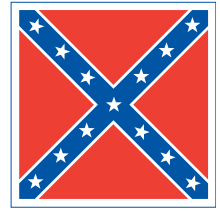


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

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Chicago, Illinois

May, 2008



671st REGULAR MEETING

Vernon Burton

on

“The Age of Lincoln”

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Friday, May 9

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA

350 NORTH ORLEANS STREET

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$35 - Members/Non-members

Entrée:

Sliced Striploin, Catch of the Day, Vegetarian Plate or Fruit Plate

please note

Make your reservation by **MONDAY, May 5** by calling **630-460-1865**. Reservations can also be made by emailing chicagocwrttdinner@earthlink.net with the names of your party and their choice of entree.

Reservations made after Wednesday, May 7, will be surcharged \$5.

People who attend without having made a reservation will pay a \$5 walk-in charge. If a cancellation becomes necessary after dinner reservations have been made, please call the number before 9 a.m. Thursday to avoid a charge.

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 \$5 per person.

Parking at the Holiday Inn is \$10 with a validated parking sticker.

Vernon Burton on “The Age of Lincoln”

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

Freedom. In Abraham Lincoln’s Second Inaugural Address, he noted that while Americans differed on the cause of the Civil War, all acknowledged that slavery was a part of that causation. To Lincoln, man was born to be free, not slave, and he promised that a “new birth of freedom” would come out of that war.

On May 9th, Professor Vernon Burton will present his views on Lincoln and his times, and how Lincoln both redefined and expanded human freedom. The talk will be based on Professor Burton’s acclaimed book, The Age of Lincoln. In the words of the publisher:

“Stunning in its breadth and conclusions, The Age of Lincoln is a fiercely original history of the five decades that pivoted around the presidency of Abraham Lincoln. Abolishing slavery was the age’s most extraordinary accomplishment, but not its most profound. The enduring legacy of the age was inscribing personal liberty into the nation’s millennial aspirations.

America has always perceived providence in its progress, but in the 1840s and 1850s a pessimism accompanied a marked extremism. With all sides claiming God’s blessing, irreconcilable freedoms collided; despite historic political compromises the middle ground collapsed. In a remarkable reappraisal of Lincoln, the distinguished historian Orville Vernon Burton



Vernon Burton

shows how the president’s Southernness empowered him to conduct a civil war that redefined freedom as a personal right protected by the rule of law. In the violent decades that followed, the extent of that freedom would be contested by racism and unregulated capitalism, but not its central place in what defined the country.”

Vernon Burton was born in Royston, Georgia, reared in Ninety Six, S.C., graduated from Furman University, and received his Ph.D. in American History from Princeton University in 1976. He is Director of the Institute for Computing in Humanities, Arts, and Social Science (I-CHASS) at the University of

Illinois, where he is Professor of History, African American Studies, and Sociology. Professor Burton is the author of more than a hundred articles and the author or editor of fourteen books, including In My Father’s House re Many Mansions: Family and Community in Edgefield, South Carolina. The Age of Lincoln was published in July 2007 and is the recipient of the Chicago Tribune Heartland Literary Award for Nonfiction.



Battlefield Preservation

BY DAVID ZUCKER

Most endangered battlefields: A cell tower that could overshadow the blood-soaked ground of Antietam and a waste-to-energy plant whose smokestack would soar 15 feet above Monocacy National Battlefield are among the imminent threats highlighted in the Civil War Preservation Trusts (CWPT) annual "History Undersiege: America's Most Endangered Battlefields" report.

In addition to the "10 most endangered battlefields for 2008, the trust also announced 15 "At Risk" sites at a new conference March 12th at the National Press Club. Platinum selling recording artist Trace Adkins, a student of history and supporter of battlefield preservation, was the keynote speaker.

The great-great grandson of a 31st Louisiana Infantry soldier who was wounded and taken prisoner at Vicksburg, Adkins said, "I've been a Civil War enthusiast all my life. When I visited the battlefield in Vicksburg and stood in a trench where my great-great granddaddy stood, tears came to my eyes. As a father of five, I believe it is critical that I protect a legacy that belongs not to just my family but to our entire nation."

CWPT trustee Cricket Bauer Pohanka, wife of the late Civil War historian Brian Pohanka, a founder of CWPT, added, "preserved battlefields are not just beautiful landscapes, they are outdoor classrooms that teach us what it means to be an American."

In a departure from the usual event, CWPT then shifted its focus to Arlington Cemetery, where Adkins and CWPT President James Lighthizer laid a wreath at the large Memorial near Arlington House, once Confederate General Robert E. Lee's home, commemorating the uniform Civil War dead.

At Antietam, considered one of the best preserved of the war's major battlefields, a communications company is proposing a 120-foot cell tower about a mile from the park visitor center. Superintendent John Howard said the tower would be "quite visible" from key parts of the battlefield

Antietam. September 17, 1862 has the dubious distinction as "the bloodiest single day in American history," with more than 23,000 casualties. Fresh from a victory at Second Bull Run in late August Lee determined to bring the war to the North. The CWPT report noted that the result of the battle was inconclusive, but photographs of the dead "allowed Americans to see for the first time the true horror of war."

Some 35 miles from Antietam is Monocacy where officials in Frederick County, Maryland are considering construction of a trash incinerator that would sit literally within yards of the park boundary. Superintendent Susan Trail said the 150 to 170 foot smokestack would loom over much of the battlefield.

Dubbed "the battle that saved Washington", the fighting on July 9, 1864, along this Monocacy River delayed the advance of Confederate forces upon the capital long enough for reinforcements to bolster the defenses.

CWPT identified two other threats to Monocacy National Battlefield. Interstate 270, which cuts through the heart of the Battlefield, is choked with commuter traffic and officials are considering widening it.

The site is also one of 16 battlefields in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia that lie within a federal "NATIONAL INTEREST ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION CORRIDOR." The designation could allow 15 story high voltage towers to cross historic landscapes.

Others in CWPT's top 10 list of endangered battlefields: Cedar Creek, Virginia, where local activists are fighting a plan to expand limestone mining on 639 acres adjacent to Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park. The acreage proposed for mining is 60% core battlefield according to the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation a "Plan B" put forward by battlefield supporters would protect the more significant land while allowing mining to proceed on 158 acres – including a vein of limestone they say is

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www.thecwrt.org

The only requirement for membership in The Round Table is a genuine interest in the Civil War and its era. For information, address Membership Committee, 9670 N. Dee #205 Des Plaines, Illinois 60016, or contact bsallardice1@earthlink.net.



rich enough to last three decades.

On October 19, 1864, Confederate forces under General Jubal Early attacked unprepared troops under Union General Philip Sheridan, nearly driving them from the field. A timely northern counter attack turned the tide and won the Shenandoah Valley for the Union.

Cold Harbor, Virginia where only about 300 acres of what was once at least a 7,500 acre battlefield is protected, and development pressure nearby Richmond is on the increase. In 2007 the Hanover County Board of Supervisors approved a new comprehensive plan that doubles the housing density allowed on the northern portion of the battlefield. Some of the land lies within the boundary of Richmond National Battlefield Park.

In one of the war's most lopsided victories, in this final battle of the 1864 Overland Campaign heavily entrenched Confederates repulsed repeated assaults by a Union army nearly twice their size. Union General Ulysses Grant later remarked that he regretted ever making the final assault at Cold Harbor, where his forces suffered casualties at more than four times the rate of the Southerners.

April Meeting

BY TOM TRESMOTT

On April 11, Jennifer Weber spoke to 64 members and guests at the 670th regular meeting of the Civil War Round Table on "Copperheads", based on her recent book, Copperheads: The Rise and Fall of Lincoln's Opponents in the North. Her talk reminded everybody that the Civil War was not just a brothers' war, but also a neighbors' war, one where neighbors began to suspect each other. She further reminded the group that Abraham Lincoln fought a two-front war --- one with guns, one with political wiles.

Only four books have been written about "Copperheads". In the most prominent of these, The Copperheads in the Middle West (Chicago: 1960), author Frank L. Klement portrayed them as marginalized and benign. Professor Weber argues that they were central to Northern politics during the war and had a huge impact, especially in 1864. Their support waxed and waned in inverse proportion to the Union war effort, and at times they were extraordinarily powerful, especially when there were Federal debacles on the battlefield.

Who were the Peace Democrats, or Copperheads? They came from three groups: migrants from the South to the North, or of Southern decent, in the lower Midwest: immigrants, especially Irish or German Catholics, with no love of the Republican Party and Nativist elements --- it was "not their war"; and conservative Jacksonians --- "strict constructionists", words which became *lingua franca* of the Copperheads. Most were not traitors (although Clement Vallandigham was), but had a genuine difference of opinion with the Lincoln administration, and wanted power through traditional means. They believed that secession was constitutional, since there was nothing in the Constitution prohibiting it. They also believed in the Crittenden Compromise, the unsuccessful 1861 effort to avoid civil war through congressional action.

During the first year of the war Copperhead patterns developed, such as questioning the legality of the war, the depiction of Lincoln as a tyrant, and the demand for immediate cessation of hostilities. However, they had two serious

problems: they refused to say what they would be willing to give up in compromise, and they refused to listen to what was being said by the Confederates in regard to how seriously they wanted independence.

By the summer of 1862 the Union cause was wavering, and the Copperheads were becoming more visible. They were virulently racist, claiming abolitionists started the war, and with immigrants getting nervous about the perceived black threat to their jobs, race riots occurred in Toledo, New York, and other cities. The issuing of the Emancipation Proclamation showed, to the Copperheads, that the war was being fought to free the slaves, and many Democrats on the fence joined their ranks. The Republicans did not do well in the 1862 Congressional elections, and New York and New Jersey elected Copperhead governors. Enlistments were drying up, and it was rumored that the Old Northwest was going to break off from the Union or join the Confederacy.

In March of 1863 the Draft Act was passed, angering the anti-war Democrats. Provost General offices were established in every congressional district, as the federal government reached into people's lives for the first time. The Copperheads tapped into the resentment this generated, encouraging draft dodging and scarring off or physically attacking draft agents; in fact, 64 such officials were killed. The use of black troops shortly thereafter further reinforced the Copperhead belief that the objective of the war was to free the slaves.

July of 1863 began with the huge twin victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, but then the draft riot broke out in New York City, which soon became a race riot. Similar riots occurred in Boston and other cities. Meanwhile notorious Copperhead Clement Vallandigham ran for Governor of Ohio. Asking why whites were dying for blacks, and using the slogan "The Constitution as it is, the Union as it was", it seemed that civil war would break out in Ohio if he won. In the election that fall, however, Vallandigham lost decisively; the Ohio soldiers hated him and voted accordingly, with a threat of

violence toward him and his supporters because of their lack of support for them.

Lincoln was confident entering 1864, but then things didn't go so well. The Union suffered 64,000 casualties as the Overland and Atlanta Campaigns bogged down. The Copperheads screamed for an end to the war, and Congressman Alexander Long (D-Ohio) proclaimed "The Union is lost". Lincoln even had his cabinet sign the "Blind Memorandum" in anticipation of electoral defeat. Many in the North blamed Lincoln for the continuation of the war, and believed he needed to drop emancipation as a war aim; in fact many Republicans said that Lincoln should go to the Democrats saying that he would do just that, in order to get their support. But Lincoln couldn't do that --- he would rather be right than president, and by breaking his pledge, he felt he would be damned for eternity.

The Democrats came to Chicago that August, and nominated George B. McClellan and George A. Pendleton, with Vallandigham writing the platform. They were feeling cocky; then Sherman took Atlanta and Sheridan triumphed in the Shenandoah. Lincoln won re-election with 82% of the soldier vote. The Democrats were hoisted on their own petard, and would bear throughout the 1800s the burden of being the party against the war to save the Union.

In conclusion, the Copperheads at times undermined the war effort, were central to Northern politics during the entire war, and (for the most part) tried to acquire power via traditional means. We need to understand them in order to understand Northern politics, the Northern home front, and the true dimensions of Lincoln's struggle.

A recording of this (and every) meeting is available from Hal Ardell, audio librarian. Contact Hal at (773) 774-6781 or hal229@ameritech.net

GRAPESHOT



Past president **Roger Bohn** recently made living-history presentations to the Wheaton College ROTC, the Westchester Prairie House Association, St. Dorothy's School in Chicago, and the Civil War class at the College of DuPage.

On May 6 at 7 p.m. Dr. Kent Gramm will speak on "The Perfect Tribute: Lincoln & The Gettysburg Address" at the **Blue Island CWRT**, 12804 Highland Ave., Blue Island. Tickets are \$5 and include dessert. For more information, phone (708) 385-3304 or visit www.blueislandparks.org.

Lincoln scholar Frank Williams will speak on "The Debates: 150 Years Later" at the annual meeting of the **Stephen A. Douglas Association** on June 7th at the Union League Club. The noon luncheon will be preceded by ceremonies at the Douglas tomb. For more information visit www.stephenadouglas.org, or call Dave Richert at (773) 761-6937.

Larry Hewitt and Frank Patton will give a presentation on the Vicksburg Campaign at the **Union League Club CWRT** Tuesday, May 6. The event begins with a reception at 11:30 am, followed by lunch and the program. Cost is \$25. For more information, contact Frank Patton at fpatton@sharedecisions.net.

Know of any upcoming talks, events, or publications? All members are welcome to contribute items to the newsletter. Contact the editor at bsallardice1@earthlink.net or (847) 375-8305.

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Fifty-seven 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.

CWRT Nominations

The nominating committee, composed of past CWRT presidents, has put together a slate of nominees for the CWRT Executive committee for the 2008-09 year.

Jerry Allen, President
 Tom Trescott, Senior Vice President
 Rae Radovich, First Vice President
 Bob Stoller, Second Vice President
 Brian Seiter, Treasurer
 Mark Matranga, Assistant Treasurer
 Donna Tuohy, Secretary
 Marybeth Foley, Assistant Secretary
 Trustees, terms to expire in 2010: Joellen Kowalski, John Kociolko, Paula Walker, Bill Sawisch

The **Northern Illinois CWRT** will hold its 25th annual banquet meeting Friday, June 6th, at Concorde Banquets, 20922 N. Rand Road, Kildeer. Tom Cartwright, the Franklin, TN historian who we know so well, will be the featured speaker. For reservations phone Tom De Franco at (708) 456-2941.

CWRT News

At our April 11th regular meeting, President Roger Rudich presented a tribute silver medallion to Roz Sanderman and her two sons, Stuart and Larry. The medallion reads, "In Memorium. MARVIN SANDERMAN. Lifetime Achievement Award. April 11, 2008". Jerry Allen made a few very appropriate remarks, expressing the feeling of all CWRT members on how much we miss Marvin.

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*.

May 9: **Vernon Burton**, "The Age of Lincoln"
June 13: **Bill Farina**, "U. S. Grant"
Sept. 12: **Pete Cozzens**, "The 1862 Valley Campaign"
Oct. 17: **Gloria Swift**, TBD
Nov. 14: **Rick Hatcher**, TBD
Dec. 12: **Craig Symonds**, TBD
Jan. 9, 2009: **James Ogden** of the Chickamauga NBP, TBD
Feb. 13: Nevins Freeman Address. **Bruce Allardice**, "Lincoln as a War Leader"

Bjorn Skaptason at the **Abraham Lincoln Book Shop** reminds us that the ALBS has some signed copies of May speaker Vernon Burton's well-reviewed book, The Age of Lincoln. You can purchase a signed first edition of the book for \$27 by phoning the ALBS at (312) 944-3085.

The next "Virtual Book Signing" will be May 17th at noon, and feature noted author Glenn LaFantasie. For more information, visit www.alincolnbookshop.com