



# Adjutant's Call

Official Publication  
of the

## Louisville Civil War Round Table

Circular Memorandum #433

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November, 2011

Announcing Our 469th Meeting

### "The Military Rise of Ulysses. S. Grant, 1862"

Will be Presented by Glenn LaFantasie

DATE: Saturday, November 12

Location: Big Spring Country Club

COCKTAILS: 6:00 P.M.

DINNER (\$25.00): 7:00 P.M.

PROGRAM: 8:00 P.M.

#### Meet Our Speaker - Glenn LaFantasie

GLENN W. LAFANTASIE, who received his Ph.D. in History from Brown University, is the Richard Frockt Family Professor of Civil War History and Director of the Institute for Civil War Studies at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Kentucky. Among his books on the Civil War are *Twilight at Little Round Top* (2005), *Gettysburg Requiem: The Life and Lost Causes of Confederate Colonel William C. Oates* (2006), and *Gettysburg Heroes: Perfect Soldiers, Hallowed Ground* (2008). He's currently working on two books, *Lincoln and Grant*, which will examine the relationship between the Union commander in chief and his most successful general, and *Past Meets Present: How the Civil War Endures in American Life*, a collection of essays. He is also a Contributing Writer on history and politics for Salon.com.

### "The Military Rise of Ulysses S. Grant, 1862"

We all think we know Ulysses S. Grant. Yet even his best friend and lieutenant during the Civil War, William Tecumseh Sherman, professed that Grant was an enigma to him. Although he had known Grant for decades, Sherman wrote in 1879 that Grant "to me is a mystery, and I believe he is a mystery to himself." Despite Sherman's diagnosis, numerous writers have attempted to solve the mystery of Grant, sometimes by concluding that the secret to understanding Grant may be found in his true simplicity as a man, while others have maintained that his secret can only be comprehended by appraising his great complexity. Over the past twenty-five years, a renewed interest in Grant as a general and as president has resulted in an armload of books examining his abilities as a field officer, his effectiveness as the nation's chief executive, and his inner and outer qualities as a man. For the most part, this scholarship has been positive. Much of the recent scholarship has been aimed at overturning the very negative portrait of Grant presented in William S. McFeely's 1981 Pulitzer-prize winning biography. Grant seems finally to have come into his own. Historians

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and biographers now tend to agree that Grant was a great general, a capable president (despite the scandals that rocked his administration), and a good man. They have, to a great extent, solved the mystery of Grant by unveiling the depths of his capabilities and his character. On the surface, there is little left to say about the man who won the Civil War and whose picture now graces the fifty dollar bill.

In this presentation, which will take place at the Louisville Civil War Round Table's next meeting on Saturday, November 12, Glenn W. LaFantasie, the Richard Frockt Family Professor of Civil War History and the Director of the Institute for Civil War Studies at Western Kentucky University, will attempt to solve the "mystery" of Grant by looking at his military rise from the colonel in command of the 21st Illinois to his victory as a Major General at the Battle of Shiloh in April 1862. How could this humble, quiet man have risen so fast from obscurity to fame? The governor of Illinois remembered him as "plain, very plain," and the soldiers under his command called him "the quiet man." In time, historians have attributed several virtuous traits to Grant, all of which have been used to explain how this plain, soft-spoken man could ever have become the great victor of the Civil War. More than anything, scholars have recognized Grant's determination, tenacity, pragmatism, decency, and common sense. Over and over again these characteristics of the man have been delineated to show what manner of man he was and how these qualities helped him to win the war.

Historians have been correct in emphasizing these character traits, although by doing so repeatedly, almost ad infinitum, if not ad nauseam, this picture of Grant has actually made him fade in our eyes; the accepted personal attributes have not sharpened our view of him, they have dulled it and turned the man into a beloved myth—a venerable icon of the Civil War. Some scholars have proposed that Grant's military rise was nothing short of miraculous. They argue that somehow his greatest character traits and a phenomenal dose of good luck combined to create his formidable successes as an officer and particularly as a field general. Given Grant's hard times in the antebellum army, from which he was forced to resign, and his lack of success in his civilian pursuits, which nearly put him in the poorhouse, his stellar performance as a field general has seemed all the more spectacular.

Glenn LaFantasie's talk will follow Grant along a path that most historians do not follow: an account of Grant's mistakes, his learning by trial and error, and an assessment of those qualities that the general possessed—some of them innate and others learned—that turned him into the competent general, and eventually the victorious lieutenant general and general in chief, who won the Civil War. As he does so, he will also analyze the problem of Grant's drinking and how historians have either dismissed it as malicious rumors spread by the general's enemies, have denied that the problem existed, or have labeled him an outright alcoholic. He will argue, unlike other historians, that the explanation of Grant's success as a general can be found in the errors and the confidence that he displayed during the two day battle of Shiloh.

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**RESERVATIONS:** Call **Doug Krawczyk (502-425-0325)** to place your reservations. If you are making reservations for more than just yourself, please give the names of the others. If you leave your reservation on his answering machine, please spell out your name so he can correctly identify you. You can also make your reservation by e-mail by sending it to **bryanw@macconstruction.com**. Please call or email **no later than Wednesday, November 9**, by noon. We cannot accept reservations past this date! If you wish to join us just for the program, please call and make a reservation so that we can provide you with a chair. If you are only coming for the program, you can call Doug anytime up to 4:00 p.m. the day of the meeting.

**Reminder for Table Reservations:** We can reserve tables for parties of **eight** only, and we need you to provide us with the names of all the people in your party when you make the reservation. This will enable us to manage our meeting space in a more efficient manner. Thank you.

### It is Time for Membership Renewals

It is now time to pay the annual membership fees of the Round Table. Remember any amount you give above the basic or family membership fee is tax-deductible since the Round Table has tax-exempt status as a 501 (c) (3) organization! There are three membership options from which to choose. The additional funds raised through Patron memberships allow the Round Table to take a more active role in the Preservation of Civil War battlefields and sites and also help pay the costs of bringing the very best Civil War speakers to our meetings. Dues notices were sent in the Summer Newsletter.

#### To Summarize the Options:

- Option One: Regular Membership \$30 Basic membership.
- Option Two: Family Membership \$35 Allows spouse or family member living in the same household to also join.
- +\$5 For each additional family member.
- Option Three: Patron Membership \$55+ Membership with financial gift to LCWRT.

Please send your membership renewal to: LCWRT, 1028 Sarah Drive, Louisville, KY 40219-4923

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### Shiloh Field Trip April 25-29, 2012

We will be going to Shiloh April 25- 29 for our Spring Field Trip. Our tour guide will be Tim Smith, former historian at Shiloh Military Park. More details will be announced soon. You can sign up at the meeting and make your non-refundable \$200 deposit to reserve your place. You can also mail your deposit to Harriette at the above address.

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### 2011 - 2012 Dates

Saturday	November 12	Glenn LaFantasie	"The Military Rise of U.S. Grant in 1862"
Saturday	December 3	Sam Elliott	"Tennessee Governor Isham Harris"
Saturday	January 21	Saxton's Cornett Band	"Civil War Music"
Saturday	February 11	Michael Bradley	"TBA"
Saturday	March 10	Richard McMurry	"TBA"
Saturday	April 14	Ari Hoogenboom	"Gustavas Fox of the Union Navy"
Saturday	May 12	Brian McKnight	"Contested Borderland"

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### Welcome New Members!

We wish to extend the warm hand of fellowship to new members:

**Jack and Brenda Brammer**

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### The 150th Commemoration of Fort Duffield

This year marks the [150th Anniversary of the construction of U.S. Civil War Fort Duffield](#). On Sunday, November 6, 2011, a [special commemoration program](#) will take place as part of the [four year long Civil War Sesquicentennial taking place across the country](#). Fort Duffield was built in the fall of 1861 to protect Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman's supply base in West Point at the confluence of the Salt and Ohio Rivers. Reenactors will set up camp on the hallowed grounds of Kentucky's largest and best-preserved Civil War earthen fortification which sits 300 feet above the small river town of West Point, in Northern Hardin County, Kentucky just across the Jefferson County line off U.S. Hwy 31W/Dixie Hwy. The sounds of muskets and cannon will once again echo across the hills and across the Ohio River into Southern Indiana.

Events will open at noon with the posting of the colors by the 9th Michigan Vol Inf Reenactors at 12 Noon. Local Historian Richard Briggs and members of the Fort Duffield Heritage Committee will share the rich history of this nearly forgotten Civil War site. Visitors will learn about the construction of the fort, the 61 soldiers who died at West Point and how the Civil War impacted the people of this small river town.

This intimate living history event offers visitors a unique opportunity to talk with reenactors and local historians.

150th Anniversary of U.S. Civil War Fort Duffield Sunday, November 6, 2011 12 Noon - 4 PM Schedule:

- **12 Noon - Opening Ceremonies**
- **1 PM - Skirmish**
- **1:30 - 2:30 Commemorative Program**
- **3 PM - Skirmish**
- **Souvenirs**

\$3.00 per person or \$7.00 per family (parents and all children under age 18). **Fort Duffield is an all volunteer historic site and park with no paid staff. All proceeds benefit the continuing restoration, maintenance and interpretation of Fort Duffield.**

The entrance to Fort Duffield is on Dixie Highway (U.S. 31W) at Salt River Dr. just 7.5 miles south of the Gene Snyder Freeway (Hwy 841) and 9 miles north of the main entrance to Fort Knox.

Shuttle service is available for those unable to walk the 1/4 mile trail to the fort.

Take a virtual tour of Fort Duffield on line at [www.fortduffield.com](http://www.fortduffield.com). For information or to arrange group tours, contact: Fort Duffield Heritage Committee (502) 922-4574 or [FortDuffield@insightbb.com](mailto:FortDuffield@insightbb.com) Visit historic West Point, Kentucky on line at [www.westpointky.org](http://www.westpointky.org).

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### **Getting the Newsletter via Email is Fast and Saves \$\$\$**

With the cost of postage going up (as always), we want to encourage everyone to consider getting the newsletter by email. It costs the Round Table about \$10.00 per year in postage, envelopes, and printing costs to mail each newsletter. If you multiply that times 150 you can see it adds up to a large amount. In order to receive the newsletter by email, you do need the capability to read a 'Word Document' on your computer. Just contact Harriette Weatherbee at [harriettew@att.net](mailto:harriettew@att.net) and let her know. You will get your newsletter faster and help us save \$\$\$ at the same time.

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### **Lowell Harrison, Life Member of the Round Table, Passes Away**

Honorary Life Member and famed Kentucky historian Lowell Harrison passed away on October 12. He was a long time professor of history at Western Kentucky University and the author of books on the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln, and Kentucky history. Over the years, he spoke at our Round Table on several occasions. He will be greatly missed by the Kentucky historical community.

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### **November 2011 Quiz:**

1. Two high-ranking Federal officers saw themselves "retired" during November 1861. Who were they and who replaced them?
2. What important Federal naval offensive action took place in November 1861 and why was it so important?
3. What well-known incident is often cited to show the manner in which General McClellan treated President Lincoln?
4. What was the British official reaction to the "Trent Affair"?
5. The older brother of General Braxton Bragg, C.S.A., was appointed to what Confederate cabinet post?

October 2011 Quiz Answers:

1. During October 1861, Jefferson Davis was besieged by requests from unhappy Confederate soldiers. What did they want?

**They wanted to rejoin their individual state militias and defend their individual states. Davis had the difficult job of trying to maintain the state regiments and at the same time create strong army corps, so he refused many requests.**

2. CSA General Thomas Jackson's map maker was a native of what state?

**Jedediah "Jed" Hotchkiss, Stonewall's map maker, was born in Windsor, New York, a town founded by his great-grandfather.**

3. In what battle did the charging troops of Winfield Scott Featherstone, CSA, push their foes back so that they fell to their deaths over a steep cliff?

**The Battle of Ball's Bluff, Virginia in October 1861**

4. Why, after the above battle, were neither USA Brigadier General Charles P. Stone nor CSA Brigadier General Nathan G. "Shanks" Evans promoted?

**Stone was made the scapegoat for the Union defeat. Though cleared and returned to service, his career was marred. Evans, though proven to be a quick-thinking soldier at this battle as well as at 1st Manassas, had a reputation for having a drinking problem. Years later Stone was the engineer responsible for erecting the Statue of Liberty.**

5. This Georgia politician served as a U.S. Representative both before the Civil War and after Reconstruction. Who was he and what did he do during the Civil War?

**He was Alexander Hamilton Stephens and was Vice President of the Confederacy. He was also the 50th Governor of Georgia and died in office after serving about six months.**

(The Quiz is prepared by Harriette Weatherbee)

**Attest:**

**John Davis  
Adjutant**

**By Order of:**

**Chris Kolakowski  
President**