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.Meets @ Civic Center Library
3839 N Drinkwater Blvd Scottsdale
.on the 3rd Tuesday of the month
6:45 PM—8:45 PM

.September thru May
.\$35 Annual Dues (individual)
.\$45 Annual Dues (family)
.Everyone Welcome

DID YOU KNOW?

.Most infantry rifles were equipped with bayonets, but very few men wounded by bayonet showed up at hospitals.



The conclusion was that the bayonet was not a lethal weapon. The explanation probably lay in the fact that opposing soldiers did not often actually come to grips and, when they did, were prone to use their rifles as clubs.

BRAD GREENBERG

presents-

**Mary Chestnut:
A Personal View of The
Recent Unpleasantness**

February 15, 2011 Tuesday
6:45 PM

Civic Center Library



Brad Greenberg was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and was raised in Greenwich, Connecticut. At an early age he developed both a love of literature and a fascination with the Civil War. He received his Bachelor's degree at Muskingum College in New Concord, Ohio, and obtained his Master's degree from Kansas State University. His Master's Thesis, "Jimmying the Lock of Domesticity: Women and Slavery in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Frederick Douglass's *Narrative*, and Mary Chestnut's *Journals*," discussed how slavery affected the roles of women in the antebellum South. After moving to Phoenix, Arizona, Brad discovered the Scottsdale Civil War Round Table, and has been an active member ever since. He will be discussing Mary Chestnut's view on the Civil War, and its effect on her society.

FROM WES' DEN.....I was looking at my insignia display and was surprised that only two Civil War corps insignias (corps is never singular) remain the same in the present army. They are the I (First) Corps, a cannon ball, and the XXIV (Twenty-Fourth) Corps, a heart. Of course the colors have changed; but one rule common to all, is that they are always designated by Roman Numerals. They had a simple solution to the three divisions in each corps. They just went with red, white and blue corps badge for 1st, 2nd and 3rd division. When I started learning of the Civil War in the late 1950's, I was shocked to find a big painting showing the first day at Gettysburg and prominent are mounted riders with Japanese flags. To see these large upright white banners with a red ball amidst the advancing I Corps was a mystery to me. It would be several years before I learned those were the battle flags of the Union I Corps. It was note the Rising Sun of Japan; but a red cannon ball of the 1st Division.



A new attendance record of 239 was set at the January meeting, and of course Ed Bearss was responsible for that. The auditorium seats 280 and seats were scarce. Two years ago, Ed set the record at 209. I do not want to even think about the ice storm Tuesday morning that delayed him; but did not cancel him. Mack Stanley, our Program Director was frazzled and I was worried. I was already driving to the meeting when Mack let me know Ed had finally arrived in Phoenix.

I remain your most obedient servant..... *Wes Schmidt*

BOOK REVIEW
by
Don Swanson
SCWRT Member



Bloody Crimes: The Chase for Jefferson Davis and the Death

Pageant for Lincoln's Corpse by James Swanson.

Published by William Morrow. Notes, index, bibliography, illustrations. 2010. 480 pp. \$27.99

My Thoughts Be Bloody: The Bitter Rivalry Between Edwin and John Wilkes Booth that Led to an American Tragedy by Nora Titone. Published by Free Press. Notes, index, bibliography, illustrations. 2010. 479 pp. \$30.00

While these books share similar titles, each provides accounts of related, but different events occurring at the end of the Civil War. In **Bloody Crimes** James Swanson follows up his popular 2006 book **Manhunt: The 12-Day Chase for Lincoln's Killer** with this fascinating account of how a grieving nation honored and buried its beloved president while also pursuing fleeing Confederate President Jefferson Davis from Richmond. Author Nora Titone examines how a family rivalry contributed to John Wilkes Booth's decision to kill Abraham Lincoln in **My Thoughts Be Bloody**.

Mr. Swanson's account in **Bloody Crimes** begins with some necessary background staging of events involving both Lincoln and Davis just prior to the assassination. The book then alternates between Lincoln's assassination and burial to Davis's actions beginning with the surrender of Lee's army five days before Lincoln's death. While many Northern newspapers blamed Davis for Booth's actions, the author is emphatic that Davis had no role in Booth's actions. In fact, when he heard of Lincoln's death Davis expressed his regret acknowledging that it would be disastrous for the Southern people. But while Davis recognized the potential harm to the South with Lincoln's death, he remained fervent in his belief that Confederate resistance west of the Mississippi was possible. He pursued that belief until his capture in Irwinville, Georgia some 38 days after evacuating Richmond.

As the author provides the harrowing account of Davis's flight, he also gives the somber, yet fascinating account of the preparation for Lincoln's burial and lengthy train trip to Springfield, Illinois in which so many people expressed their admiration for their war-time leader and emancipator. The author's detailed descriptions of the formation of the military escort, embalming and care of the body during its long trip, the numerous memorials enroute to the burial site, and the influence of Mary Lincoln and others on the events reflect the author's extensive research and ability to tell a great story.

While I enthusiastically jumped into Mr. Swanson's new book, I picked up **My Thoughts be Bloody** (taken from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*) with some hesitation as its subtitle

struck me as another attempt to psychologically diagnose a madman 150 years after the fact. That hesitation was quickly forgotten, however, as I was pulled into this complex examination of how the Booth family and 19th century theater influenced the infamous assassin. It was Booth's father, Junius, and older brother Edwin especially, who because of their fame and success in the theater, unintentionally motivated the weak and marginally-talented actor, John Wilkes, to commit the theatrical killing. Ms. Titone provides a detailed, heavily-researched tale of curious child rearing by Junius and sibling rivalry with Edwin weaved together with a detailed description of 19th theater – a time when much of the public viewed actors on a par with street prostitutes. While the author focuses on her primary theme, it's the other aspects of this tragic story that makes this book so interesting. Few readers will know of the close relationship between U.S. Grant's aide-de-camp Adam Badeau and Edwin Booth or the repeated theatrical failures of John Wilkes. It's these lesser-known perspectives that make this book something more than just another "Lincoln assassination book."

Ultimately, whether the reader reaches the same conclusion as the author regarding the motivations of John Wilkes Booth, **My Bloody Thoughts** still provides both a fascinating look at the assassin's troubled life and times.

Bloody Crimes: *Highly Recommended.*

My Bloody Thoughts: *Recommended*

THANKS ARE IN ORDER TO:

- Charles Madigan: for suggesting we make our third annual \$2500 donation to Civil War Preservation Trust, in honor of Ed Bearss. A great presentation at the meeting, Charlie.
- Hank Potosky: who manages the book sales and hauls all those books in every meeting which brought in \$367 in donations at the January meeting...another record.
- Don Swanson: who provides the 6:15 show every meeting plus reads all those books for our book reviews.



UPCOMING ROUND TABLES

Mar 15, 2011...Lesley Gordon
So Much Suffering: The 16th Connecticut Volunteers in War & Memory

Apr 19, 2011...Frank O'Reilly
The Liberty Hall Volunteers: Stonewall Jackson's College Boys



May 17, 2011...Brian Wills
My Dancing Days Are Over: William Dorsey Pender & The Civil War

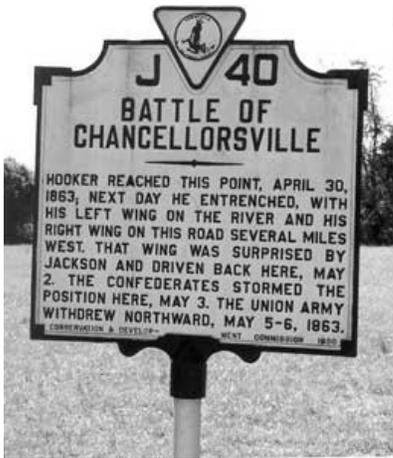
MY UNCLE HENRY -- A GERMAN YANKEE

by Mary Jane Baetz
SCWRT Member

(Part Two of a four-part series)

In February of 1863 my uncle Henry Baetz was promoted from Captain to Major. Three months later, he and the men of the 26th Wisconsin marched to Chancellorsville where there was much military movement from both sides. His company was placed on a hill, on a ridge facing west, on the completely unprotected far right flank of the Union military.

At about five o'clock on the evening of May 2nd, as the men of the 26th prepared coffee and their evening meal, the Confederacy attacked. The Union soldiers were caught completely unaware by the fierce force of Stonewall Jackson's men surging from the dense woods, guns ablaze, shrieking their Rebel Yell. Although vastly outnumbered, some say the men of the 26th rushed to retrieve their weapons and return the fight, shooting and clubbing at the attackers. Others say they didn't.



At a visit to the Chancellorsville battlefield, I stopped at the National Park Service to get information. When I inquired about Uncle Henry's company the Ranger shook his head and said, "It was not good."

"What?" I asked -- "What was not good?" He unrolled a complex map of the battlefield. "This," he said as he placed his finger on the map, "is where the 26th stood. When Jackson's men charged out of the woods, the Germans ran away. They were cowards and ran down the hill." That, he explained, is why other soldiers called them 'Flying Dutchmen' and 'Howard's Cowards.'

Cowards? Flying Dutchmen? I'd read this in books, but I'd also read angry denials and detailed explanations of what "really" happened that infamous day, including my Uncle Henry's furious denouncement of the accusations. Other personal memoirs, reports and letters and of the men who were there acknowledge the attack and the confusion, but also cite the courage and sacrifice of the soldiers.

Twenty-five thousand Rebel soldiers had moved stealthily yet rapidly along a path through the westerly woods, led by a local boy who knew the way. They were spotted several times by Union pickets who rushed to report their sightings, but the warnings went unheeded as General Joe Hooker nodded off and casually dismissed the situation. Even the commander of the XI Corps, General Oliver Otis Howard, who had recently replaced the German's beloved Franz Sigel, initially dismissed the idea.

The Confederates had spread out in the dense woods and advanced without skirmishers. Their attack began with a furious volley poured upon the unsuspecting Twenty-sixth, many of who were young recruits who had never before been engaged in a battle. Nonetheless, on that hilltop the fewer than 650 men gallantly resisted for more than 30 minutes until they were flanked on the right and left. With reluctance, and only after twice receiving the command, those who could retreated to the main portion of the army near the Chancellorsville House. Those who could not included 154 killed, wounded and missing -- some incinerated by a fire begun by exploding shells in the woods. The battle was finally checked that night by the approach of darkness, but continued on the next day with a terrible toll to both sides.

And yet, after the three-day battle, the news press in New York cited the German regiments as cowards who threw down their weapons and fled for their lives. It would take many months and a great deal of effort from Major General Carl Schurz and Colonel Krzyzanowski to bring out the truth.

One newspaper later wrote, *"We think much injustice was done in the outcry made at the time at the alleged cowardice of the German troops. Experienced officers have, since the war, gone over the battle ground, and have pronounced the positions occupied by the Eleventh Corps as perfectly untenable, and that the best troops in our armies, in the same position, and under the same kind of attack, would have broken and retired, leaving no alternative but a retreat."*

On the morning of May 6th, the army of General Hooker made a general retreat across the Rappahannock River at United States Ford, and the Eleventh Corps returned to its old camp at Stafford Court House.

Shortly after, my Uncle Henry wrote a letter to his sweetheart, saying, *"Should Lee cross the Rappahannock he will march through the Shenandoah Valley to the upper Potomac in order to invade Maryland and Pennsylvania. This, by the way, would be a very risky maneuver and I do not yet believe in it."*

But soon Uncle Henry and the men of the Twenty-sixth began to march north and in just a short time they would find themselves in a small Pennsylvania town called Gettysburg.

Lincoln's Message at Gettysburg

by

Mary Lannon, SCWRT Member

The battle of Gettysburg was fought July 1-3, 1863. Although both the North and South would claim success, neither side achieved decided victory. When in doubt, General Lee ordered a doomed assault into the mouth of the Union cannon. George Pickett was later ordered by Lee to reassemble what was left of the assault and replied that he had no force left to assemble. As a result, Lee offered Jefferson Davis his resignation. Although Lee's counterpart, General Meade, had also suffered significant losses, he maintained enough men and ammunition to pursue an enemy that was running out of both. Yet regardless of desperate urgings from President Lincoln to pursue and destroy the enemy, Meade allowed Lee to lie uncontested despite the fact that Lee was trapped by the flooded Potomac. When Lee at last escaped across the river, Lincoln feared the North could not continue with the war through to the next year's election. Meade too, offered his resignation.

Neither Lincoln nor Davis could afford to accept these resignations, largely due to the fact that there were no acceptable replacements for the generals. Both sides had left fifty thousand dead, wounded or missing behind them. As historian Garry Wills has recognized in his study of Lincoln at Gettysburg, both sides had reason to maintain a large pattern of pretense about the battle – Lee pretending that he was not taking back to the South a broken cause, and Meade that he had not let the broken pieces fall through his fingers. Thus, it would have been hard to imagine that Gettysburg would come to be a symbol of national pride, purpose, and ideals. This occurred not as a result of the battle of Gettysburg, but as a result of the Gettysburg Address on November 19, 1863, by which Lincoln transformed the ugly reality of the conflict into something rich and extraordinary which has lasted the generations since the Civil War.

In reading the Gettysburg Address, two interesting points come almost immediately to mind. The first, and perhaps most obvious, is the length of the speech, or lack thereof. At a time when Americans were accustomed to speeches lasting two to three hours, Lincoln spoke for only two to three minutes. Indeed, the orator for the occasion, Edward Everett, gave a two hour speech. While Lincoln had been asked only to provide a few remarks to commemorate the dedication of the cemetery at Gettysburg, the audience which gathered there was unprepared for just how brief those remarks were. Somewhat restless after the conclusion of Everett's speech, the audience had assumed that Lincoln was just getting under way as he delivered his powerful conclusion and sat down.

A second interesting point about the Gettysburg Address is that it makes no direct mention of Gettysburg or the dedication of the cemetery, but only a slight reference to those who fought in the battle. It does not mention the South or Confederacy, the Army of the Potomac or its generals, slavery or – most surprisingly – the Union. Furthermore, Lincoln's other major message of 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation, is not mentioned much less defended. The "great task" Lincoln refers to is not emancipation but the preservation of self-government. Lincoln was intentionally moving away from the specific occasion and seizing the opportunity to make a general argument.

Both the brevity of the Address and its silence on the most

controversial issues of its historic moment are by design. An experienced speaker, Lincoln certainly realized such a short speech was unlikely to be well-received by its immediate audience at Gettysburg. During so short an address there was no time to build up the sort of rapport a speaker needs to fully engage his listeners, and he no doubt left them with a sense of being let down. Yet he was willing to take such a risk, because his intended audience was not the thousands gathered at the dedication ceremony, but the millions who would later read his address. In his analysis of Lincoln's writing, author Douglas Wilson points out that one advantage to such a short speech at the time was that it was sure to be reported in many newspapers in its entirety, and on the front page. In addition, because of what was not specifically mentioned in the Address, it had every appearance of being nonpartisan and merely ceremonial and so stood a good chance of being printed in Democratic newspapers as well. Thus, Lincoln was able to ensure that his message would reach as many Americans as possible.

Exactly what was Lincoln's message at Gettysburg? In his biography of Lincoln, David Herbert Donald has argued that Lincoln drove home his belief that the United States was not just a political union, but nation – a word he used five times. His message was at once a defense of his administration, an explanation of why the war with its associated horrors must continue, and a pledge that because of those efforts "government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth." Wilson has noted that Lincoln also sought to forge a new and lasting expression of the war's purpose. The genius of the famous first sentence is less in the quality of its language than in the manner by which it commands assent to what was at the time a highly disputed belief, that the forefathers brought forth a nation dedicated to the idea that all men are created equal. The second sentence states that the war was therefore about a national commitment to the equality of all men, not merely the right to self-government, as the Confederate states had argued they were claiming for themselves. Lincoln invoked the Declaration of Independence to remind his audience that theirs was a nation committed not merely to constitutional liberty but to human equality, a truth even the nation's Founding Fathers had held to be self-evident. Lincoln had long acknowledged that equality and self-government were linked, and he did not have to mention the word slavery at Gettysburg to argue that it violated the first principle of self-government.

In the Gettysburg Address Lincoln created a configuration of three related ideas, all from the Declaration of Independence. These are equality, freedom, and self-government. As Donald has recognized, Lincoln stressed the role of the Declaration in the origins of the nation which had been "conceived in liberty." Now, the sacrifices of the "brave men, living and dead, who struggled here" on the battlefield at Gettysburg had renewed the power of the Declaration, and "the last full measure of devotion" which they gave made it possible resolve that "these dead shall not have died in vain" and to pledge that "this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom." Rather than merely commemorate the sacrifices of those who fought and died at the battle of Gettysburg, Lincoln effectively seized an opportunity to deliver a message to the entire nation that he and his administration were dedicated to the ideals of the Declaration, and that those ideals necessitated an end to slavery, for which purpose the Union must achieve a renewed commitment to a successful prosecution of the war and ultimate victory.