



THE drum roll

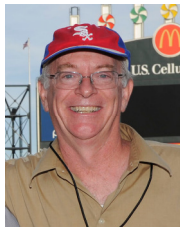
Volume 37 360th Regular Meeting
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Were mines ungentlemanly, immoral, or illegal?

Friday, May 3, 2019, 7:30 p.m.

Arlington Heights Memorial Library
500 North Dunton Avenue, Arlington Heights, Illinois

Damn the Torpedoes! Hi-Tech Rebs and Their Infernal Machines



Bruce Allardice

The outgunned and outnumbered Confederates came up with some pretty sophisticated inventions to try and even the odds. The most effective was their use of naval mines (then called torpedoes) to defend their harbors.

Much of the Civil War was fought in the South, forcing the Confederates to protect thousands of miles of coastline with few resources. Mines offered the most effective tactic: they cost little to produce, worked well as defensive weapons, and could sink or damage large, costly Union ships.

Confederates planted mines in Southern rivers as early as July 1861 and continued to use mines defensively through the end of the war. Southern inventors also developed offensive mines, but these proved less successful because they had a lower chance of encountering targets. The low-

cost mines sunk more Union warships than all the ships of the Confederate navy.

On May 3 Bruce Allardice will trace the history of mine warfare — which predated the Civil War — and tell how the Confederacy made the first effective use of this weapon. The saga includes eccentric and not-so-eccentric inventors, army officers, and even *The Sound of Music* star Julie Andrews. He will discuss how many civilian and military leaders, on both sides, considered mine warfare ungentlemanly, immoral, or illegal, and how both sides nonetheless used mines.

A professor of history at South Suburban College, Allardice is past president of both the Northern Illinois and Chicago Civil War Round Tables and has spoken to this round table numerous times. He has authored or coauthored six books, and numerous articles, on the Civil War. His latest book is *Two Years Before the Paddlewheel: Charles F. Gunther, Mississippi River Confederate* (State House Press, 2012), the edited diary of Charles F. Gunther, a Confederate steamboat officer who later became Chicago's leading candy maker. Other books include *More Generals in Gray* (Louisiana State University Press 1995) a selection of the History Book Club; *Confederate Colonels: A Biographical Register* (University of Missouri Press), a biographical register of Confederate army colonels; and *Kentuckians in Gray* (University Press of Kentucky), co-authored with Larry Hewitt. His latest article appears in the May 2019 issue of *Civil War News*.

If you would like to join us for dinner with Bruce Allardice at 5:30 p.m. before the meeting on May 3 at Sam's of Arlington restaurant, 1863 West Central Road, Arlington Heights, please contact Wayne Rhine at waynerhine@gmail.com or (847) 363-0875 by Wednesday, May 1.

Banquet reservations must be made by May 25

Understanding the Longstreet Controversy

By Pat McCormick

James Longstreet is known to history as Robert E. Lee's right-hand man, his Old War Horse. However, after the war he was surrounded by controversy, both political and historical. On April 5, 2019, Dan Paterson led the round table through Longstreet's contentious post-war life.

Paterson began by reviewing his own background as a descendant of the general, Longstreet being his maternal great-grandfather. He described his own history as a member of memorial groups: the Longstreet Memorial group (which erected a monument to the general at Gettysburg in 1998) and the current Longstreet Society (which operates a museum based on the hotel that Longstreet owned in Gainesville, Georgia, after the war). He has even re-enacted as Longstreet.

Paterson then examined the roots of the controversy. After the surrender at Appomattox, Longstreet visited Lynchburg, Virginia, with his son Garland, his former aide Captain T. J. Goree, and a servant. Traveling by ambulance and horseback, the group then made their way west toward Texas, traversing the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi. (Goree's letters during this period are a key source of information on the travels.) Unlike many members of the failed Confederacy, Longstreet understood that the region would be best served by acquiescing to the new situation. In late May 1865 he gave an interview to the *New York Times* in which he recommended reconciliation; ex-rebels should fulfill their new obligations and honor their paroles.

As Longstreet settled into business in New Orleans, he strengthened his ties with the Northern victors. In 1866, Swinton's history of the Army of the Potomac was published, Longstreet having been one of those interviewed by the author. In this work, Longstreet first broached the claim that Robert E. Lee had promised to fight on the defensive in the 1863 Pennsylvania campaign. In 1867, Longstreet was officially pardoned by President Andrew Johnson, one of his supporters for amnesty being former Union opponent John Pope.

These ties to the North did not sit well with many of the vanquished ex-rebels. In March 1867 the *New Orleans Times* surveyed 18 prominent former Confederates in the area; of them, only Longstreet advised acceptance of the new situation. In a private letter that June, Longstreet advocated suffrage for blacks. The letter was leaked to the press, resulting in an editorial excoriating the former Confederate hero. Death threats followed, his businesses failed, and he moved his family to Lynchburg for safety. His reputation in the South did not improve when he joined the Republican Party, was appointed as Surveyor of New Orleans by President Grant, and (in 1870) pledged the state militia, of which he was now the head, to uphold civil rights for blacks.

Thus, Longstreet's reputation was already tarnished when the controversy over his role in the Gettysburg campaign shifted into high gear following Lee's death in 1870. During a celebration of Lee's birthday in January 1872, Jubal Early's speech included the characterization of Longstreet as slow-moving during the battle, and Early wholly invented a "sunrise" attack order of July 2, intended to damn Longstreet for his late afternoon launching of the attack.

One year later, former artilleryman William Pendleton piled on, becoming one of many who shifted blame for the Gettysburg defeat away from Lee and onto Longstreet. (Paterson pointed out that generations of historians, notably Douglas Southall Freeman, fully bought into the Early-Pendleton viewpoint, though not all historians did so.) Longstreet did, in 1873, reconcile with former subordinate Lafayette McLaws, who had referred to Longstreet as a "humbug" in 1863 but who now agreed that his corps commander did not dawdle on Gettysburg's second day.

Meanwhile, in Louisiana the troubles continued to involve Longstreet. Incidents where unrepentant Southerners attacked and slaughtered black citizens — the Colfax Massacre of 1873 and the Coushatta Massacre of 1874 — were emblematic of the conflict. In another confrontation at Liberty

Place in 1874, Longstreet, still in command of the militia (who were attempting to keep order), was slightly wounded. His presence in the general area led to a newspaper illustration of the general in direct confrontation with an ex-Confederate soldier; although a fabrication, the picture did nothing to help Longstreet's reputation among the unreconstructed.

He had finally had enough of New Orleans and moved to Gainesville, Georgia, in 1875. There he opened a hotel, taking advantage of the new railroad that had recently reached the town. Even there, he was not free from controversy: in 1889, as Longstreet was attempting to establish a Republican Party organization in Gainesville, his home burned down under mysterious circumstances. His sword, uniform, and personal papers were lost in the conflagration.

By that time, Longstreet had been answering his Gettysburg critics for over a decade. He publicly told his side of the story in a variety of publications from 1875 to 1888, most notably in a Philadelphia *Times* series and then in *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*. He also published his memoirs in 1896. Longstreet appeared at numerous battlefield reunions over the years; Paterson showed a few photos from those gatherings, pointing out that Longstreet was usually the only Confederate veteran in groups of ex-Union officers. Because he never retreated from his conciliatory position, even Longstreet's death in 1904 did not still the controversy, particularly concerning his performance at Gettysburg. To this day he has his champions and detractors.

Paterson finished the presentation by showing photos from the Longstreet family album, many (if not most) of them unpublished. On behalf of the round table, I would like to thank Dan Paterson for presenting this important story.

Women's Civil War Book Club

The Civil War book club for women will meet at the home of Denise Limburg at 2 p.m. on Saturday, June 8, to discuss *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott. If you are interested in joining the group, contact Denise Limburg at (847) 212-5313 or dlimburg@prodigy.net or Mary Banks at (847) 497-3149 or zeller1@comcast.net.

drum roll, May 2019

May Saturday Discussion

All members and guests are invited to participate in the session to be held at the Barrington Area Library, 505 North Northwest Highway, Barrington, on Saturday, May 18, from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Pat McCormick will lead the discussion continuing with Chickamauga and leading into the Chattanooga Campaign.

These discussions are generally held on the third Saturday of the month from September through June. They are held to generate and foster a free exchange of ideas on Civil War events.

May Events

May 10, Second Friday Lecture Series, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. Claire Herhold will speak on *I Have Not Wavered at All: Robert Gould Shaw's Journey to the 54th Massachusetts*, noon. Free program is sponsored by the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table and the Iron Brigade Association. Information on all Civil War Museum programs is available at (262) 653-4140 or www.thecivilwarmuseum.org.

May 10, Chicago Civil War Round Table. John Horn will speak on the Petersburg Regiment: the 12th Virginia.

May 14, McHenry County Civil War Round Table. Bruce Allardice will speak on *Damn the Torpedoes! Hi-Tech Rebs and Their Infernal Machines*.

May 17, Salt Creek Civil War Round Table. Jerry Allen will speak on Wisconsin: The Hotbed of Secession?

Annual Banquet

The 36th annual banquet of the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table will be held June 7, 2019, at Concorde Banquets, 20922 North Rand Road, Kildeer, Illinois. Dave Powell will speak on Grant's Chattanooga Campaign. Reservations should be sent to Pat McCormick, 1444 North Lee Boulevard, Berkeley, Illinois 60163, by May 25, along with a check for \$39 for each person having dinner and the choice of dinner. Dinner choices are beef tenderloin brochette, chicken Marsala, broiled whitefish, and a pasta dish with roasted vegetables.



2017–18 Officers and Trustees

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Appointed Positions

Book Raffle	Charles Banks
Newsletter Editor	Sally Smith

Book Raffle

The lucky winners at the April book raffle were David Noe, who won *Strangling the Confederacy: Coastal Operations in the American Civil War* by Kevin J. Dougherty; Pat McCormick, who won *Gettysburg: A Novel of the Civil War* by Newt Gingrich and William Forstchen; Alisa Corsi, who won *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America* by Garry Wills; Phillip Thornton, who won *Chickamauga Campaign: Great Military Campaigns of History* by Patrick Abbazia; and Dan Josephs, who won *A Little Short of Boats: The Civil War Battles of Ball's Bluff and Edwards Ferry* by James A. Morgan, III.

Congratulations to the winners and sincere thanks to the donors

Election of Officers

Officers for the 2019–2020 club year will be elected at the annual banquet on June 7, 2019.

The nominating committee will present the slate of nominees headed by Wayne Rhine and Laurence Schiller.

Volunteers are still needed to fill some positions. Anyone who is interested should contact any board member. Additional nominations may be made at that meeting with the consent of the nominee, who must be a current member of the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table.

New Member

Ms. Carol Schumann
Schaumburg, Illinois
skynyrdlvr@aol.com

Eisenhower Library Discussion

The Civil War discussion group at the Eisenhower Library, 4613 North Oketo Avenue, Harwood Heights, meets on the first Saturday of the month from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. On May 4, 2019, the group will discuss the Lincoln assassination and the pursuit of John Wilkes Booth.



To learn more about the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table
visit our website at www.northernilcwr.org