

Cape Fear Civil War Round Table

February, 1996

NEWSLETTER

Editor: George Slaton

ABRAHAM LINCOLN February 8 Meeting

Probably no American has been the subject of more biographical analyses than Abraham Lincoln who led the Union through four years of struggle and warfare with the Confederacy. Bob Toplin, Professor of American History at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington will focus in our February 8 meeting on how public perceptions of Lincoln's leadership evolved during the war years. Though Lincoln was an unpopular leader early on in his presidency, he emerged, as we all know, in the last period of the war, as an extraordinary figure in American history. Dr. Toplin will survey Lincoln's emergence as a military and political leader.

Dr. Toplin, an accomplished historian, has been on the faculty at UNCW since 1978. He's authored eight books, the most recent being *Ken Burns' Civil War*, an examination of television's treatment of the war. This book is a main selection of the History Book Club, a high tribute to Dr. Toplin's scholarship. His *History By Hollywood: The Use and Abuse of the American Past*, will be published shortly. He has also written several scripts for various historical programs produced by public television. Wilmington is fortunate to have an historian of Dr. Toplin's caliber, and the RT will likewise be fortunate in hosting him as our February speaker!

So make plans to attend another riveting presentation on CW history by the RT on Thursday, February 8, 7:30 pm, King Hall, Room 101, at UNCW. Feel free to bring a guest!

(Also, if you wish to reserve a copy of Mark Bradley's *Last Stand in the Carolinas: The Battle of Bentonville* at the February meeting, please call Dan Geddie at 799-5338 (home, evenings).

A STIRRING CONCERT! The 11th Regiment North Carolina Band

All of us RT members who were present for the concert of the 11th Regiment N. C. Band on Saturday night, January 27, were thrilled both by the music and the attendance! A large crowd of 230-40 turned out for the performance. Everyone seemed to enjoy hearing this authentic CW brass band whether they were playing the mournful tunes of *Who Will Care for Mother Now?*, the romantic melody of *Aura Lea* which Elvis Presley later used in his *Love Me Tender*, hymns like *Rock of Ages*, or the stirring strains of *Dixie* and *Bonnie Blue Flag*! And many people lingered afterwards for conversation and refreshments. The concert was really a great event.

The Cape Fear Civil War Round Table wants to recognize and thank the following sponsors whose support made the concert possible:

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Sgt. John H. House, Co. D, 38th Regiment NCT
Private Morris Gore, Co. I, 20th Regiment NCT

ASSOCIATION FOR PRESERVATION OF CIVIL WAR SITES Unrivalled In Saving CW Battlefields

There has been no greater or more successful leader in the campaign over the last several years to save and preserve for all of us our natural CW heritage than the Association for Preservation of Civil War Sites (APCWS). I've been a member of APCWS since its inception in 1988 and I hope that all of you will consider joining this outstanding organization.

Founded by such respected historians and authors like Gary Gallagher, Robert Krick, Brian Pohanka, Dennis Frye, Wilson Greene, Alan Nolan, and Donald Pfanz, the association has done wonderful things for CW preservation. In more recent years, such luminaries as James McPherson, Ed Bearss, Katie Couric, I.E.B. Stuart IV, Ted Turner, James I. Robertson, Senators Dale Bumpers and James Jeffords, and our Petersburg/Appomattox tour leader for our coming bus trip in March, Chris Calkins, have joined the boards of APCWS.

Recognizing that important and historic Civil War landscapes were being lost to development at an alarming rate, APCWS began at once the huge task of raising funds and planning acquisitions of CW battlefields. APCWS functions much like the Nature Conservancy in that it buys threatened battlefield properties outright and then transfers them to local, federal, or state agencies which preserve and interpret them for the public. APCWS has also helped numerous smaller preservation organizations in many states acquire battlefield land. It's noteworthy that APCWS seeks to work with landowners to protect battlefield properties.

In the last couple of years alone, APCWS has succeeded in purchasing 90% of the battlefield at Brice's Crossroads in Mississippi where Nathan Bedford Forrest won his greatest victory, over 700 acres at Glendale and Malvern Hill near Richmond where Lee battled McClellan, and over 200 acres which comprise a major portion of the Third Winchester field. In all APCWS has preserved 36 sites in 11 states totalling 3918.49 acres at a cost of \$7,427,804.00.

And I've enjoyed my membership in APCWS! Not only can I feel a sense of real accomplishment in helping to save battlefield land by making contributions as finances allow, but I've had numerous opportunities to enjoy several superb battlefield tour weekends sponsored by the association. With APCWS, I've done a one-day tour of Petersburg and weekend tours of the Seven Days Campaign, Cedar Mountain, Brandy Station, McDowell, Port Republic, Corinth, and Brice's Crossroads. There's nothing more exciting than to stand on the field with knowledgeable historians and get a first-rate description of the struggle which took place there!

No wonder that the membership of APCWS, folks like you and me, has grown by leaps and bounds to over 10,000 members. The organization's successes have brought many members on board, resulting in a doubling of the membership since 1993.

Annual individual memberships in APCWS are available in categories from \$30.00 to \$1000.00. All members receive the bimonthly *Hallowed Ground* and can participate in tours and seminars sponsored by the association. Write to APCWS at Box 1862, Fredericksburg VA 22401 or call (703) 371-1860 or (703) 371-3489 FAX.

APCWS needs you! It needs your interest and support....and it needs your dollars. It will put your dollars to work to save battlefields that you and I can not only see in our mind's eye as we read an account of a battle or a campaign but that we can actually visit and enjoy and more thoroughly understand.

Join APCWS and be a part of a remarkable and successful undertaking to preserve the battlefields we love!