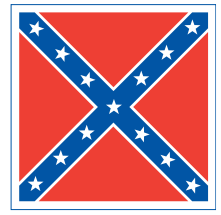


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

Volume LXXII, Number 2

Chicago, Illinois

October 2011



704th REGULAR MEETING

Nora Titone

on

“My Thoughts Be Bloody”

★★★★★

Friday, October 14

★★★★★

HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA

350 NORTH ORLEANS STREET

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$45 - Members/Non-members

Entrée: Chicken Aegean.

Baked Tilapia.

Vegetarian Plate or

Fruit Plate

please note

Make your reservations by Wednesday, Oct. 12, by calling 630 460-1865, or emailing dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org, with the names of your party and choice of entrée.

If a cancellation becomes necessary after dinner reservations have been made, please call the number before 9 a.m. Thursday.

We are offering the option of choosing not to have dinner and coming only for the address at 7:30 p.m., for a charge of \$10 per person.

Parking at the Holiday Inn is \$12 with a validated parking sticker.

“My Thoughts be Bloody:” The Bitter Rivalry of Edwin and John Wilkes Booth

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

On the night of April 14th, 1865, actor John Wilkes Booth shot and killed President Abraham Lincoln. Historians have largely failed to reconstruct the exact sequence of events of the “Booth Murder Conspiracy.” Similarly, the assassin’s life has remained something of a mystery, despite his status as one of America’s best-known actors, second only to his brother Edwin Booth. What led this handsome, athletic “ladies man” to commit the “Crime of the Century”?

On October 14th, Nora Titone will explain the surprising origins of her Booth research project, tell the epic story of the actor brothers, and explore the tangled relationship these two sons shared with their famous father, British Shakespearean star Junius Brutus Booth.

Nora Titone studied 19th-century American history at Harvard University and the University of California at Berkeley. She later worked as a research assistant to Pulitzer Prize-winning pres-



Nora Titone

idential historian Doris Kearns Goodwin as Goodwin wrote her groundbreaking 2005 portrait of Lincoln and his Cabinet, Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln. While working for Doris Goodwin, Titone discovered a rare and extraordinary collection of private Booth family diaries, letters and papers that inspired her to write My Thoughts

Be Bloody: The Bitter Rivalry of Edwin and John Wilkes Booth that Led to an American Tragedy.

Titone has discussed her book on NPR and C-SPAN, and been a guest speaker at Ford’s Theater, the National Archives, the Harvard Club of Boston, and the New York Public Library, among other venues. She is delighted to be making her first visit to a Civil War Round Table.



The Preservation of Antietam National Battlefield

BY BRIAN SEITER

The battle of Antietam is called in James M. McPherson's book, *The Crossroads of Freedom* the battle that changed the course of the Civil War. The preservation of the Antietam battlefield would use a different model than the Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park.

The Antietam Memorial Association was created in 1890, though the efforts of Rev. C. L. Keedy and Maryland Congressman Louis E. McComas. McComas proposed a park establishment bill in the House of Representatives on June 7, 1890. McComas was given no support for his bill, so in true Congress fashion he had an earmark added to a civil bill which included a provision of 15,000 dollars to begin the surveying, location and preserving of Antietam and all lands would be under the care and supervision of the Secretary of War. The spending bill became law on August 30, 1890 and with this bill came the start of preservation of the Antietam battlefield.

McComas tried again to have Congress pass his park establishment bill but the House of Representatives did not follow the Committee on Military Affairs' recommendation on Antietam importance. This issue was never brought up again and with the defeat of McComas in his reelection bid in 1890, Antietam lost their political sponsor. This would result in Antietam developing in a different fashion compared to Chickamauga with its large amount of acreage and large monumentation. Congress would save money by acquiring small amounts of the original fields of battle and save money by passing only sustaining appropriations in the years to come. This decision by Congress meant not all battlefields would be preserved along the Chickamauga Plan.

The War Department created an Antietam board in July 1891 to organize the work at the battlefield. As board members it chose Colonel John

C. Stearns of 9th Vermont Infantry and ex-Confederate Major General Henry Heth. The problem was neither officer was a veteran of the battlefield nor did they report to the secretary of war himself. Congress and the War Department were taking a different view of how the work was going to be done on the Antietam battlefield.

Over the next three years the park was showing little signs of development under Stearns and Heth. These men were old and sick, the battlefield had changed over the years and landowners wanted to sell all, not part, of their land. By January 1894 the Antietam battlefield had two hundred wooden signs around the battlefield to mark troop positions. They also started the process of working with landowners on the possibility of acquiring land. A major change came in the summer of 1894 with the new Secretary of War Daniel S. Lamont. Work on the Antietam battlefield would change with his activist supervision of Antietam and creating a new team to implement these plans.

Stearns would resign as member of the board and Heth would stay on as the Confederate representative. Lamont appointed as president of the Antietam board Major George B. Davis. Davis had served in the 1st Massachusetts cavalry during the war, was a competent administrator, authority on military law, advisor on battlefield preservation and president of board publishing the Official Records. The Union representative and historical expert was Antietam veteran Ezra Carman, who was the colonel of the 13th New Jersey and brevetted brigadier general after the war. He worked in the War Department and had actively petitioned for a position on the Antietam board. The last member of Lamont team was Jed Hotchkiss, former "Stonewall" Jackson cartographer, because an expert topographer was needed to aid in the board's mapmaking efforts.

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



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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.

The Antietam battlefield would be transformed during the time period from October 1894 to August 1895 and 17 acres of land, 5 miles of macadamized roads and 200 tablets would be placed to preserve the Antietam battlefield. The board worked with the landowners on the selling of their land to the battlefield and Carmen and Davis both wrote the text for the tablets displayed on the battlefield. The board left it to the states themselves or veterans to place monuments to individual regiments. The board would be dissolved and only Carmen would spend any further time on Antietam which placed him as the supreme authority on the battle and the battlefield. In 1933 the Antietam battlefield would become part of the National Park Service.

In 2013 our annual tour will be to Antietam and our co-chairs for the tour will be Mark Matranga and Mary Abroe. Please consider the Save Historic Antietam Foundation when donating to the Antietam battlefield. The mission of SHAF is the preservation and protection of historic sites within the Antietam valley that are related to the Battle of Antietam, the Maryland Campaign, or other Civil War activity in the region. Contact information for SHAF is P.O. Box 550, Sharpsburg, MD 21782, 301-432-2996 and www.shaf.org.

September Meeting

BY MARK MATRANGA

Bruce Allardice spoke to the 703rd meeting of The Civil War Round Table on our 'national pastime,' baseball, and the Civil War. Baseball had its origins in the bat-and-ball games played in 18th century England and its colonies such as "rounders" and cricket. Although Abner Doubleday has been called the "father" of baseball, Doubleday never claimed credit. The diamond-shaped field is attributed to Alexander Cartwright, albeit modern scholarship disputes even this. It is agreed that Cartwright formed the Knickerbocker Club in New York in September 1845 and, with another club member, James "Doc" Adams, changed the rules of an existing game, town ball, to set many of the rules we now associate with the game, including fair/foul territory, three-strikes and "out," nine innings, nine players, and 90-foot baselines..

A convention of clubs standardized the rules in 1858. By that time, the game had spread across the country, with franchises in southern cities as well. Chicago saw its first game in 1857; the Excelsiors, ancestor of the Cubs, played in the first city championship in 1859. Like many other clubs, the Excelsiors disbanded when its players went off to war.

By 1860, baseball infused political culture. Political cartoons from the election featured baseball terms. It was said that Lincoln was playing baseball at the time he learned of his nomination. Once elected, Lincoln used baseball analogies to focus on events such as Stuart's third ride around McClellan. A young boy who grew up in Blair House recalled Lincoln playing town ball

with him and other boys. A D.C. newspaper reported the President an "apparently interested spectator" of an exciting contest between the Washington Nationals and Brooklyn Excelsiors. And Lincoln had a baseball field, the 'White Lot,' constructed behind the White House.

Thousands of baseball club members volunteered for service in the Union Army, and a few enlisted in the Confederate Army. Some brought bats and balls when reporting for duty. All bats and balls were handmade. Soldiers wrote home of the pleasures of playing ball as a diversion from the hardships of battle and boredom of camp life. George Putnam, a Union soldier, wrote of a game called early due to a surprise attack. Another wrote home of hearing the report of musketry while his company played "batball." Ballplayers of one regiment or brigade challenged others. On Christmas 1862, the 165th New York volunteer regiment played a group from other regiments before a crowd of 40,000.

There is no convincing evidence Union and Confederate soldiers played against each other during lulls in action. However, informal games were played after the surrender at Appamattox while Lee's army was awaiting parole. And Private John Adams of the 19th Massachusetts wrote of having observed Confederates playing baseball across the Rappahanock River while his unit was encamped at Falmouth, Virginia: "We would sit on the bank and watch their games, and the distance was so short we could understand every movement and would applaud good plays." Rank did not prevent officers from participating

in games. Charles Davidson of the 13th Massachusetts related that in early 1862, General Hartsuff "got off his horse and requested permission to catch behind the bat" and playing for several minutes.

Baseball was played in prisoner-of-war camps with guards and town residents as spectators. Dr. Charles Gray wrote in his diary of the game being played regularly in the camp at Salisbury, North Carolina. Louisiana Brigade members who had played for prewar New Orleans teams were imprisoned on Johnson's Island, Ohio, where they played the first recorded organized baseball game in that state.

Veterans became prominent in professional baseball following the war. One, Morgan Gardner Bulkeley of the 13th New York, later established one of the charter members of the National League and was inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Both prayed to the same god; the prayers of both sides could not be answered. But both continued to play the same game. The Round Table thanks Bruce for his very informative talk on the intersection of the war and the game that has become an integral part of our culture.

To hear the entire talk, there is a recording of the meeting (and every meeting) available from **Hal Ardell**, audio librarian. Contact Hal at (773) 774-6781 or hal229@ameritech.net. To view his slide presentations see <http://classic.kodakgallery.com/civilwar/main>.

GRAPESHOT



On October 29th the **Chicago History Museum** will host its annual Lincoln Colloquium, which focuses on the theme of Lincoln and Leadership. Speakers include Daniel Stowell of the Lincoln Papers, Prof. Stewart Winger, Prof. Matthew Holden, Prof. **Bruce S. Allardice** (speaking on “Lincoln as a War Leader”), and Dr. **Lawrence Hewitt**. The event starts with a light breakfast at 8:30 a.m., and ends at 4 p.m. The registration fee includes lunch. For more information, contact the CHM.

On Oct. 16th **Rob Girardi** will speak on “What I Saw of Shiloh” at the Wilmette Public Library, and Oct. 18th on “Civil War Artifacts” at the Chicago History Museum.

Dave Corbett’s Battlefield Balladeers will perform at the Rolling Meadows Library Oct. 7th, and the Addison Library Oct. 9th.

Leslie Goddard will present “Clara Barton” at the DuPage County Historical Museum Oct. 15th, and at the Elgin Historical Society Oct. 16th.

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

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.

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Sixty plus years of audio recordings of CWRT lectures by distinguished historians are available and can be purchased in either audio cassette or CD format. For lecture lists, 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.

Upcoming Civil War Events

Oct. 5th, Lake County CWRT: Charlie Jarvis on “Bell City Rifles”

Oct. 5th, Kankakee Valley CWRT: **Jon Sebastian** on “Illinois Politics”

Oct. 7th, Northern Illinois CWRT: **Robert Girardi** on “Civil War Corps Command. A Study in Leadership”

Oct. 11th, McHenry County CWRT: Kathy Grey on “Women of the South”

Oct. 13th, Milwaukee CWRT: Vernon Burton on “Lincoln”

Oct. 2011–March 20, 2012, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Stephen A. Douglas exhibit. Visit www.thecivilwarmuseum.org for more details.

Oct. 18th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Dave Hirsch & Dan VanHaften on “Abraham Lincoln and the Structure of Reason”

Oct. 21st, Salt Creek CWRT: Panel Discussion: Ron Carlson “Greatest What-Ifs of the Civil War”

Oct. 27th, South Suburban CWRT: **Bob Miller** on “Father James Sheeran”

Reminder: 2012 Tour
(Chickamauga/Chattanooga)
May 3–6, 2012

2013 Tour – Antietam

Bulletin Board



FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held at the Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, 350 North Orleans Street, the second Friday of each month, *unless otherwise indicated*.

Oct. 14: Nora Titone, “The Bitter Rivalry of Edwin and John Wilkes Booth”

Nov. 11: Gail Stephens on “Early’s 1864 Invasion of Maryland”

Dec. 9: James Robertson, “The Untold Civil War”

Jan. 13: Parker Hills, “Chickamauga”

Feb. 10: Harry Bulkeley, “I Propose to Fight it Out”

Bjorn Skaptasan of the **Abraham Lincoln book store** reminds us that the next “Virtual Book Signing” will be November 2, with Amanda Foreman talking about her book, [A World On Fire](#). In addition, the store and the Union League CWRT are sponsoring a discussion and book signing by historian **Craig Symonds** on Oct. 7th at the Union League Club. Visit www.virtualbooksigning.net for more details.

We had two deaths in our Civil War community recently. Longtime CWRT member **Ted Zimmerman** passed away September 17th at Evanston Hospital. **Rick Benson**, Vice President of the Salt Creek CWRT and frequent presenter on Captain Henry Wirz, passed away Tuesday September 20th. They’ll be missed.