



THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Volume LXXXVI, Number 2

Chicago, Illinois

October 2026

851st REGULAR MEETING, Friday, October 9th, 2026, (this month) at the **Bensenville Public Library**. Buffet with Italian Chicken and/or Mostaccioli.

Joshua Lindamood on

"Black Thursday: The Battle of Sailor's Creek"

Live Meeting. Time: October 9th, 2026, 7:30 PM CST.



April 6, 1865 (known as "Black Thursday") was one of the most devastating days of the American Civil War. As Robert E. Lee's Confederate army retreated, Grant's Union forces struck along a stretched and vulnerable line, triggering the Battle of Sailor's Creek. Fighting broke out at multiple locations, including near the Hillsman House and along Sailor's Creek, where Confederate units were overwhelmed, cut off, and forced into intense close-quarters combat. The losses were staggering, with thousands killed, wounded, or

captured. This program highlights the key decisions of the day and their significance, showing how the fighting at Sailor's Creek led directly to Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House just three days later.

Joshua Lindamood is a historian serving at both Sailor's Creek Battlefield Historical State Park and Staunton River Battlefield State Park. Throughout his career, he has also held positions with the American Civil War Museum and Appomattox Court House National Historical Park, where he has helped interpret and preserve the history of the Civil War for visitors from around the world.

Joshua is a founding member and co-director of the Appomattox-Petersburg Preservation Society (A.P.P.S.), a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the historic battlefields and landmarks of Southside Virginia while promoting public education about the region's vital role during the American Civil War. Through his work in public history, preservation, and education, Joshua is committed to ensuring that the stories of those who experienced the conflict continue to inform and inspire future generations.

Battlefield Preservation



Last week Chicago CWRT President Bruce Allardice presented our CWRT's \$1,000 donation in person to the Libertyville Historical Society, to aid in their restoration of their 1860 election "Wide Awake" banner. Other Chicago area CWRTs donated a further \$800 to this worthy cause.

The banner is currently undergoing restoration and framing. The LHS hopes to have the banner back in Libertyville, at the Anson Cook House that serves as their museum, by the first of the year, after which an unveiling ceremony will be held. When we received word of that ceremony, it will be announced in this newsletter. Chicago CWRT members are encouraged to attend the ceremony---and to visit the Cook house any time.



September Presentation

By Mark Matranga

James Marten, Emeritus Professor of History at Marquette University, presented an insightful view of the Sixth Wisconsin Regiment at the 850th Regular Meeting of The Civil War Round Table on September 11, 2026. Professor Marten is author of, among other titles, *The Sixth Wisconsin and the Long Civil War: The Biography of a Regiment* which formed the basis of his talk. The Sixth Wisconsin was one of the original four regiments serving in a unified Western brigade in the Army of the Potomac, the Second and Seventh Wisconsin and the Nineteenth Indiana making up the rest of the unit. The Twenty-Fourth Michigan was added later, after massive casualties the brigade suffered at Second Manassas and during the invasion of Maryland. With their companion artillery, Battery B, 4th U.S. Light Artillery, these storied units came to be known as the "Iron Brigade of the West."

The Sixth was initially mustered in for three years' service at Camp Randall in Madison on July 16, 1861, and consisted of troops from fourteen counties, 1029 men in all. The regiment left the state shortly thereafter under the command of Colonel Lysander Cutler on July 28, headed for Washington, D.C. where they arrived on August 3. They were to be assigned to an all-Wisconsin brigade led by Brigadier General Rufus King, but King's design was dashed when the Army transferred the Fifth Wisconsin from his command to General Hancock and replaced it with the Hoosiers.

The Sixth was originally attached to McDowell's Division, Army of the Potomac, when the brigade was activated on October 1, 1861. The regiment moved toward Richmond during the Peninsula campaign but did not see action. Its first taste of battle came during the Second Manassas Campaign on August 28, 1862. A significant development before then was Rufus Dawes's promotion in June from Captain of Company K to Major; Dawes was a descendent of Charles Dawes of Paul Revere's ride fame.

During the reshuffling of units after the Seven Days battles, the Iron Brigade had been reassigned to the John Pope's Army of Virginia. On that fateful August day, King, now a division commander, moved his troops through the village of Groveton in the early evening and, unaware, walked into fierce barrage of artillery fire. That began the battle of Brawner's Farm, with the Sixth on the right of the brigade. The battle continued into the night; with other Federal troops having retreated, the Sixth was the only regiment left fighting. Lt. Colonel Bragg, who took command after Cutler was wounded, commented that the Sixth was "left to fight the whole rebel army by itself." Dawes said that he had wanted battle but now did not need another.

After the debacle at Manassas, the Sixth marched again with the Army of the Potomac into Maryland. On September 14, making its way up the National Road at South Mountain under the command of General Gibbon, the brigade fought a very arduous uphill battle against well positioned Confederate troops. Their conspicuous valor caught the eye of General McClellan who gave them their nickname. Three days later, at Antietam, the brigade fought in the Cornfield and down the Hagerstown Road, the Sixth taking the point. In almost two hours of savage combat with Georgians and the Texas Brigade, the entire color guard was killed or wounded; one company was reduced to 13 men. Lt. Col. Bragg was wounded, Dawes taking command. Dawes wrote, "The flower of our regiment was slaughtered in that terrible cornfield. I dread the thought of that place...I never want to fight there again."

The regiment did not see much action at Fredericksburg but did play a role in fighting Confederate pickets, providing cover for engineers bridging the Rappahannock. But it was at Gettysburg on July 1, 1863, that the Sixth earned special honor. The Iron Brigade was one of the first on the field and hit the assaulting Confederates at Willoughby Run, halting their advance. The Sixth, with others, charged the Railroad

Cut, capturing hundreds of the enemy and the flag of the 2nd Mississippi. They retreated later that day to Culp's Hill and assisted in its defense.

The Sixth participated in the remaining campaigns in Virginia, including the siege of Petersburg, and in the Grand Review in Washington in May 1865 at war's end. The regiment mustered out July 2, 1865, long after its original enlistment term. It was only later, as they began to age and die, reports Marten, that "events rippled through their lives" that veterans of the Sixth began to tell their stories. It was then that they reflected on how they had learned to fight, to endure hardship and violence, illness and death. It was then, Professor Marten shows, that these men began to truly evaluate what they had accomplished.



BULLETIN BOARD

Our in-person meetings are this month held at:
Bensenville Public Library, 202 S. Church in Bensenville
Dinner and meeting: \$50.00 Members and Non-Members
Dinner at 6:30
Menu choices: Italian chicken and mostaccioli for the entrees and then mashed potatoes and mixed vegetables.

The **Kenosha Civil War Museum** will feature Steve Osman on October 9th, presenting on "Minnesota's Own Civil War: The Dakota Conflict of 1862." The event is part of their Friday lunchbox series and will run from noon to one.

The Museum has a great ongoing exhibit on the "8th Illinois Cavalry," featuring the collections of our CWRT's past president, the late Marshall Krolick.

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

On October 15th **John Horn** will be speaking on Vicksburg's Crater attacks (and the 124th Illinois) to the Springfield, IL CWRT.

Rob Girardi is busy this month, with presentations October 1 at the Kankakee CWRT on "The Real War Will Never Get in the Books;" October 6 at the Kenosha Civil War Museum on "George B. McClellan and the Peninsula Campaign;" October 15 at the Southern Pines NC CWRT on "Gouverneur Kemble Warren's Last Battle;" and

October 16-18 at the Pamplin Park Symposium on "The Murder of Major General William "Bull" Nelson."

More Upcoming Local Civil War Events

Oct. 2nd, Northern Illinois CWRT: **Jerry Allen** on "The Prince and Princess Salm-Salm"

Oct. 5th, Rock Valley CWRT: Steve Leonard on "John Bell Hood and the Battle of Nashville"

Oct. 8th, Milwaukee CWRT: Joshua Lindamood on "Black Thursday: the Battle of Sailor's Creek"

Oct. 13th, McHenry County CWRT: Bob Frenz, TBA

Oct. 20th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Ed Urban on "The Queen of the West"

Oct. 22nd, South Suburban CWRT: Ron Kirkwood on "Soldier's Stories from Gettysburg"

Oct. 24th, Salt Creek CWRT: **Matt Savage** on "Locked, Cocked and Late: How Illinois Soldiers Were Enticed with Promises of Repeating Rifles"

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

Future Chicago CWRT Meetings

Nov. 13th: Father Bob Miller on "Angels of the Battlefield: Catholic Nuns in the Civil War"

Dec. 11th: Stuart Dempsey on "'So outrageously and so persistently misrepresented': The 11th Corps at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg"

Jan. 8th, 2027: Dan Masters on "Hell By the Half Acre: The Stones River Campaign"

Feb. 12th: Rob Girardi on "Gouverneur K. Warren in the Gettysburg Campaign"

March 12th: Doug Dammann, Nevins-Freeman Address: "Tar-Heel and the Yankee: Civil War Veterans Who Played in the First Intercollegiate Football Game on November 6, 1869"

April 9th: Dave Powell on "Who Won the Battle of Chickamauga?"

May 14th: Lucas Wilder on "Longstreet's East Tennessee Campaign"

June 11th: Kevin Donovan, topic TBA

The **Abraham Lincoln Book Shop** in its “House Divided” series of author interviews, will feature Dave Powell discussing his new book, the 3rd volume of his Atlanta Campaign series. The podcast is October 29th at 3:30 CST.

For more, visit <https://alincolnbookshop.com/>

October Meetings from the Past:

2021 (5 years ago)— David Dixon on “August Willich”

2016 (10 years ago)— Lance Herdegan, The Nevins Freeman Address

2011 (15 years ago)— Nora Titone on “My Thought be Bloody: The Rivalry between John Wilkes Booth and his brother Edwin”

1941 (75 years ago)— Monroe Cockrell on “General Nathan Bedford Forrest”

Chickamauga-Chattanooga 2027 Battlefield Tour

Reserve the dates: April 28-May 1, 2027. Jim Ogden and Dave Powell will be our tour guides. More information to come later.

