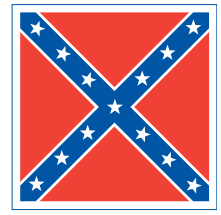


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

Volume LXX, Number 4

Chicago, Illinois

December, 2009



686th REGULAR MEETING

Brooks Davis

on

“Lincoln and Davis as War Leaders”

★★★★★

Friday, December 11

★★★★★

HOLIDAY INN MART PLAZA

350 NORTH ORLEANS STREET

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$40 - Members/Non-members

*Entrée: Prime Rib of Beef,
Salmon, Vegetarian Plate or
Fruit Plate*

please note

Make your reservations by Monday, Dec. 7 by calling 630 460-1865, or emailing chicagocwrttdinner@earthlink.net, 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 \$5 per person.

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

Brooks Davis on Lincoln and Davis as War Leaders

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

They were born in similar frontier cabins in rural Kentucky, at about the same time and within 100 miles of each other. But at an early age both their families left Kentucky, the one to move south to Mississippi, the other north, to eventually settle in Illinois.

Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis shared a common Kentucky background, but developed into strikingly opposite personalities with strikingly opposite views on most of the great issues of the day. Both became spokesmen for their regional interests. Reluctantly, both became presidents at a time when Americans warred with Americans, a war neither leader sought, but neither leader shirked.

On December 11th, our friend Brooks Davis will explore how these two different leaders struggled with the complex and daunting tasks of leading a nation in a time of war. The two had contrasting backgrounds, contrasting management styles, contrasting political and oratorical skills, and (in many ways) quite contrasting tasks. Was either, or both, the “Indispensable Man” to his country? Would the outcome of



Brooks Davis

the war been different under different leaders?

Brooks Davis has been a member of the Civil War Round Table of Chicago for 50+ years, making him perhaps the CWRT’s most senior member. Brooks was CWRT president in 1965-66, and a winner of the Nevins-Freeman Award.

Brooks Davis has been a student and teacher of Abraham Lincoln for over fifty years. He is currently an instructor in American History at the Osher Lifelong Institute of Learning at Northwestern University, chair-

man of the Stephen A. Douglas Association and member of the Abraham Lincoln Association Board of Directors. He was regent of the Lincoln Academy of Illinois from 1982 to 1992. Part of his work in education includes twenty-eight years of service as a member of the Lincoln College Board of Directors including six of those as chairman with emphasis on building the college’s Lincoln-Civil War Museum.



Battlefield Preservation

BY DAVID ZUCKER

WINCHESTER, Va. – On Sept. 18, one day short of the 145th anniversary of the Battle of Third Winchester, government officials and historic preservation groups gathered to celebrate the acquisition and protection of a major piece of that battlefield, the Huntsberry Farm.

The Battle of Third Winchester (also called Opequon, after a nearby creek) was “the largest and most costly battle fought in the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley,” according to W. Denman Zirkle, executive director of the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation (SVBF). “It was the battle that presaged the loss of the Shenandoah Valley for the Confederacy.”

A coalition of groups pooled \$3.35 million to purchase the two tracts totaling 209.81 acres, which comprise Huntsberry Farm. The SVBF closed on the transaction Aug. 7, 2009. The two properties are currently assessed at a combined total of \$314,700 according to Frederick County real estate tax records.

The National Park Service American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) contributed \$1.23 million; the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation (funded by the Commonwealth) \$1 million; the SVBT \$628,000; the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) \$380,000; and Frederick County gave \$112,000 from its Historic and Open Space Preservation Fund.

The farm’s nearly 210 acres combine nicely with adjacent battlefield land owned by the SVBF (144 acres) and CWPT (222 acres) to form over 575 contiguous acres of the battlefield. This is far from saving the entire battlefield, though. The core area cited in Lowe’s study is 4,914 acres.

The celebratory press conference was hosted on the Huntsberry Farm by the SVBF and CWPT. In his opening remarks Zirkle addressed a

claim sometimes made by opponents of battlefield preservation – most recently heard during the debate over the proposed Wal-mart Supercenter at the entrance to the Wilderness Battlefield in Orange County, Va.

“I recently read an article indicating that if we preserved every piece of ground in Virginia on which blood was shed in the Civil War, a huge portion of our Commonwealth would be untouchable. Nothing could be further from the truth,” Zirkle said.

“The truth is that about 1.8 percent of Virginia is comprised of battlefields and we are losing them daily. To illustrate our challenge, that same figure, 1.8 percent, represents the amount of land actually lost to commercial and residential development during one five-year period in the heady days of the late 1990s.”

Zirkle noted more than 6,000 acres have been preserved to date in the Shenandoah Valley. “We have over 14,000 acres that have not been protected, much of which is headed for development if we do not act within the next few years. And some of these are prime battlefield areas, such as Port Republic and Cross Keys and Rockingham County and others,” he said.

CWPT chairman emeritus Theodore Sedgwick recalled that the first transaction of CWPT’s predecessor organization, the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites, was 222 acres at Third Winchester for \$2.5 million in 1995.

He pointed out the national scope of the CWPT’s work and how it has saved 28,000 acres of Civil War battlefield land across the country. Of that total, 13,000 acres are in Virginia and 1,200 of those acres are in Frederick County.

The American Battlefield Protection Program is the Department of the Interior’s legislative instrument for assisting communities to identify

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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, 1039 Hinswood

Darien, Illinois 60561, or contact
bsa1861@att.net.

and preserve their battlefields, its chief, Paul Hawke, explained.

It covers other wars fought in America, such as the Revolutionary War and War of 1812. The ABPP has saved 16,000 acres of battlefield land in the U.S., 7,000 of which are in Virginia, Hawke said.

Kathleen S. Kilpatrick, director of the state’s Department of Historic Resources, called the celebration “a great day for the Commonwealth and the nation.”

“We see the Huntsberry Farm acquisition as transforming the Third Winchester Battlefield from an afterthought for visitors to a genuine tourism destination,” CWPT spokesman Jim Campi recently told Civil War News last fall. “Visitors can lose themselves for hours in the unique history of this site.”

A stop on the Civil War Discovery Trail, CWPT’s 222 acres have signage and trails open to the public from dawn to dusk. The SVBT’s original 144 acres and the Huntsberry Farm land are not yet accessible to the public.

(from Nov. *Civil War News*)

November Meeting

BY JACQUELINE WILSON

On November 13th, at the 685th meeting of the Civil War Round Table before 75 members and guests, historian Pat Schroeder covered some of the most interesting aspects of Appomattox, from his books *Thirty Myths about Lee's Surrender* and *More Myths about Lee's Surrender*. Mr. Schroeder has been the National Park Historian for the Appomattox Court House National Historical Park since 2002.

Schroeder began his talk by comparing the tales of the surrender to the childhood game of Telephone. One person starts a story by whispering in the ear of the child next to her, and by the time the tale reaches the last child it has no resemblance to the original story. Historians also perpetuate the myths.

Some of the myths are obviously fabrications, such as that Lee and Grant were classmates at West Point. The truth is they were never there at the same time. Lee attended from 1825 to 1829. Grant was there from 1839 to 1843. Lee did not become the Superintendent of the military academy until 1852. After discussing the troop movements of both Grant and Lee during the final campaign, Schroeder talked about the actual surrender.

The biggest problem Lee faced was getting the rations to the Confederate troops. When Lee and the troops reached Farmville, VA, rations were ready to be distributed, but Grant and the Union Army appeared too soon and the rations had to be sent westward. Lee wanted them to go to Amelia Courthouse,

but somehow the orders were never forwarded to the supply train. When the army reached the Appomattox Courthouse area, there were no rations available for the troops. The idea that Lee's army at Appomattox only numbered 10,000 is also a myth. He had about 25,000. This also meant that there were a lot more men to feed and the rations had still not appeared. Why did Lee tell Jefferson Davis, in a letter sent during the campaign, that he only had 10,000? Schroeder believes that Lee wanted to prepare Davis for the end of the Army of Virginia. Which leads to another myth.

Where was Lee really going on that fateful march? The myth is that he was heading for Lynchburg. But in reality he was heading towards Danville and a connection with General Joe Johnston. But Grant outflanked Lee. Was there fighting at Appomattox Courthouse and Station? Yes there was, contrary to popular belief. Fighting first occurred on the evening of April 8 and on the morning of April 9. And yes, there were casualties. One myth of the surrender indicated that only a slave girl named Hannah was killed.

Of course, this leads to more tales of who was the last casualty of the Virginia campaign. Several soldiers are considered to be the last. One was Hiram Clark who was sick and in the hospital who did not need to be on the march, but he left his sickbed to join his unit. William Montgomery, who many have claimed was only 15, was mortally wounded but did not die until April 29 and Thomas Bennett who did not die until May 21, 1868.

Additionally there is the myth of where the surrender actually took place - under an apple tree or in the Courthouse building. Neither is correct. Grant and Lee met in the Wilmer McLean house. Prior to that meeting Lee had met with Colonel Babcock of Grant's staff while Lee was resting under an apple tree. Many soldiers made the mistake of thinking that Babcock was Grant. After the surrender of the troops, the fate of the apple tree was not kind. It was reduced to kindling - even the roots were taken as souvenirs.

One of the favorite myths is the one that said Grant was improperly dressed and therefore was disrespectful of Lee. Nothing could be further from the truth. Grant was every bit as respectful as he could be, considering he rode with his men and had been riding for about 22 miles when the two met. Lee had time to clean up and change his clothes before the meeting. Nor did Grant have his baggage with him so that he could change into a clean uniform. Schroeder did not believe Lee or anyone on his staff took offense.

Mr. Schroeder ended his talk by telling what happened to the various pieces of furniture from the McLean house as well as what is currently happening at the historic site in way of preservation

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



Current CWRT Officers

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 Website Development: Bruce Allardice
 2010 Tour: Rae Radovich

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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.

Upcoming Civil War Events

- Dec. 2, Kankakee Valley CWRT:
 Wayne Wolf on "Firsts in the Civil War"
 Dec. 2, Lake County CWRT: Annual
 Christmas Party
 Dec. 4, Northern Illinois CWRT: Sarah
 McDougall on "Gouverneur K. Warren:
 Beyond Little Round Top"
 Dec. 4, Salt Creek CWRT: Memorabilia
 Show and Tell
 Dec. 6, Milwaukee CWRT: Christmas Gala
 Dec. 8, McHenry Co. CWRT: MCCWRT
 Annual Christmas Party
 Dec. 12, Kenosha Civil War Museum,
 12-4 p.m.: 2nd Annual "A Civil War
 Christmas".
 Visit www.thecivilwarmuseum.org for
 more details.
 Dec. 17, South Suburban CWRT: Annual
 Christmas Party and News Conference

Thanks to a recent gift of a set of *The Official Records of the Civil War*, the Chicago, Salt Creek and Northern Illinois CWRTs were able to make a joint donation of \$1,000 to the CWPT. The combined CWRTs thank the Estate of Robert L. Coleman for that gift.

Know of any upcoming talks, events, or publications? All members are welcome to contribute items to the newsletter. Contact the editor at bsa1861@att.net or (630) 297-8046.

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*.

Dec. 11: **Brooks Davis**, "Lincoln and Davis as War Leaders"

Jan. 8, 2010: **Rob Girardi**, "Railroad Defense in the Atlanta Campaign"

Feb. 12: **Paul Finkelman**, "Lincoln and Emancipation"

March 12: **Eric Jacobson**, "The Battle of Franklin"

April 9: **David O. Stewart**, "The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson"

May 14: **William W. Freeling**, "The Strange, Difficult Triumph of Southern Secession"

June 11: **John V. Quarstein**, "Battle of the Ironclads"

Bjorn Skaptason at the Abraham Lincoln Book Shop reminds us that the next "Virtual Book Signing" will be noon, Dec. 5th, with **Dave Powell** talking about his new book, [The Maps of Chickamauga: An Atlas of the Chickamauga Campaign](#). For more information on this and upcoming events, visit www.virtualbooksigning.net or www.alincolnbookshop.com.

Happy Holidays!