

The Sentinel

“I See the Presage of a Tempest” **Henry B. Carrington: The “Desk” General Who** **Led the Hoosier War Effort**

Loyal roundtable member and annual presenter Bill Overlease shared the story of Henry B. Carrington, a Union General who never saw battle in the war but was instrumental in the state of Indiana in the effort to win it.

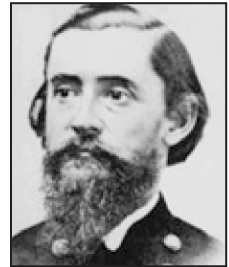
Born in Ohio in 1824, Carrington was raised to become a confirmed abolitionist who eventually went to Yale University and graduated with honors. He came back to Ohio after his education and was, by the time the Civil War began, was made a Colonel of the Ohio militia with little or no actual military training, but with a keen eye for organization and “getting things done.”

Through both personal and political connections, Carrington had become a close personal friend of Salmon P. Chase, who would figure prominently in Lincoln’s cabinet during the war years and who gave Carrington a great deal of “background support.” Most people in late 1860 and early 1861 believed that a war, if it came, would be brief and glorious, with Federal forces quickly sending the rabble back to their homes in the south and that the Union soldiers who sent them there would return home bathed in military glory. Many thought the war would last less than thirty days. But when the Confederates attacked Fort Sumter and the war actually began, Carrington was one of the few who immediately saw the conflict for the reality that it would quickly become. In a speech he gave on April 17, 1861, just a few days after the fall of the fort in Charleston harbor, Carrington said, “In the lull that follows Sumter, I see the presage of a tempest.”

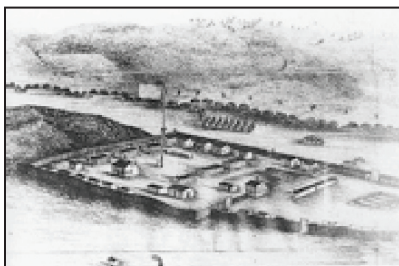
He first visited Indiana as a Colonel of the 18th Ohio in early 1861 to lead the contingent that would escort President-elect Lincoln to Washington. In August of 1862, Carrington was appointed Chief Mustering Officer of Indiana. In this position he would eventually induct over 120,000 men into the Union army, a staggering figure when compared to some other states. At one point, he sent over 30 regiments east in ten days! And, although he would never see combat during the war, he would have his own battle on the home front. Carrington also became a master intelligence gatherer for the Union in Indiana, a state with a surprising amount of Southern sympathy. Eventually, he had between 2,000 and 3,000 informants and spies working for him. At one point, he arrested five men who were to be tried for treason, but Hoosier wartime Governor Morton refused to allow them to be tried in a military court, as Carrington wanted, but directed that they should be tried in a civilian court. The governor felt this would be much less political. Carrington, even though a close friend of the governor, was indignant and his dissatisfaction led to the lessening of his affect on the war towards its end.

After the war, Carrington went west with the 18th Ohio and was instrumental in building three forts for control of the territory, including Fort Phil Kearny in northeast Wyoming. What this actually meant, in those days, was the control of the native American populations. Carrington, in a phrase, became an Indian fighter. Although history has essentially vindicated him, he was involved with the events surrounding the Fetterman Massacre of 80 Union soldiers by the Indians in late 1866. The cloud that hung over him eventually led Carrington to leave the service and move to Crawfordsville, Indiana, where he became a professor at Wabash College, the commandant of cadets and a designer of many of the buildings on campus, some of which remain to this day. While at Wabash, he also began avidly studying and writing on George Washington and the American Revolution, becoming a renowned expert on the subject with several books in the late years of the 19th century.

Needless to say, Carrington led a distinguished and active life for many years after his service in Indiana during the Civil War. He was awarded a Doctor of Letters in 1876 for his Revolutionary War studies. Carrington died at the age 88 in retirement in Hyde Park, Massachusetts.



Carrington



Fort Phil Kearny in the late 1800's and . . .



...the fort today.

Still Time to Subscribe and Help the MCCWR

Civil War Historian, a relatively new and unique magazine on the war, specializes in not only strategy, tactics, battles, dates, etc. but also on the home front. It publishes six times a year and the regular subscription rate is \$28.95, but until the end of November, the roundtable will get \$14 *back* for our treasury for every subscription sold. If you want a subscription for yourself, or for a friend (a great holiday gift!), contact Deborah Cronin at 323-9615 to order. All sales must go through her for the Roundtable to receive its “share”.

Another subscription possibility that we have been asked to pass along is the *Civil War Courier*, a newspaper-type publication that is simply packed full of information on the history of the war, modern day events, shopping opportunities, opinion pages and much more. This is a minutiae-hooked buff’s delight. If interested, go to www.civilwarcourier.com for more information, or call 800-624-0281.

Roundtable to Be at Christmas Market

Again, volunteers are needed to represent the group at the Annual Christmas Market, in the same location as the summer farmers’ market next to the Showers Building (City Hall), on Saturday, November 24th.

The Roundtable will be simply handing out information about the group to “recruit”, chatting with folks and perhaps taking that one last shot at a subscription to *Civil War Historian* as a holiday gift.

Call anyone listed below and sign up for just an hour to help out.

Deborah also hopes to set up a table in the mall at Christmas, so chip in there, as well, if you can. For those who manned the table at the June encampment, this kind of thing can be both fun and rewarding.

Annual Holiday Gathering Next Time!

Lasts year’s “share-a-story and dine” evening was a great success, so lets it again. Hospitality Chair Deborah Cronin is planning some unique Civil War style dishes to celebrate the season as well as our fellowship as admitted Civil War nuts. If you, or anyone you know (a spouse, maybe?) would like to help Deborah in planning, please call her at 323-9615. Deborah has been a trooper with the refreshments at meetings, but a little help here would be greatly appreciated. Please volunteer!

As to the dinner itself, everyone is invited to bring themselves, spouses, kids or friends to join in the camaraderie. You are again invited to bring a favorite artifact, a story about a “battlefield crawl” experience or reminisce about a relative that served. With no formal program, this is what we will share.

IN MEMORIAM

First time occurrence for our Roundtable was also a sad one. Local resident Suzanne Trisler contacted President Steve Rolfe and asked about making a donation to the MCCWR in memory of Harlan Burros who passed away in October. Mr. Burros, of Evansville, Minnesota, was the brother-in-law of Bloomington residents Mr. and Mrs. Gary Charbonneau and was an active Civil War enthusiast for many of his 68 years, as are the Charbonneau’s. As many of us do, they often traveled to battle sites and reenactments to indulge their passion for the history of the war. The gracious donation given in honor of Mr. Burros will be used to further the programs and purposes of the Monroe County Civil War Roundtable which is deeply grateful for this first-of-a-kind gift. As a tribute to Mr. Burros, we have included the opening verse of Theodore O’Hara’s epic poem, displayed at every national cemetery in the country, “The Bivouac of the Dead.”

The muffled drum’s sad roll has beat
The soldier’s last tattoo;
No more on life’s parade shall meet
That brave and fallen few.
On fame’s eternal camping ground
Their silent tents are spread,
And glory guards, with solemn round,
The bivouac of the dead.

Contacts

Steve Rolfe, President	336-0757	srolfe@indiana.edu
David Wiley, Secretary	337-0649	davidwiley@sbcglobal.net
Carol Wise, Treasurer	824-8708	CWise30099@aol.com
Deborah Cronin, Hospitality	323-9615	Dcronin111@cs.com

Or on the web at <http://mypage.iu.edu/~rawatson/roundtable/>.