

Middle Tennessee Civil War Round Table



JULY 2009 NEWSLETTER

OUR NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Middle Tennessee CWRT will be at 7 PM on Tuesday July 21, 2009. We will meet at the Heritage Center of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County (225 West College Street in Murfreesboro).

This month's featured speaker is Dr. Earl J. Hess of Lincoln Memorial University. He will present *The Rifle Musket in Civil War Combat: Reality and Myth*.



The Civil War's single-shot, muzzle-loading musket revolutionized warfare—or so we've been told for years. Earl J. Hess forcefully challenges that claim, offering a different assessment of the rifle musket's actual performance on the battlefield, and its impact on the course of the Civil War.

Many contemporaries were impressed with the new weapon's increased range of 500 yards, compared to the smoothbore musket's range of 100 yards, and assumed the rifle was a major factor in prolonging the Civil War. Historians have also assumed that the weapon dramatically increased casualty rates, made decisive victories rare, and relegated cavalry and artillery to far lesser roles than they played in smoothbore battles.

Hess contends that its impact was much more limited than previously supposed, and confined primarily to skirmishing and sniping. He argues further that its potential to alter battle line operations was virtually nullified by inadequate training, soldiers' preference for short-range firing, and the difficulty of seeing the enemy at a distance. He notes that bullets fired from the new musket followed a parabolic trajectory unlike those fired from smoothbores; at mid-range, those rifle balls flew well above the enemy, creating two killing zones between which troops could operate untouched.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

August 18, 2009

Derek Frisby – Middle Tennessee State University – *Fort Pillow*

September 15, 2009

Russell Bonds – *Stealing the General: The Great Locomotive Chase*

October 20, 2009

Fall Party

If you would like to do a program for the Middle Tennessee CWRT, or if you have a suggestion for a group discussion topic, please get in touch with Jim Lewis at mtcwrtable@att.net or 615-423-6830.

CIVIL WAR NEWS

Franklin Cited

FRANKLIN, Tenn. — The National Trust for Historic preservation named Franklin as one of this year's "Dozen Distinctive Destinations," noting its "rural atmosphere and Southern charm."

The city, which has seen a surge of preservation activity after years of neglecting its Civil War heritage, was cited for its "strong preservation ethic that has helped retain its distinctive sense of place and protect the region's architecture, village communities and traditional farmsteads."

CIVIL WAR TRIVIA

1. How was Confederate General Earl Van Dorn killed?

- Shot by a Gatling gun
- In a cattle stampede
- Fell off a horse
- Shot by a jealous doctor

2. The Battle of Pittsburgh Landing is also known by what name?

- Manassas
- Wilderness
- Gettysburg



Shiloh



3. According to many Historians, which battle was decided by 'three cigars'?



Gettysburg



Antietam



Chattanooga



Vicksburgh



4. Which State does not have a star in the Stars and Bars?



Texas



Kentucky



Mississippi



Florida



5. Which of the following was not among the first seven states to secede from the Union?



Texas



North Carolina



South Carolina



Georgia