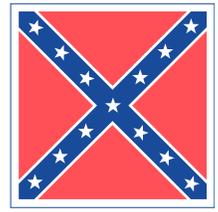


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Founded December 3, 1940



Volume LXXVI, Number 3

Chicago, Illinois

November 2015



746TH REGULAR MEETING

★★★★★

Friday, November 13th

★★★★★

HOLIDAY INN O'HARE

5615 N. CUMBERLAND, CHICAGO

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$50 - Members/Non-members

Entrée: Turkey or Whitefish

Please Note:

Make your reservations by Sunday, Nov. 8, by emailing dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org, or calling 630 460-1865 with the names of your party and choice of entrée.

If a cancellation becomes necessary after dinner reservations have been made, please email us at dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org and/or call us at 630-460-1865.

We are offering the option of choosing not to have dinner and coming only for the address at 7:15 p.m., for a charge of \$10 per person.

Parking at the Holiday Inn is FREE.

Philip Leigh on *Trading with the Enemy*

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

Many historians believe the Confederacy collapsed not because of lack of will, but lack of supplies. A little-known aspect of that Confederate search for supplies is that the Confederate government authorized trade with their enemy. The Confederate Secretary of War claimed that such trade was necessary to sustain the Confederate army.

Such commerce was large and scandalous. About twice as much cotton went to Northern states as was shipped through the blockade to Europe. Aside from gold, cotton was the best international exchange medium available in America. Although Civil War shipment tonnage dropped sharply, cotton prices soared over ten-fold thereby sustaining a robust dollar volume.

Evidence suggests a number of notable Civil War personalities were involved in dubious - perhaps treasonous - conduct. Examples include Treasury Secretary Salmon P. Chase, Major General Benjamin Butler and Rhode Island Senator William Sprague. One trader became the largest shareholder of New York's National City Bank. His great-grandson was the bank's Board Chairman, now known as Citicorp, as late as 1967.

Perhaps because the story provides no heroes, little has been written on inter-



belligerent trade. Nonetheless, an 1865 joint Senate-House investigation led by Illinois Congressman Elihu Washburne

concluded: "[The trade] is believed to have led to a prolongation of the war, and to have cost the country thousands of lives and millions upon millions of treasure."

On November 13th Philip Leigh will examine that trade, in a presentation based on his book Trading with the Enemy. Mr. Leigh has contributed twenty-four articles to The New York Times Disunion blog, which commemorated the Civil War Sesquicentennial. To date Westholme Publishing has released three of his Civil War books, which are distributed through the University of Chicago Press: Lee's



Lost Dispatch and Other Civil War Controversies (2015); Trading With the Enemy (2014); and Co. Aytch: Illustrated and Annotated (2013).

Phil has lectured a various Civil War forums, including the 23rd Annual Sarasota Conference of the Civil War Education Association in 2015 and assorted Civil War Roundtables. Currently he is writing a fourth Civil War book. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Florida Institute of Technology and an MBA from Northwestern University.

CW TRUST PETITION SEEKS TO PROTECT WAR MEMORIALS

(October 2015 Civil War News)

WASHINGTON — The Civil War Trust is leading the Citizens' Petition in Support of War Memorial Preservation telling Congressional leaders, "I believe we have a sacred duty to protect these war memorials, from all of America's conflicts, whether they rest on the battlefield, in national cemeteries, or on town squares."

Noting passions currently "running high on the issue of how we as a nation remember our shared history," the petition says: "It is our privilege as a free people to debate our history. However, we must remember that such freedoms come at a tremendous cost, paid for in the blood of brave Americans in uniform who sacrificed all to forge the country we are today. We owe these men and women a debt that can never be repaid."

Recognition of that debt includes the silent sentinels, the monuments built over generations to honor military service from the Revolutionary War to Afghanistan and Iraq.

"It is important to remember that many of these memorials are historic in their own right, some more than 200 years old," says the petition. "In countless instances, these monuments were erected by the veterans themselves, who wanted to remember their leaders, their units and their fallen comrades."

The petition says that such war memorials "invaluable to remembering the sacrifices of young soldiers who defended freedom both here and abroad, must not be discarded in the passions of the moment."

In a letter to Trust members, President

James Lighthizer wrote that the issue is "our history."

"Just as our nation's battlefields are a part of that history, the soldiers who fought on both sides of that war are a part of that history. And the memorials those men erected to honor their fallen family and friends ... they, too, are a part of our history," wrote Lighthizer.

He noted that members of past generations, North and South, paid for these memorials themselves, "because they believed it was essential to transmit a very important message to us, and to all future generations."

"They wanted us to remember their sacrifices... they wanted us to remember that - whatever we may think of their causes today - they believed they were fighting for honor and country."

Lighthizer said, "And it is my belief that if we as a nation start erasing any part of our past, that is a very dangerous thing to do. Because if we start down that road, what is to stop some future generation from destroying monuments from any war, including World War II, Korea or even Vietnam, just because they disagree with those of us who are alive today?"

The petition can be accessed at the Trust website www.civilwar.org under Take Action, Speak Out.

People who wish to write their own messages can send them to: The Honorable Mitch McConnell, Majority Leader, and The Honorable Harry Reid, Minority Leader, United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510; and The Honorable John

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1039 Hinswood
Darien, Illinois 60561
Phone: 630-460-1865
www.chicagocwrt.org

The only requirement for membership in The Civil War Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Membership Committee, 1039 Hinswood, Darien, Illinois 60561, or editor@chicagocwrt.org.

Boehner, Speaker of the House, and The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20510.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

74 years ago, Nov. 1940, author Stanley F. Horn spoke to The Civil War Round Table on "The Army of Tennessee."

60 years ago, Nov. 1955, Robert B. Browne and Don Russell spoke on "George Armstrong Custer."

50 years ago, Nov. 1965, Colonel Wilbur S. Nye spoke on "Milroy is Gobbled Up."

10 years ago, Nov. 2005, Ed Bonekemper spoke on "A Victor not a Butcher: U. S. Grant's Overlooked Military Genius."

One year ago Steve Towne spoke on "Detecting Deserters and Disloyalty."

October Meeting

By Mark Matranga

Dennis Frye delivered the Nevins-Freeman Address, “The Spark That Ignited the Civil War,” to The Civil War Round Table at its 745th Regular Meeting on October 9, 2015. Born and raised in the Harper’s Ferry area, Dennis has participated in Round Table activities for fifty years. This, and his role as Chief Historian at Harper’s Ferry National Park, makes him uniquely qualified on the causes of the war and, more specifically, the role of John Brown in ‘igniting’ the War of the Rebellion.

For Frye, the John Brown Raid is the mid-19th century’s ‘911’ moment: it galvanized the nation and led to Lincoln’s election and secession. Brown planned to strike at the heart of slavery and the government, to seize weapons, to retreat to the mountains, and to lead slaves to the ‘promised land’ in the north. He intended neither to provoke insurrection nor kill whites, but unlike most abolitionists, Brown accepted violence, and for this he was found guilty of murder, treason, and inciting slave rebellion, and was executed. John Brown was not a foreign terrorist but an American attacking America.

His fellow citizens had divergent views of his actions. Opinion at the south was concerned for further attacks. John Tyler, former president, stated, “Virginia is arming to the teeth.” “There is no peace for the South in this union,” exclaimed the Charleston Mercury. The Richmond Examiner noted that the

raid had “swelled the ranks of the secessionists by tenfold.” Edmond Ruffin rejoiced, hoping Brown’s outrages might “stir the sluggish blood of the South.” The legislature proclaimed the Commonwealth “has been assaulted; Virginia is at war.” James Kemper uttered “... that whenever you advance a hostile force upon our soil, we will welcome you with bloody hands and hospitable graves.” Tyler summed up the south’s position: “But one sentiment pervades this country ‘security to the union or separation.’”

In the North, many were shaken, especially Republicans who were seen as responsible for Brown. The Chicago Tribune called Brown and his followers, “a squad of fanatics.... guilty of incomprehensible stupidity, folly, as well as unpardonable criminality.” However, Emerson found Brown “the purest idealist of artless goodness,” whose death “made the gallows glorious, like the cross.” Louisa May Alcott termed him ‘St. John the Just.’ William Lloyd Garrison conjured the Revolution, exclaiming that Brown’s acts justified, “Yes, by God, as Washington was in his!” Wendell Phillips referred to Harpers Ferry as “the Lexington of today.” “The best news America has ever heard,” said Thoreau.

John Brown consumed the public in 1859. But what motivated Brown? Frye refers to the preamble of Brown’s ‘Constitution.’ In that mission statement, Brown called slavery “the most barbarous, unprovoked, and unjustifiable war of one

portion of the citizens upon another portion” that led to “perpetual imprisonment, hopeless servitude, and absolute extermination,” in utter disregard with the eternal and self-evident truths set forth in the Declaration. Brown’s thought was steeped in the Bible: slavery was legal, but Brown appealed to a higher law, God’s law, which (in Brown’s view) did not abide slavery.

Virginia quickly tried, convicted, and hanged Brown, but some thought this inappropriate – it made a martyr of a fanatic. Brown was dead, but did not die: he had ‘died to make men free.’ Southerners considered him a traitor. Jefferson Davis considered the prospect that to securing southern rights and preserving its honor might necessitate severing the bonds of union even if bloodshed ensued. Herman Melville pronounced Brown the ‘Meteor of the War.’

In closing, Frye posed Stephen Vincent Benet’s query, “You can weigh John Brown’s body well enough, but how, and in what balance weigh John Brown?” For Frye, he is transformative actor in the American epic, part of the soul of the American people. And one must agree. Frye engages us, draws us into our history, makes us part of its process. He extols us to ‘feel’ history, and in his hands we do. Dennis Frye is exactly who The Round Table thought of when it created the Nevins-Freeman award.

GRAPESHOT



Veteran's Day will once again be marked at Rosehill Cemetery in Chicago. On Nov. 8th reenacting groups and veteran's groups will assemble at Rosehill, starting at 11 a.m., to honor our country's soldiers.

“**The Civil War Comes to Chicago**” is the title of a symposium Nov. 7th at Northerly Island, Chicago. This FREE event is co-sponsored by the Chicago Park District and the Camp Douglas Restoration Foundation. Speakers include our own **Rob Girardi**, presenting “The War Front & Chicago.” For reservations and more information, call (312) 745-2910 or email dkeller@campdouglas.org.

On Nov. 13th, at noon, the Kenosha Civil War Museum's “Friday lunchbox” program will feature our own **Leslie Goddard**. She will be presenting on “Gone with the Wind and the Construction of Civil War Memory.” For more information, visit www.Kenosha.org/wp-civilwar.

On Nov. 14th, author David Powell will speak at the Kenosha Civil War Museum on “The Army of the Cumberland from Louisville to Atlanta.”

Check the **Announcements** section of the CWRT's website for additional coming events.

SCHIMMELFENNIG BOUTIQUE

Sixty plus years of audio recordings of CWRT lectures by distinguished historians are available and can be purchased in CD format. For pricing and a lecture list, please contact Hal Ardell at hal229@ameritech.net or phone him at (773) 774-6781.

Each meeting features a book raffle, with proceeds going to battlefield preservation. There is also a silent auction for books donated by Ralph Newman and others, again with proceeds benefiting battlefield preservation.

More Upcoming Civil War Events

- Nov. 4th, Kankakee Valley CWRT: Jennifer Goran and Doug Peterson present “Elizabeth Van Lew”
- Nov. 6th, Northern Illinois CWRT: Gene Salecker on “The Sultana”
- Nov. 7th, Chicago Park District and Camp Douglas Foundation: Symposium, “The Civil War Comes to Chicago”
- Nov. 10th, McHenry County CWRT: Bill Werst on “Building the Lincoln Funeral Train”
- Nov. 12th, Lake County CWRT: Doug Dammann on “Dr. Benjamin Franklin White, Surgeon of the 1st Wisconsin”
- Nov. 12th, Milwaukee CWRT: Philip Leigh on “Trading with the Enemy”
- Nov. 17th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Peter Carlson on “Junius and Albert's Adventures in the Confederacy”
- Nov. 19th, South Suburban CWRT: Rob Girardi on “General Warren”
- Nov. 20th, Salt Creek CWRT: Dan Josephs on “The 83rd Illinois”

Know of any upcoming talks, events, or publications? All members are welcome to contribute items to the newsletter. Contact the editor at editor@chicagocwrt.org or (630) 297-8046.

Bulletin Board



FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held at the Holiday Inn O'Hare, the second Friday of each month, *unless otherwise indicated*.

Dec. 11: Dave Keller on “Camp Douglas”

Jan. 8, 2016: David Moore on “William S. Rosecrans”

Feb. 12: Don Doyle on “The Cause of All Nations”

March 11: Bruce Kraig on “Why the Civil War Made our Modern Food”

April 8: Greg Biggs on “Nashville: Siren's Song of the Confederacy”

May 13: Glenna Schroeder-Lein on “The Solders' Home in Civil War America”

June 10: Dale Phillips on “Ben Butler and the Federal Occupation of New Orleans”

Virual Book Signing

Join the **Abraham Lincoln Book Shop** on November 21, at noon, when we welcome **Jason Silverman** and **Todd Nathan Thompson** to the program. Jason talks about his new book [Lincoln and the Immigrant](#). Todd with talk about [The National Joker](#). Learn more about these books and order yours at http://virtualbooksigning.net/book-information/#anchor_2.