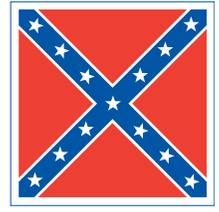


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Founded December 3, 1940



Volume LXXII, Number 3

Chicago, Illinois

November 2011



705th REGULAR MEETING

Gail Stephens

on

“Jubal’s in the Valley,
Summer, 1864”

★★★★★

Friday, November 11

★★★★★

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: Roast Turkey,
Baked Orange Roughy,
Vegetarian Plate or
Fruit Plate*

please note

Make your reservations by Wednesday, Nov. 9, 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.

Gail Stephens

on

“Jubal’s in the Valley,
Summer, 1864”

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

In the fourth summer of the Civil War, a small Confederate army came close to carrying off the improbable – the seizure of Washington, DC.

In June 1864, Lt. Gen. Jubal Early slipped away from the works around Richmond, where Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia faced Grant and the Army of the Potomac, and moved rapidly through the Shenandoah Valley into Maryland with an army of 16,000 veterans. Lee’s orders to Early were to take Washington, which had been stripped of veteran troops to reinforce Grant.

The Union high command in Washington refused to believe the first reports of a Confederate presence north of the Potomac and took no action. The Union commander

in Baltimore, Maj. Gen. Lew Wallace, was convinced of the threat, and mustered a small force near Frederick, Maryland, where on July 9 he and his men managed to hold Early’s army an entire day, though outnumbered two to one. Warned by Wallace, Grant swung into action and put a corps onto steamships to reinforce Washington. The race was on. Though the Confederates did not succeed, this little known cam-



Gail Stephens

paign is one of the most exciting and potentially most momentous of the Civil War.

Gail Stephens has a Bachelor’s Degree in International Politics from George Washington University in Washington DC, and did graduate work at Johns Hopkins and Harvard Universities. She worked for the Department of Defense for 26 years, retiring in 1994 as a member of the Department’s Senior Executive Ser-

vice. Upon retirement, she began to study the American Civil War. She lectures regularly on various Civil War topics, including Monocacy, Major General

Lew Wallace and the 1864 Maryland campaign, and gives battlefield tours. She has written articles on Lew Wallace and Early’s 1864 invasion of the North for several Civil War publications. Her book on Wallace’s Civil War career, *Shadow of Shiloh*, recently won the Civil War Forum of New York City’s William Henry Seward Award for best Civil War biography of 2011.



Battlefield Preservation

BY BRIAN SEITER

Trust Raising Funds For Perryville Battle Ground

— The Civil War Trust recently launched a campaign to raise \$181,250 to protect 141 acres at the Oct. 8, 1862, Perryville Battlefield in Kentucky.

The total to be raised by the Trust will be matched \$4 to \$1 for land valued at \$725,000. The federal Civil War Battlefield Preservation Program and a lead gift from a trustee will make the match.

Mary Koik, Deputy Director, Communications, said, “As is often a hallmark of our acquisitions, we’re excited about how this fills in a ‘hole’ in the existing park and preserved area. To date, this is the first major acquisition on the west side of Mackville Road.”

The Civil War Trust has helped save 385 acres at Perryville, almost all of it incorporated into the Perryville Battlefield State Historic Site. Koik said the 141 new acres “brings us all the more close to having achieved a ‘critical mass’ at the site.”

Confederates at Perryville pushed the Federals back in a battle that lasted from late morning until dark, after which the Confederates retired, leaving Kentucky under Union control.

The 141-acre tract of the Henry Bottom farm includes the ground where Brig. Gens. Bushrod Johnson, Daniel Adams and Patrick Cleburne’s brigades crossed Doctor’s Creek and climbed the steep banks to surprise Union First Corps defenders from the 3rd Ohio and the 15th Kentucky.

The barn, in which wounded had taken shelter, was set on fire by Confederate artillery. Its plume of smoke was a landmark during the battle. At least 560 of the battle’s 7,400 casualties were killed, wounded or captured on the target tract.

Artist William D.T. Travis used the burning barn incident as the image for the Battle of Perryville in his 32-panel panorama “The Army of the Cumber-

land” which can be seen at Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History.

Most of the battle was fought on the Bottom farm, which was then more than 600 acres, according to site Perryville Battlefield State Historic Site Manager Kurt Holman.

The 141 acres and funds raised will count toward the Civil War Trust’s “Campaign 150: Our Time, Our Legacy” five-year goal of raising \$40 million and saving 20,000 acres (see August issue front page).

To see maps, Holman’s description of the action and to donate online, go to www.civilwar.org

The 150th battle commemoration will be held at Perryville Battlefield Oct. 5-7 next year. The Southern Division and Western Federal Blues will manage the battle reenactments, with registration fees going to The Friends of Perryville Battlefield State Historic Site. For information call (859) 332-8631 or visit www.perryvillebattlefield.org.

Two Preservationists to Buy 81 Acres in Spotsylvania County

— Two prominent local battlefield preservationists acquired an option to buy 81.69 acres in Spotsylvania for \$595,793. The land they call Wilderness Fields is on both the Chancellorsville and Wilderness battlefields.

The men received support from the Spotsylvania Board of Supervisors to apply for a state grant to assist with the purchase.

Johnny Mitchell, a businessman who owns The Made in Virginia Store in nearby Fredericksburg, and Enos Richardson, a retired Fredericksburg lawyer, have worked together for years to preserve Civil War battlefields.

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.

They, with five others, founded the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust (CVBT) in 1996 to preserve battlefield land in the region surrounding Fredericksburg. The CVBT has preserved 893 acres to date....

Of the three tracts, the 51-acre parcel has minimal Civil War historical significance, Mitchell said, but the owners stipulated that it had to be included in the deal. It is wooded and screens a housing development from the heavily-traveled Route 3.

None of the parcels is within the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park boundary. The land therefore could not be donated or sold to the National Park Service without Congress expanding the park boundary. Mitchell said ownership of the properties will be transferred to the county.

The antebellum Ellwood Manor on the Wilderness Battlefield can be seen from the westernmost parcel of Wilderness Fields, according to Mitchell. Preserving that land will help protect Ellwood’s viewshed. The family cemetery at Ellwood is where Jackson’s amputated arm is buried.

(from October issue of *Civil War News*)

October Meeting

BY MARK MATRANGA

My Thoughts Be Bloody – The Bitter Rivalry Between Edwin and John Wilkes Booth That Led to an American Tragedy, was presented to the 704th meeting of The Civil War Round Table of Chicago on October 14, 2011, by **Nora Titone**, author of the book by that name. While Edwin was the most prominent actor of his time, his brother did not share this fame. John Wilkes had charisma but no classical training or natural gift for drama. He was despised by other actors and when he forgot lines was known to improvise stage violence which left other actors injured. In December 1862, Chicago critics issued negative reviews, calling his performance at the McVicker's Theatre "a severe dose of rant." He foreshadowed his later actions when while drinking in the Green Room, a saloon near State and Madison, he uttered, "What a glorious opportunity it would be for a man to achieve immortality," by killing Lincoln.

John Wilkes struggled to stay afloat as an actor. Before the war he played theaters in the south and west; during the war he played mainly minor and provincial theaters. He had no home – when not touring he lived with Edwin at his New York mansion for much of the war. What reserves he had were lost in an ill-fated oil drilling venture. What financial success John Wilkes' had later came from payments he received from the Confederate secret service.

Edwin, on the other hand, was a colossal talent, an international star who defied the 19th century stereotype of actor as huckster and

pariah. Instead he achieved great wealth and fame, impressing even Fanny Seward when Edwin dined with her father in March 1864. The aristocratic Fanny found President Lincoln kind and good but "no gentleman," while Edwin was to her "a genius, a scholar, and a gentleman" despite his having no formal education. Unlike his brother, Edwin supported the Union, using his Broadway theater for fundraising to assist widows and orphans. On the third anniversary of his inauguration, Edwin gave a command performance for Lincoln.

Following the war, Edwin's success continued unabated. He established the Player's Club, a private club in Manhattan whose membership included many wealthy and politically influential figures of the Gilded Age such as Grover Cleveland, Mark Twain, J.P. Morgan, and William Sherman. Out of respect for Edwin, any discussion of his brother or Lincoln was not permitted until after his death in 1893.

Booth family history was responsible for the brothers' divergent paths and profound dislike for each other. Their father, British stage star and social radical Junius Brutus, left his family in London and took up with his lover, Mary Ann Holmes, in America where he deposited her and their ten children on a remote Maryland estate. Only four years separated the brothers, but as a twelve year old, Edwin became his increasingly intemperate father's travelling associate. While John Wilkes was sent to boarding academies in Maryland where he socialized with slaveholding gen-

try, Edwin toured with his father, gaining skill as an actor. Thus John Wilkes was informed by southern culture while Edwin, who lived in New York and performed in large northern cities, supported the union and associated with elite northern intellectuals.

Titone concluded that it is impossible to separate John Wilkes' Confederate zealotry from his being an actor, the son of Junius Brutus, and brother of Edwin. The Booth clan was "a dynasty of Shakespearean stars who out-Shakespeared Shakespeare in the plot line of their family life." They were a narcissistic and toweringly ambitious family, torn apart by rivalry. John Wilkes' ultimate actions are inextricable from his family's tangled history. But ironically, Edwin, who performed Shakespeare for three generations, is now relatively unknown, whereas John Wilkes achieved a notoriety far beyond Richard III's mythical and forgotten "ambitious youth who fired the Ephesian dome."

The CWRT is indebted to Nora Titone for having mined Booth family history and for the engrossing "Round Table" discussion she invited after her presentation.

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



Starting in November and continuing through next March, past president **Mary Abroe** will moderate a five-part reading and discussion series called "Let's Talk About It: Making Sense of the American Civil War" at the Wilmette Public Library. This series starts on Wednesday, November 9 at 7 P.M. with a discussion of the novel *March* by Geraldine Brooks. For more information, contact the library's Web site at www.wilmettelibrary.info/civilwar Call 847-256-6930 or e-mail wag@wilmettelibrary.info in order to register.

On Nov. 8th past president **Jerry Kowalski** will speak on "Masons in the Civil War" at the Waukeshaw (WI) CWRT.

On Nov. 6th **Rosehill Cemetery** in Chicago will host its annual Veteran's Day event, sponsored by the Salt Creek CWRT. Ceremonies start at 11 a.m. at the May Chapel.

Bruce Allardice will speak on "Conscription and the Civil War" at the Downers Grove Library, to the DUV, on Nov. 5th, and will deliver an address on "South Suburban Civil War Veterans" at the Thornton Township Veterans Day ceremony Nov. 11th. Bruce has also signed a contract with Savas-Beatie Publishing House to edit an e-book on Union army generals.

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.

SCHIMMELFENNIG BOUTIQUE

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

- Nov. 2nd, Lake County CWRT: Gene Wells on "Disunion in the Confederacy"
- Nov. 2nd, Kankakee Valley CWRT: Betty Carlson Kay on "Jenny Hodges, Julia Grant"
- Nov. 4th, Northern Illinois CWRT: **General George Thomas** (Jerry Allen) on "History will do me Justice"
- Nov. 5th, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Veteran's Heritage Day
- Nov. 8th, McHenry County CWRT: **Jerry Allen** on "General George Thomas"
- Nov. 11th, Milwaukee CWRT: Gail Stephens on "Early's Valley Campaign"
- Nov. 15th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Dennis Keese on "Boy Soldiers in the Union Army"
- Nov. 17th, South Suburban CWRT: Donna Work on "Poetry and Music in the Civil War"
- Nov. 18th, Salt Creek CWRT: Annual book auction, at the Glen Ellyn History Center
- Nov. 19th, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Heritage Military Music Foundation's exhibit of 19th century band instruments. Visit www.thecivilwarmuseum.org for more details.

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*.

- Nov. 11: Gail Stephens on "Jubal's in the Valley, Summer, 1864"
- Dec. 9: James Robertson, "The Untold Civil War"
- Jan. 13: Parker Hills, "Chickamauga"
- Feb. 10: Harry Bulkeley, "I Propose to Fight it Out"
- March 9: A. Wilson Greene, "Nevins-Freeman Address"
- April 13: Marshall Krolick, "Riding for the Union: 8th Illinois Cavalry Troopers"
- May 8: Bruce Holden Reid, TBA
- June 8: Dennis Frye, "Antietam"

Bjorn Skaptasen of the **Abraham Lincoln book store** reminds us that the next "Virtual Book Signing" will be Nov. 12th, at noon, with Elizabeth Leonard talking about her new book, [Lincoln's Forgotten Ally: Judge Advocate General Joseph Holt of Kentucky](#), and Gail Stephens on her book [Shadow of Shiloh: Major General Lew Wallace in the Civil War](#). Visit www.virtualbooksigning.net for more details.

We had another death in our Civil War community recently. Longtime CWRT member Bill Hetzel died at Loyola Medical Center on Oct. 7th. He'll be missed.