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## HARPERS FERRY

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### CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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**PO BOX 1079, HARPERS FERRY, WV 25425**

Vol. 29 November 2009 No. 03

DATE: Wednesday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009

TIME: Dinner 7:00 PM; Program 8:00

PLACE: Camp Hill Methodist Church, Harpers Ferry, WV

SPEAKER: Dan Pence

SUBJECT: The Creation of Two Books: *I Knew Frank; I Wish I Had Known Jesse* and *Guerrillas and Other Curiosities*

#### The Speaker:

Dan Pence was born in Portland, Oregon on January 3, 1945, but from 1946 he was raised in a suburb of Detroit, Michigan. He attended the University of Michigan, earning undergraduate and graduate degrees in electrical engineering and computer science as well as a Masters in Business Administration. As an undergraduate, he participated in the Navy ROTC program and, upon completing his undergraduate degree, was commissioned an officer in the U.S. Navy. He served six years of active duty, including two tours during the Vietnam War in the Gulf of Tonkin and in river patrol south of DaNang. After completing his active duty in the Navy, Dan began a career in the field of data processing and information technology that continues to this day as a contractor for federal government agencies.

Dan and his wife, Mary, recently celebrated their 42<sup>nd</sup> wedding anniversary. They have been living in Washington, DC since 1978. They have a daughter, Karen, and a son, Brian, both of whom are married. Karen earned a PhD in economics and works as an economist for the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve. Brian earned a PhD in epidemiology and is an assistant professor at Duke University, where he is studying the relationship between substance abuse and the incidence of HIV/AIDS. In 2004 Brian and his wife Caroline brought forth a grandson, Samuel McRee Pence, who is named for his paternal great-great grandfather (the author of the James and Quantrill manuscripts). Dan is a direct descendant of Adam Pence, an early settler of Clay County. His father, Leland Hadley Pence, and paternal grandfather, Samuel Anderson Pence, were born in Kearney, Mo. His first visit to Clay County occurred in 1952 when his family took a summer vacation to visit his grandparents, who were living in Liberty, Mo. During that trip, as a seven-year-old, Dan visited the James Farm, met Robert James, and held what was supposedly one of Jesse's pistols. But it was not until much later in life that he learned about his ancestors' involvement in the development of Clay County and with the James family in particular.

During the late 1940's – mid 1950's, when Dan was a child, his paternal grandparents, Sam and Rose Pence, usually traveled from Missouri to Michigan once a year. He has memories of Grandpa typing his manuscript during those visits. Sam finished typing some time around 1960 and tried to get his work published, without success. That must have been a great disappointment for him. When Sam passed away in 1971, his daughter, Lois McFall, took custody of his papers. When Lois passed away, her eldest daughter, Colleen DiBiase, took custody of Sam's papers. In 1995, Colleen made a copy of Sam's Jesse James manuscript and William Quantrill manuscript for Dan. Dan got them keyed into Microsoft Word in 2000, but then the files lay dormant until the December 2004 birth of Dan and Mary's grandson, who was given the name Samuel Pence by his parents, an event that inspired Dan to "get moving" on the book project. Mary and Dan have been members of Christ Congregational Church (United Church of Christ) since 1979. Both have been active in the leadership of the church for many years. Currently Dan is serving as Treasurer. He also sings in the choir and has participated in four European choir tours.

Dan has had a life-long fascination with railroads in general and steam locomotives in particular, an interest that he acquired from his father that he probably acquired from his father. There is a model railroad layout occupying much of his basement. Other interests include long-distance running, tennis, and travel.

## The Subject

Mr. Pence will speak on this history of the publication of his two books that were created from manuscripts that his grandfather prepared in the 1950's but never published. They deal with Quantrill's Guerrillas during the Civil War, and the lives of Frank and Jesse James, tracing their ancestry and the amazing interconnectedness of the families of Clay County, Missouri, not the least of whom were his Pence ancestors. The presentation not only provides considerable insight into life in Western Missouri before, during, and after the Civil War, but it can also be inspirational for any in the audience who have

interesting family records and think they might want to publish some day but are unsure how to do it.

## The Meal

A family-style meal will be served at 7:00 PM prior to the program. The cost of the meal is \$15.00 per person. Reservations for the meal **must be phoned in no later than Sunday, November 7<sup>th</sup>**, to Allison Alsdorf, at 304-535-2101 or you can email her at [alsdorf@comcast.net](mailto:alsdorf@comcast.net)

## US to issue Harpers Ferry quarter in 2016

by [The Associated Press](#)

HARPERS FERRY, W.Va. -- The United States Mint is planning a Harpers Ferry quarter. The agency said Wednesday it will issue the coin in 2016. The Harpers Ferry design will be the 33rd featured on coins issued as part of the agency's America the Beautiful Quarters Program.

Under the program, the agency is issuing 56 quarters with designs emblematic of national parks or other national sites in each state, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories. The agency says Harpers Ferry was chosen because of it has been the site of several historic events. Among those are John Brown's 1859 raid and one of the earliest integrated schools in the United States. Harpers Ferry was established as a national monument in 1944 and a national park in 1963.

## The Woman in Battle

The Civil War Narrative of Loreta Janeta Velazquez, Cuban Woman and Confederate Soldier Loreta Janeta Velazquez

A Cuban woman who moved to New Orleans in the 1850s and eloped with her American lover, Loreta Janeta Velazquez fought in the Civil War for the Confederacy as the cross dressing Harry T. Buford. As Buford, she single-handedly organized an Arkansas regiment; participated in the historic battles of Bull Run, Balls Bluff, Fort Donelson, and Shiloh; romanced men and women; and eventually decided that spying as a woman better suited her Confederate cause than fighting as a man. In the North, she posed as a double agent and worked to traffic information, drugs, and counterfeit bills to support the Confederate cause. She was even hired by the Yankee secret service to find "the woman . . . traveling and figuring as a Confederate agent"—Velazquez herself. Originally published in 1876 as *The Woman in Battle*, this Civil War narrative offers Velazquez's seemingly impossible autobiographical account, as well as a new critical introduction and glossary by Jesse Alemán. Scholars are divided between those who read the book as a generally honest autobiography and those who read it as mostly fiction. According to Alemán's critical introduction, the book also reads as pulp fiction, spy memoir, seduction narrative, travel literature, and historical account, while it mirrors the literary conventions of other first-person female accounts of cross-dressing published in the United States during wartime, dating back to the Revolutionary War. Whatever the facts are, this is an authentic Civil War narrative, Alemán concludes, that recounts how

war disrupts normal gender roles, redefines national borders, and challenges the definition of identity.