Run Campaign and the Wilderness. The conference will be held at the Jepson Alumni Center, 1119 Hanover Street, Fredericksburg. Preliminary programs and speakers include Gordon Rhea, Ted Savas,

and Stephen Cushman (more to be added). Registration is now open at: www.cvbt.org/cvbt-annual-conference.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

May 14: Patrick Falci, “The Man in the Red Shirt: The Life of A.P. Hill”

June 11: Wayne Motts, “Pickett’s Charge at Gettysburg”

July 9: Frank O’Reilly, “Yellow Tavern and the Death of JEB Stuart”

August 13: Brad Gottfried, “The Antietam Paintings by James Hope”

September 10: Scott Mingus, “If We Are Striking for Pennsylvania: The Army of Northern Virginia and the Army of the Potomac March to Gettysburg”

October 8: Bobby Krick, “W.H.F. ‘Rooney’ Lee”

November 12: Annual Dinner Meeting
Dr. Gary Gallagher, TBA

December 10: Sarah Bierle, “John Pelham: His Five Years at West Point”

Attendance at March Meeting: 58

NOTABLE QUOTE

“One of the knightliest soldiers of the Federal army, General Joshua L. Chamberlain of Maine, who afterward served with distinction as governor of his State, called his troops into line, and as my men marched



in front of them, the veterans in blue gave a

soldierly salute to those vanquished heroes – a token of respect from Americans to Americans, a final and fitting tribute from Northern to Southern chivalry.”

John B. Gordon, 1904
Reminiscences of the Civil War