

# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



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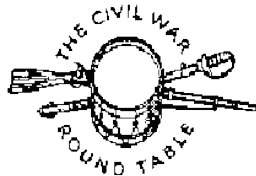
## Janet Croon on: *The War Outside My Window*



Our September speaker, author Janet Croon, will present the edited diaries of a young teenage boy who wrote thoughtful and wistful observances of the changing world in Macon, Georgia, from 1860-1865, as he battled his own deteriorating health. The talk is based on Croon's new book, The War Outside My Window: The Civil War Diary of Leroy Wiley Gresham, 1860-1865 (Savas Beatie, 2018).

for the first time and editor Janet Croon captures the spirit and the character of a young privileged white teenager witnessing the demise of the South and a crumbling way of life even as his own as his body fails him.

Janet E. Croon holds a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science, Modern European History, and Russian Language and Area Studies from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (1983), and a Master's Degree in International Studies from the University of Dayton (1985). She taught International Baccalaureate History for nearly two decades and developed a deep interest in the Civil War by living in northern Virginia.



### 784th REGULAR MEETING

★★★★★

Friday, September 13th, 2019

★★★★★

Holiday Inn O'Hare  
5615 N. Cumberland, Chicago

*Cocktails at 5:30 pm*

*Dinner at 6:30 pm*

\$40 - Members/Non-members

ENTREE  
BUFFET STYLE.

LeRoy Wiley Gresham was born in 1847 to an affluent slave-holding family. After a horrific leg injury at age 12 he began keeping a diary in 1860 just as secession and the Civil War began tearing the country apart. He wrote even as his health deteriorated past the end of the war. He died in 1865. The diary is published

## PRESERVATION NEWS

### FROM THE AMERICAN BATTLEFIELD TRUST

Have you ever considered how much history took place at any given family farm on a Civil War battlefield? Take, for instance, the Plank Farm at the Battle of Gettysburg. From the arrival of Union reinforcements under General John Reynolds on the morning of July 1 to the burial of more than 60 fallen soldiers long after the armies departed, this once-ordinary land witnessed every stage of an incredibly consequential moment in our nation's history.

Today, we have the chance to help save 143 acres at this critical site. While the full value of the transaction is \$435,000, thanks to federal and local grant sources and a generous landowner donation, the Trust only needs to raise \$40,000 to meet our commitment – which means every \$1 you invest in this property is matched up to \$10.88! This transaction is truly a team effort, with the Trust joining forces with the Land Conservancy of Adams County and other partners.

By securing this land now, you are proactively protecting this part of the battlefield from the spread of devastating commercial or residential development. It was a farm at the time of the battle, it is a farm today, and if you and I are successful, it will be a farm forever! You are also building on recently preserved hallowed ground nearby, like the 18 acres at Seminary Ridge earlier this year, and the preserved and restored Lee's Headquarters site Trust supporters saved in 2014.

I know you're not in this fight for the maps, but as a symbol of my

personal gratitude, all supporters who contribute \$64.20 or more today will receive a special reproduction of a historic map of the Gettysburg battlefield that will knock your socks off!

Please visit our website now to learn more about the history of this land – and the map we'll send when you contribute to save it. Then give as generously as you can to preserve these 143 acres of crucial American history. Thank you for all you do to keep hallowed ground hallowed, today and for generations to come.

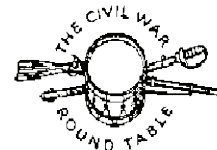
Today, I'm thrilled to inform you that present and future history lovers and students will have 74 more acres of preserved hallowed ground to enrich their understanding of this critical year of the Civil War.

You may recall this campaign from last autumn – at stake were tracts hallowed at Chancellorsville and Brandy Station in Virginia and at Champion Hill in Mississippi. Less than a year later, these three 1863 tracts are forever protected thanks to generous preservationists like you.

In case the details are hazy, here's a little more about the history of these three tracts:

- At Chancellorsville, you've saved 4 acres of hallowed ground at the site of "Stonewall" Jackson's famous flank attack – the remarkable tactical maneuver that helped to setup Robert E. Lee's greatest battlefield victory, but resulted in Jackson's death just a week later.
- At Brandy Station, these 2 acres at the heart of the battlefield are often called the "St. James Church"

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1039 Hinswood  
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Phone: 630-460-1865  
[www.chicagocwrt.org](http://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](mailto:editor@chicagocwrt.org).

tract for a small Episcopal church that stood on the property, around which swirled the largest cavalry battle in the history of North America.

- At Champion Hill, you've preserved 68 acres encompassing "almost two-thirds of [Confederate General John C.] Pemberton's line of deployment from where the Confederate counterattack began," an area that "has changed little since that bloody day in 1863" according to historian Terry Winschel.

This is truly a remarkable accomplishment and a priceless gift to future generations. Thank you for your dedication to saving hallowed ground.

With sincere appreciation,  
*James Lighthizer*

President  
American Battlefield Trust

P.S. Want to learn more about the land you saved? Visit our website to read more about these three battles and how they fit into the larger context of the Civil War.

## JUNE MEETING

*By Mark Matranga*

Doug Dammann spoke to The Civil War Round Table at its 783rd Regular Meeting on June 14, 2019, on “Elmer Ellsworth and the United States Zouave Cadets.” Dammann reminded the Round Table that while we may be familiar with Ellsworth as the Colonel of a colorful regiment and favorite of Abraham who met an untimely end in Alexandria, Virginia as the Civil War began, that Ellsworth had strong Midwestern connections.

Ellsworth was born in Saratoga County, New York in 1837, to a father who was a tailor and a mother who ran a boarding house. His desire to attend West Point was thwarted but he maintained an intense interest in military related subjects, studying drill and formations. Little is known of the reason why he moved west, but by 1853 he was living in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Dammann speculates that he may have relocated to work in the city’s public schools or possibly was attracted by work on the canals. Soon thereafter, he was in business in Chicago after having formed the firm of Deveraux, Ellsworth & Co., an operation which failed. Notwithstanding this, he continued to study the military arts, believing he was “born to be a soldier.” During his studies he learned of the French Zouaves and perused Hardee’s Tactics.

His expertise was such that in 1857, Ellsworth was invited to Rockford, Illinois to teach the Zouave ‘system’ to a newly formed unit, the “City Greys.” He moved to Madison in October 1858 when he was appointed to head the Governor’s Guard, a unit that included future Civil War

notables Lucius Fairchild and Frank Haskell. He then returned to Chicago in 1859 to clerk in a law firm; he also began to drill the National Guard Cadets in preparation for a 4th of July performance. For Ellsworth, this work was more than a physical endeavor. He demanded cadets be moral exemplars, not merely good soldiers. He insisted that his cadets not drink or gamble or indulge in other immoral activities. He considered these ‘moral resolutions’ and that the cadets treat each other as would fraternity brothers, even to the extent of offering financial assistance.

His work culminated in the Zouave Cadet Tour of 1860 when Ellsworth issued a controversial challenge to organizations in eastern cities to determine the ‘National Champion of Drill Competition.’ He trained his company for six months to prepare for this event in which his cadets bested teams from Detroit, Rochester, Boston, Washington D.C., Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Cincinnati, among others. This feat made Ellsworth “the most talked about man in America.” Dammann quoted from local papers which commented on the cadets “rapid quick movement fired in unison” and performance of the Manual of Drill to Drums.

Dammann emphasized that in this period the drill competitions captured the public’s interest and catapulted Ellsworth into the public eye. After the last competition in St. Louis, Ellsworth stopped in Springfield where he made the acquaintance of Abraham Lincoln. The cadets had also been invited

by Generals Hardee and Scott to demonstrate their skills at West Point and to the White House by President Buchanan.

After meeting Lincoln, Ellsworth worked for his law firm until the election, after which the President gave him a job in his administration. However, Ellsworth resigned once hostilities began and raised a regiment from upstate New York fire houses, the 11th New York Zouaves, a unit trained on principles similar to those used with the Cadets. Dammann noted while the 11th did not perform well at First Manassas, when incorporated into the 44th New York the unit fought in every major engagement with the Army of the Potomac, including Little Round Top.

Although he died young, Ellsworth was very influential in the ‘command tree,’ with many of his subordinates rising to command positions later in the war. More important, when the Marshall House innkeeper shot Ellsworth dead on May 23, 1861, he did not kill a mere protégé of Abraham Lincoln. Elmer Ellsworth was one of the most famous men in America in his own right.





## GRAPESHOT



The **Civil War Museum** of Kenosha, WI, is hosting the following public programs and workshops this month:

2nd Friday Lunchbox Series, Friday, Sept. 13, 2019; Noon

U.S. Grant's Corinth and Iuka Campaigns

Dan Nettesheim's presentation will focus on U.S. Grant's strategic concepts and planning for the Iuka and Corinth campaigns. These campaigns, while relatively obscure, are key to the development of Grant's generalship as they are his first after Henry Halleck's promotion and transfer to Washington. They also reflect Grant's relationship with General William Rosecrans, another major Western commander.

### Great Lakes Civil War Forum

Saturday, September 14, 2019 | Registration 8:30am; Program Begins 9:30am | \$60 (\$50 FOM) Lunch Included

This Battle Will Go by the Name of Gettysburg

Join the Museum for a day filled with presentations and discussions about Gettysburg.

For more on programs at the museum, visit <https://museums.kenosha.org/civilwar/events/>

**Leslie Goddard** will speak on "Gone With the Wind" Oct. 4th at the McHenry County College RAP, and on "Louisa May Alcott" Oct. 1 at the Warrenville Public Library. For more on Leslie, visit [www.lesliegoddard.info](http://www.lesliegoddard.info).

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

### Please Note

Make your Reservations by Sunday, Sep 7, by emailing [dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org](mailto:dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org), or calling 630 460-1865 with the names of your party.

If a cancellation becomes necessary after dinner reservations have been made, please email us at [dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org](mailto: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.

## MORE UPCOMING LOCAL CIVIL WAR EVENTS

Sept. 6th, Northern Illinois CWRT: William Piston on "Longstreet, Lee, and the Lost Cause Myth"

Sept. 10th, McHenry County CWRT: Jerry Allen on "The Yankee Buzzard Regiment"

Sept. 12th, Milwaukee CWRT: Janet Croon on "The War Outside My Window"

Sept. 17th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Kate Masur on "They Knew Lincoln"

Sept. 20th, Salt Creek CWRT: Georgiann Baldino on "A Family and Nation Under Fire"

Sept. 20-22, Civil War Roundtable Congress in St. Louis

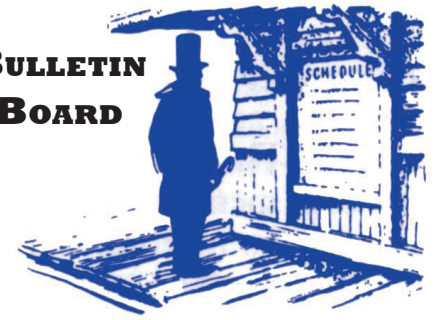
Sept. 26th, South Suburban CWRT: Jim Heinz, "The Medal of Honor"

Sept. 28th, Chicagoland Civil War and Militaria Show, Wheaton Fair Grounds

Oct. 4-5, Historical Society of Quincy and Adams County: Civil War Symposium

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](mailto: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*.

**Oct. 11th:** Jim Lighthizer on Battlefield Preservation

**Nov. 8th:** Ethan Rafuse on The War in Missouri: The Military Problem

**Dec. 13th:** Daniel Weinberg on Musings of a Collecting Voyeur

**Jan. 10th:** Pam Toler on Heroines of Mercy Street: Nurses in the Civil War

**Feb. 14th:** Connie Langum on Wilson's Creek

**Mar. 13th:** David Sutherland on VMI's Civil War Legacy

**Apr. 17th:** Michael Shaffer on Recollections of the 1st Virginia Cavalry

**May 8th:** Wil Greene on The Petersburg Campaign

**June 12th:** Brian Wills on George Henry Thomas

## AUTHOR'S VOICE

The next Author's Voice will be September 14th, at noon, with Sidney Blumenthal talking about his new book on the political life of Abraham Lincoln, *All the Powers of Earth*. For more, visit [alincolinbookshop.com](http://alincolinbookshop.com)