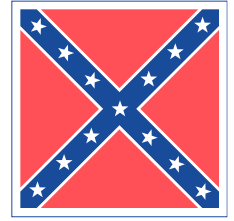


# THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Founded December 3, 1940



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## *Dan Van Haften and David Hirsch on "Abraham Lincoln and the Structure of Reason"*



Approximately 16,000 books have been written about Abraham Lincoln, arguably our greatest President. Is there anything new to say about him? Surprisingly, the answer is: yes! In their highly original book, Abraham Lincoln and the Structure of Reason, David Hirsch and Dan Van Haften offer a fresh perspective on Lincoln's oratory, as a lawyer and as a politician. The conventional wisdom is that Lincoln used colorful phrases, flowery oratory, and funny stories to persuade and charm his listeners. Hirsch and Van Haften offer a radically different perspective: that the key to Lincoln's success was intellectual fidelity to the principles of Euclid, the Greek mathematician and logician.

much of his substantive post-1853 communication.

Their book reveals the six element structure of the Cooper Union speech which helped make Lincoln president. It offers a startling revelation about the Declaration of Independence that connects Lincoln to Thomas Jefferson more closely than previously realized. And it shows how the structure of the legal system itself played an important role in Lincoln's greatness.

Batavia's Daniel Van Haften, an engineer and Michigan State graduate, retired from Alcatel-Lucent in November, 2007. During his career at Bell Laboratories, AT&T, Lucent, and Alcatel-Lucent Dan



worked on developing and testing telecommunication systems. David Hirsch is an attorney in Des Moines, Iowa. He has a BS from Michigan State University and a JD, with distinction, from the University of Iowa College of Law. Hirsch co-authored the technology column for the American Bar Association Journal for over a decade. They have co-authored Barack Obama, Abraham Lincoln and the Structure of Reason and The Ultimate Guide to the Gettysburg Address.



### **777th REGULAR MEETING**

★★★★★

Friday, December 14th

★★★★★

HOLIDAY INN O'HARE  
5615N. CUMBERLAND, CHICAGO

*Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.*

*Dinner at 6:30 p.m.*

**\$40 - Members/Non-members**

*ENTRÉE*  
BUFFET STYLE.

## PRESERVATION NEWS

“Dear friend and fellow battlefield preservationist,

Whether you gave to Seminary Ridge for Remembrance Day, Giving Tuesday, or otherwise, I’m here to let you know it’s making a difference. In the past week or so, we have made significant progress with matching funds. We raised more than \$5,000 during our Remembrance Day Fundraiser, more than \$10,000 for Giving Tuesday on Facebook and a whopping \$38,000 on our website. With the matching funds added, this amounts to nearly \$75,000 in one week! This is incredible. Thanks to you, the finish line is in sight towards our march to save these 18 crucial acres at Gettysburg.

We’ve still got work to do to cross the finish line in the coming weeks, but we’re grateful for those who’ve helped keep up the important momentum toward our goal of securing this hallowed ground for generations to come. (Remember, if you’ve given \$100 or more on our website, you should soon see your name on our Seminary Ridge Virtual Donor Wall!)

Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for your critical role in safeguarding our American legacy.

‘Til the Battle is Won,

Jim Lighthizer

President

American Battlefield Trust”

From The American Battlefields Trust:

As a new year rapidly approaches, we have a big goal for 2018. Right now, we have the chance to save 317 acres at 5 Civil War battlefields in 4 states!

The total value of the tracts at stake is \$4,460,280, which would be a very hefty lift for our organization. Fortunately, generous public and private matching funds will allow us to save all 317 acres for just \$136,222. That means every \$1.00 you can commit today will be multiplied into \$32.74.

The land we hope to save in this campaign includes tracts at Fort Blakely in Alabama, where we can save 59 acres, 6 acres at Wilson’s Creek in Missouri, 201 acres at Rappahannock Station in Virginia and 51 acres combined at

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1039 Hinswood  
Darien, Illinois 60561  
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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.



Averasboro and Bentonville in North Carolina. The first of the battles fought on these tracts was at Wilson’s Creek just four months after the Civil War began. The last was fought at Bentonville a month before the war effectively ended at Appomattox Court House.

What each of these 317 acres has in common is its rightful place in a complex picture that helps us to understand of one of the most significant conflicts in our nation’s history.

Every student of history should have the chance to walk these battlefields and know what happened there.

*Please consider making your most generous gift today to help us raise the \$136,222 we need to secure these critical tracts.*

## NOVEMBER MEETING

By Mark Matranga

Paul Kahan provided a lively discussion of “The Presidency of Ulysses S. Grant” at the 776th Regular Meeting of The Round Table on November 9, 2018. Kahan pointed out that Grant’s Memoirs do not include his presidency, which implies that Grant was not enamored of his time in the White House. Of course, his administration struggled with Reconstruction, one of the most violent periods in our history. Indeed, Kahan argues, Reconstruction was a continuation of the civil war. The South was devastated by the war; once the wealthiest portion of the country, now the poorest. Thus the task of bringing the rebellious states back into the Union and enforcing the Civil War Amendments caused the nation’s problems to ‘bleed,’ literally as well as figuratively, into Grant’s presidency.

The war did not end at Appomattox. The relationship between the formerly seceded states, the status of former slaves, and the position of those who took up arms against the federal government were issues not settled by the war. The Republican Party, having accomplished the abolition of slavery, broke into factions, with the Sumner wing advocating punishment of the South, while War Democrats reverted to their ante-bellum stance and supported a more lenient approach. This dichotomy and the growing power of Congress generated difficulty for Grant in administering Reconstruction. But notwithstanding this, the post-war period was one of Congressional supremacy. Congress reacted strongly to the Johnson administration which

started a trend against what in the ante bellum period had been an ascendant Presidency.

Many considered Grant malleable because he was considered non-political, something Kahan believes is not correct as Grant certainly maneuvered quite deftly through the war years. And he pursued many positive policies such as purging corrupt Indian agents, thwarting Jay Gould’s attempt to corner the gold market through the use of executive power, and crushing the Ku Klux Klan. He created a Department of Justice charged with enforcing the rights of newly freed slaves. And with the Treaty of Washington he reinvigorated relations with England which had been rocky due to England’s support for the Confederacy.

In fact, Grant had been so successful that his only opposition for election in 1872 came from within his own party. But lurking beneath this were problems. His opponent in 1868 won the majority of the white vote and the Republican Party was splitting into factions. Several events caused his second administration to come under siege. Congress deflated the currency and reduced support for Reconstruction, making the government’s task in securing the rights of citizenship more difficult. The Panic of 1873 jolted the nation and ushered in a long period of economic contraction. In 1874, the Democrats took over the House of Representatives and began a series of investigations into the Grant administration. Some of these were in retribution for some

of Grant’s actions, but Kahan made clear that there was scandal enough in the administration to support the investigations. These led to the popular vote defeat of the party in 1876; Hayes was elected by a Commission when the Republicans agreed to end Reconstruction.

Kahan considers Grant’s presidency middling albeit the common conception of his administration has been less than lukewarm. He attributes this to a combination of Grant taking the blame for Reconstruction and the wave of reconciliation which spread through the country later in the century. Reconstruction was considered a failed experiment, one that went too far, and Grant was tagged with this loss. Kahan cites the ‘Sumner’ version of Reconstruction taking hold, leaving Grant without support in the historiography of the period. This was in part due to the fact that Grant’s papers were not collected and published until over a century later. And the void in his memoirs also contributed to this effect. Nonetheless, Kahan states there was a vacuum for Grant’s narrative, leaving the public with a perception of his presidency as a failed, scandal ridden one.

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### SAVE THE DATE!

The 2019 Battlefield Tour of Vicksburg will be May 2-5, 2019. Ed Bearss and Terry Winschel will be our guides—and you can’t get better than those two! More information will be forthcoming.

## GRAPESHOT



The next “Friday Lunch Box” event at the Kenosha Civil War Museum will be at noon on Friday, Dec. 14th, with Bruce Allardice presenting “War is Hell: Sherman’s March to the Sea.” For more on programs at the museum, visit <https://museums.kenosha.org/civilwar/events/>



Happy Holidays!

Civil War soldiers in camp and their families at home drew comfort from the same sorts of traditions that characterize Christmas today.

By the mid-19th century, most of today’s familiar Christmas trappings – Christmas carols, gift giving and tree decoration – were already in place. Charles Dickens had published “A Christmas Carol” in 1843 and indeed, the Civil War saw the first introductions to the modern image of a jolly and portly Santa Claus through the drawings of Thomas Nast, a German-speaking immigrant.

Happy Holidays!



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](mailto:editor@chicagocwrt.org) or (630) 297-8046.

### PLEASE NOTE

Make your reservations by Sunday, Dec 9, by emailing [dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org](mailto:dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org), or calling 630 460-1865 with the names of your party.

If a cancellation becomes necessary after dinner reservations have been made, please email us at [dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org](mailto:dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org) and/or call us at 630-460-1865.

We are offering the option of choosing not to have dinner and coming only for the address at 7:15 p.m., for a charge of \$10 per person.

Parking at the Holiday Inn is FREE.

### More Upcoming Civil War Events

Dec. 5th, Kankakee Valley CWRT:

Don Chamberlain on “Civil War Ironclads and Naval Battles”

Dec. 7th, Northern Illinois CWRT:

Ed Bearss on “Remembering Illinois’ Civil War Heroes”

Dec. 13th, **Milwaukee CWRT:** David

Hirsch and Dan Van Haften on “Abraham Lincoln and the Structure of Reason”

Dec. 18th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT:

Steve Magnusen on “To My Best Girl: Courage, Honor and Love in the Civil War”

Dec. 20th, South Suburban CWRT:

Holiday Party, at Aurelio’s in Frankfort

### Bulletin Board



### FUTURE MEETINGS

Regular meetings are held at the Holiday Inn O’Hare, the second Friday of each month, *unless otherwise indicated.*

Jan. 11th, 2019: Bjorn Skaptasan on “Henry Morton Stanley at Shiloh”

Feb. 8th: Rob Girardi on “Gouverneur K. Warren’s Last Battle”

Mar. 8th: Horace Mewborn on “Col. Elijah White”

Apr. 12th: Brad Gottfried on “Maps of the Fredericksburg Campaign”

May 10th: John Horn on “The Petersburg Regiment: the 12th Virginia”

June 14th: Greg Biggs, “The Nevins-Freeman Address: Logistics of the Atlanta Campaign”



### AUTHOR’S VOICE

Join us online on December 6th at 3:30 pm (Central) when we welcome Professor Timothy Smith to A House Divided. Daniel Weinberg, owner and president of Abraham Lincoln Book Shop, Inc. will talk with Smith about his latest book. The Real Horse Soldiers: Benjamin Grierson’s Epic 1863 Civil War Raid Through Mississippi. Other programs this month (also at 3:30) are December 13th with Sean Wilentz on his new book No Property in Man, and December 21st with Aaron Sheehan-Dean on his book The Calculus of Violence. Visit <http://alincolnbookshop.com/> for more information on upcoming events.