

# HARDTACK

Indianapolis Civil War Round Table Newsletter

<http://indianapoliscwrt.org/>




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February 9, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting at Indiana History Center

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## *The Plan of the Day* The Fort Pillow Massacre



From A *New York* magazine

America's Civil War created many heroes, villains, casualties and controversies. One of the greatest controversies surrounds the events of April 12, 1864 in Western Tennessee on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River. Tennessee Union soldiers and Black Union soldiers manned this place, named Fort Pillow. It was attacked and overwhelmed by the troops of Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest. It became known as the Fort Pillow Massacre. We will look at the events leading up to the battle and the historical information recorded about this event.

### *Our Guest Speaker* Gerald Jones

Gerald G. Jones is a resident of Anderson, In. and retired from General Motors after 34.5 years. A graduate of Ball State University, he has been studying the Civil War since 1970. He is a member and Past President of the Indianapolis Civil War Roundtable. Member of the Ben Harrison Camp of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. He has been Chairman of the Madison County Historical Society Civil War Roundtable since its inception in 1992. Gerald is married with three children, one Granddaughter and one Grandson.

*Roster of Officers and Committees for the 2008-2009 Campaign*  
*Officers:*

President: Nikki Schofield  
 Vice President: Tom Dean

Secretary: Frank Bynum  
 Treasurer: Tony Roscetti

*Committee Chairs:*

Programs: Tom Dean  
 Website: Paul Watson

Preservation: Andy O'Donnell  
 Publicity: Dave Buchanan & Tony Roscetti

*Quiz Master:*

Tony Trimble

*Summer Campaign:*

Nikki Schofield

*HARDTACK Newsletter:*

Editor: Jenny Thompson

*2008-2009 Campaign Plans*

March 9, 2009	to be announced
April 13, 2009	to be announced
May 11, 2009	to be announced
June 8, 2009 (Banquet)	“Gettysburg National Battle Field NSPS” Troy Harmon

**\*Note our meetings will be held at the Indiana History Center through March. Our April and May meeting will be held at Speedway Baptist Church at 2986 Moller Road. Our June banquet will be held at the Indian Lake Country Club on the northeast side of the city.**

*Other Camp Activities*

**Portraits of Lincoln: The Lang Collection:** The collection opens at 10 a.m. on February 9 at the Wabash County Historical Museum, 36 E. Market Street, Wabash, IN. The museum is open Tues. – Sat. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free for Museum members or with paid daily admission of \$5 adults; \$3 seniors (60+); \$3 children (6-12).

**Upcoming Lincoln Events in Spencer County**

February 12, 2009 – Remembering Lincoln, 2 p.m. CDT  
 Will include a wreath laying ceremony at the grave site of Nancy Hanks, guests speakers and an open house at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial.

April 14, 2009 – Abraham Lincoln Funeral Reenactment, noon to midnight CDT  
 A reproduction of President Abraham Lincoln’s casket will lie in state in the Spencer County Courthouse in Rockport, Ind. as guards in period uniform keep watch. A wreath laying ceremony will begin at noon. For more information, call 812-489-0365 or visit [www.ThinkLincoln.org](http://www.ThinkLincoln.org).

April 19, 2009 – Lincoln Bicentennial Speakers Series, 2 p.m. CDT  
 This event at the Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial will feature Seth Bongartz of Hildene, the home of Robert Todd Lincoln. For more information, visit [www.nps.gov/libo](http://www.nps.gov/libo) or call 812-937-4541.

April 25, 2009 – Pioneer Day, Rockport Lincoln Pioneer Village, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
 Costumed interpreters will be demonstrating life in the village and trade techniques commonly used during the period when Lincoln grew up in Southern Indiana. Free admission. Donations

accepted. For more information, visit <http://www.lincolnpioneervillage.org/> or call 812-649-9197 or 812-686-2553.

**Carmel Civil War Round Table:**

- February 18 – Mike Beck, “Indiana Connection to the rare Merrill musket”
- March 18 – Tim Beckman, “The 42<sup>nd</sup> Indiana and His Family”

We meet at 7:00 PM on the third Wednesday of the month at the Carmel Clay Historical Society's Monon Depot Museum at 221 First St. SW in Carmel.

**Indiana Association of Historians – Lincoln’s Legacy:** This event will begin Friday, February 27 at the Allen County Public Library (900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne) for a business meeting, election, and a film presentation “Presenting the Past”. Events will continue Saturday, February 28 at the History Center (302 East Berry Street) with sessions on “Race, Conflict, and Death in Early Indiana;” “Emancipation in Indiana and International Context;” “Teaching Lincoln: An Indiana Council for History Education Roundtable;” “Three Indiana Women with Lincoln Connections;” “Saving the Lincoln Museum’s Collections for Indiana;” and “The History/Geography Educators’ Network of Indiana.” Cost is \$50 for nonmembers, \$40 for members, and \$20 for students. Registrations must be received by Monday, February 23. Please see Tom Krasean for copies of the program and information about how to sign up for this event.

**The Reel Civil War: The Civil War in the Cinema:** Liberty University, located in Lynchburg, Virginia, will present its 13<sup>th</sup> annual Civil War Seminar on March 27-28, 2009. Featured speakers include Bruce Chadwick; Ron Maxwell; Lee Webb; David Sachsman; Ken Elston, Mel Reid; Katherine Antolini; Paul Ashdown; Dr. Brenda Ayres; Kevin Hershberger; Kenny Rowlette; and Dr. Brian Wills. There will also be numerous exhibits of Civil War artifacts and memorabilia, vendors of Civil War items, and a special exhibit of Civil War movie posters. Friday’s events will be held at the Kirkley Hotel. Saturday’s events will be held in DeMoss Hall on the campus. The seminar will conclude with a special period church service on Sunday, March 29. Admission to the seminar is \$65, which includes all the seminar sessions, Friday night banquet, and Saturday’s luncheon); \$35 for Friday only; and \$40 for Saturday only. For more information, visit <http://www.liberty.edu/index.cfm?PID=8516>

**Chambersburg Civil War Seminars:**

In the Footsteps of John Brown, April 3-5, Four Points Sheraton, Chambersburg, PA

Stonewall Jackson in the Valley, July 22-26, Plaza Hotel, Hagerstown, MD

Riding with Jeb Stuart, Oct. 9-11, Four Points Sheraton, Chambersburg, PA

For more information, visit <http://www.chambersburgcivilwarseminars.org> or call Cindy Baker at 717-264-7101.

**Annual Lincoln Tomb Ceremony:** This event, sponsored by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) and the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States (MOLLUS), will be observed on Saturday, April 18, 2009 at the Lincoln Tomb in Oak Ridge Cemetery, Springfield, Illinois. The ceremony will be held at 10 a.m. CDT and will be followed by a luncheon at noon. A ceremony commemorating the founding of the Grand Army of the Republic will be held at the site of Dr. Benjamin

Stephenson's grave in Rose Hill Cemetery near Petersburg, Illinois at 3 p.m. Additional information may be obtained by visiting [www.suvcw.org](http://www.suvcw.org) or by contacting Alan Loomis at [arlsuvcw@aol.com](mailto:arlsuvcw@aol.com) or 219-464-1332.

**Third annual Civil War event at Fort Harrison:** This event, "The Sunken Road at Shiloh", will be held at Fort Harrison on September 19-20, 2009.

### *Special Orders*

**Indiana Soldiers' and Sailors' Children's Home in Knightstown to close:** The school founded in 1865 to care for orphaned children of Civil War Veterans from Indiana is scheduled to close this spring.

**Oldest Soldier's Daughter passed away:** Frances Woolson Campbell, daughter of Albert Woolson (the last surviving veteran of the Union Army), passed away in October at the age of 99. She was the last of his eight children from his two marriages. Her family publicly announced her death in late December.

**Bodies From Civil War-Era New Mexico Graveyard to be Reburied:** Scott Sandlin in the Albuquerque Journal reported that the Fort Craig cemetery had been looted over the years. This discovery came to light in 2005 when a grocery bag containing buffalo soldier Thomas Smith's skull was given to U.S. Bureau of Reclamation archaeologists. In August 2007, the cemetery was excavated revealing over 60 full or partial human remains. These remains will be reburied with pomp and ceremony at the Santa Fe National Cemetery on July 28, 2009.

**Battle of Gettysburg still gets attention:** The flag of the 28<sup>th</sup> Virginia Infantry was captured and taken home by 1<sup>st</sup> Minnesota Volunteer Marshall Sherman, who earned the Medal of Honor for the deed. Upon his death in 1896, it was given to the Minnesota Historical Society. "When the War Department in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century had ordered all captured Civil War flags returned to Washington, to be stored as relics or to be returned to their states of origin. Most state governments obeyed, but there were exceptions. The flag of the 28<sup>th</sup> Virginia was one of the exceptions... the flag is the only known captured battle flag that has not been returned to its state of origin." A Virginia reenactment group, who has campaigned for years for its return, now asks that it go to the National Museum of the United States Army scheduled to open June 14, 2009 at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Minnesota refuses to return the flag.

***The Bloody Shirt: Terror After the Civil War:*** In this new book, Virginian historian, Stephen Budiansky, brings to life the period of Reconstruction between 1866 and 1876 through the stories of five courageous men who risked their lives to stop the violence: Confederate General James Longstreet, Union Cavalry Major Lewis Merrill, former slave elected magistrate Prince River, Union General Adelbert Ames, and northern entrepreneur Albert T. Morgan. This book is available at [www.penguin.com](http://www.penguin.com).

## *Official Records*

**ICWRT attendance for January:** 55

**Alan T. Nolan Memorial Youth Scholarship Fund:** The Executive Board of the Indianapolis Civil War Round Table has established this fund to provide membership dues, annual tour expenses or other worthwhile purpose for any full-time student of any age. Please see Tony Roscetti to donate to this fund.

### **Annual Trip:**

Annual trip dates have changed from the announcement at the January meeting. The new tentative dates for our annual trip (to the Shenandoah Valley) will be Sat., July 11, to Friday, July 17. If you want to go, but have a problem with those dates, please let Nikki know by Feb. 10.

**June Banquet:** The June banquet will be held at Indian Lake Country Club, 10502 E. 75<sup>th</sup> Street in Indianapolis on June 8, 2009. The sign up sheet is at the back of the Hardtack.

### **Book Raffle list:**

*Pickett's Charge*, by George R. Stewart

*The Civil War Paintings of Mort Kuntzler, Volume 1: Fort Sumter to Antietam*

*Why the Civil War*, by Otto Eisenschiml

*A Great Civil War: A Military and Political History, 1861-1865*, by Russell F. Weigley

TWO BOOKS – *National Geographic Guide to the Civil War National Battlefield Parks, and Battlefields in Dixie Land*

**\*Anyone wishing to donate books for upcoming raffles should either bring them to Tony Roscetti at the February meeting or contact him to make arrangements for pick up.**

### *Test Your Civil War Knowledge (with Trimble's Trivia)*

1. What is an "inundation"? Where was the only recorded use during the war?
  
2. For what was George W. Morse known?
  
3. In what unit would you find Company Darling?
  
4. What unit was known as the "Wild Riders"? Name the well-known enemy unit defeated by them twice.
  
5. What important activity did soldiers do, "by the nines"?

Answers to January quiz:

1. Who or what was “Coquette”? Horse belonging to John S. Mosby
2. What unit was known as the “Nottaway Grays”? Co. G, 18<sup>th</sup> Virginia Infantry
3. By what name is Robert H. Hendershot better known? The Drummer Boy of the Rappahannock
4. Who wrote the following: “...we know of no other instance ever having occurred – surely never in the United States – and what has this helpless people done that they should be driven from their homes, to wander as strangers, outcasts, and exiles, and to subsist on charity?” James M. Calhoun  
To what does he refer? Mayor of Atlanta to Sherman protesting his evacuation order
5. What was the principal function of a “donkey”? motor used to turn the turret on a Monitor

### *The Soldiers Speak*

Editor’s note [Thank you to Gregg Biggs for bringing these to my attention.]:

Correction: Robert Brown, mentioned last month as being in the 15<sup>th</sup> Indiana, was actually in the 15<sup>th</sup> Ohio Infantry. He captured the 9<sup>th</sup> Mississippi’s battle flag at Missionary Ridge.

Addition: The 15<sup>th</sup> Indiana captured the flag of the 13<sup>th</sup> Louisiana Infantry. This flag still exists in the collections of the Chicago Historical Society.

Nathan Bedford Forrest’s dispatch sent to Grant after the massacre, quoted in *The Oxford Dictionary of Civil War Quotations*, edited by John D. Wright:

“The river was dyed with the blood of the slaughtered for two hundred yards. The approximate loss was upward of five hundred killed, but few of the officers escaping. My loss was about twenty killed. It is hope that these facts will demonstrate to the Northern people that negro soldiers cannot cope with Southerners.”

Nathaniel W. Stephenson, quoted in *The Oxford Dictionary of Civil War Quotations*, edited by John D. Wright, reflecting on revenge for the massacre:

“To take the life of one of their prisoners on the assumption that they murder ours, when it is short of certainty that they do murder ours, might be too serious, too cruel a mistake.”

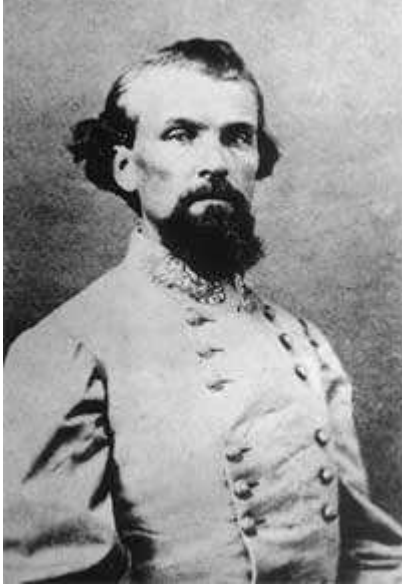
Nathaniel W. Stephenson, quoted in *The Oxford Dictionary of Civil War Quotations*, edited by John D. Wright, regarding Douglass’s reaction after asking revenge for the massacre:

“I shall never forget the benignant expression of his face, the tearful look of his eye, the quiver in his voice, when [Lincoln] deprecated a resort to retaliatory measures.”

## *Officer of the Month*

### **Nathan Bedford Forrest**

Quoted from C. Brian Kelly's *Best Little Stories from the Civil War*:



#### Brave Men Spared

“The fiery, hot-tempered Confederate cavalry leader Nathan Bedford Forrest began his unbending ways early in life – as “man of the house” while still a boy, he had to grow up in a hurry. And he did, skipping school and supporting the family as a farmhand, then as a livestock dealer, and finally as slave trader and cotton planter of moderate wealth.

An incident when he was only ten served notice of what was to come. A neighbor's bull kept breaking loose and rampaging through the Forrest family's precious stand of corn, despite repeated pleas and complaints. Finally, young Forrest told the neighbor he could expect to have his bull shot if it wandered one more time.

The neighbor let it be known that anyone shooting his bull would be shot himself.

The bull indeed broke loose one more time and again found its way into the Forrest cornfield. The lad took up his rifle and shot the beast on the spot. The neighbor then appeared with a rifle in his hand and violence in his heart. He started over the fence in between them but the ten-year-old shot again. The round whistled through the neighbor's clothing, causing him to turn and run for home.

As a full-grown man, the same Forrest was so ornery that he once threatened his own commander, General Braxton Bragg. Amazingly, with no military schooling whatsoever, he rose from enlistment as a private in the future 7<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Cavalry to general's rank, with a reputation as a genius at cavalry warfare tactics. His reputation for ferocity in battle was great – and deservedly so. Still, one Southern woman had it slightly wrong the day he and his unit galloped through town with Union men closely pursuing. “Why don't you turn and fight, you cowardly rascal?” she shouted. “If old Forrest were here, he'd make you fight!”

This same officer may or may not have ordered the massacre of black Union troops at Fort Pillow. This controversy was never quite settled and was fueled by his apparent postwar role as a founder and possibly the first Grand Wizard of the original Ku Klux Klan.

At least once, though, Forrest showed unexpected softness of the heart. Two Union soldiers – Germans from Wisconsin – had been taken prisoner near Forrest's headquarters outside of Memphis, Tennessee. Since food rations were short and exchanges of prisoners were difficult to arrange, explained *Harper's* magazine in 1871, ‘orders had been issued to take no prisoners, but execute them on the spot.’

The firing squad assembled, and things looked bleak for the two Union men as Forrest himself strode into sight to command the grim proceedings. Still, to the surprise



of the onlookers, Forrest included, the two young Germans merely lit up their pipes and stood chit-chatting with each other, seemingly unconcerned.

Forrest barked his orders. The firing squad formed up and stood at attention. Still the two captives did not flinch or break down, but kept on smoking.

Forrest continued his drill, 'Shoulder arms,' he shouted. 'Ready, Aim....'

The Rebels took aim, waiting for the final command to fire.

But Forrest then barked, 'Ground arms' and 'Right about face.'

There would be no execution after all! 'Git up and git!' he told the two Yankees. To his onlookers the rarely perturbed Forrest merely explained: 'Brave men are too scarce to be shot down like dogs.'"

### *Historic Site of the Month*



**Fort Pillow State Historic Park**, 3122 Park Road, Henning, Tennessee: The 1,642 acre Fort Pillow, located in Lauderdale County on the Chickasaw Bluffs overlooking the Mississippi River, is rich in both historic and archaeological significance. In 1861, the Confederate Army built extensive fortifications here and named the site for General Gideon J. Pillow of Maury County. Because of its strategic location, the fort was taken by the Union Army who controlled it during most of the war. Remains of the earthworks are well-preserved. The park is open from 8 a.m. – sunset (year round). The park Interpretive Center/Museum is open from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. daily (year round with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day). There is no entrance fee. Visitors will find displays of Civil War artifacts and interpretive displays. There is a 12 minute video on the 1864 Battle shown by request. Tours of the museum and restored fortifications are available upon request.

If you have a short article, book review, or some other item that may be of interest to our members, please submit it via email to the editor at [jkt60@att.net](mailto:jkt60@att.net) by the tenth day following the preceding month's meeting. Please list HARDTACK in the subject line and include your email address in case I need to contact you.



# Indianapolis Civil War Round Table

## Annual Dinner Meeting

*Monday, June 8, 2009*

*at*

### ***Indian Lake Country Club \****

*10502 E. 75<sup>th</sup> Street, Indianapolis, IN 46236*

*(317) 823-4484*

**Buffet dinner will be served starting at 6:30 PM.**

*Cost is \$21 per person*

**Menu:** Homemade Fried Chicken; Savory, slow simmered swiss steak; mashed potatoes; beef and/or white pepper gravy; bacon infused green beans; kernel corn; coleslaw; dinner rolls/butter; carrot cake/chocolate cake; coffee/tea/soda

### **Our Guest Speaker: Troy Harmon**

\* **Directions:** From I-465: Take the 56<sup>th</sup> Street exit. Go east to Pendleton Pike and turn left. Turn left (north) on to Sunnyside Road. At the stop light at 75<sup>th</sup> Street, turn left to the entrance on your right. \*\*\* From Castleton: Come east on 82<sup>nd</sup> Street, which becomes 79<sup>th</sup> Street at Fall Creek Road. Continue east to the stoplight at Sunnyside Road. Turn right (south) to the stoplight at 75<sup>th</sup> Street. Turn right to the club entrance on your right. \*\*\* From the Southeast: Come north on German Church Road, which becomes Sunnyside Road at Pendleton Pike. Continue north to the stoplight at 75<sup>th</sup> Street. Turn left to the club entrance on your right.

Reservation form (attached below) should be completed and submitted, along with payment, by **June 1, 2009**. Reservation form and payment can be brought to the February, March, April or May meeting or mailed to:

*Tony Roscetti*

*6270 Brixton Lane*

*Indianapolis, Indiana 46220*

*----- Please detach and mail this form, along with payment, to Tony Roscetti -----*

**Individuals attending the Indianapolis Civil War Round Table, June 8, 2009 dinner meeting, including the buffet dinner:**

Name

Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Reservation form and payment must be received by June 1, 2009.

Cost: \$21 per person. Please make check payable to *Indianapolis Civil War Round Table*

William Tecumseh Sherman, quoted in *The Oxford Dictionary of Civil War Quotations*, edited by John D. Wright:

No doubt [General Nathan B.] Forrest's men acted like a set of barbarians, shooting down the helpless negro garrison [at Fort Pillow, Tennessee] after the fort was in their possession; but I am told that Forrest personally disclaims any active participation in the assault, and that he stopped the firing as soon as he could. He had a desperate set of fellows under him."

Indianapolis Civil War Round Table  
6019 Allendale Dr.  
Indianapolis, IN 46224