

THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



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Chicago, Illinois

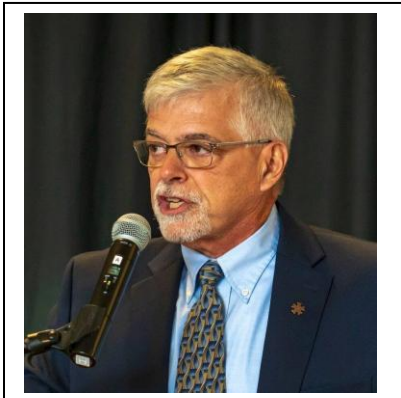
April 2025

836th REGULAR MEETING, Wednesday, April 9th, 2025

Phil Spaugy on

The 19th Indiana and the Iron Brigade

**Live/Zoom Meeting. Time: Apr. 9th, 2025, 07:30 PM CST.
Zoom Option ID 845 3227 1496; No Passcode needed**



The Iron Brigade is usually thought of as a Wisconsin unit, but the 19th Indiana Infantry was a part of this storied brigade. At the Battle of Gettysburg, the 19th was led Colonel Samuel J. Williams, a farmer from Selma, Indiana who was originally from Virginia. Williams was wounded on July 1st. He returned to command of the regiment and would be killed at the Battle of the Wilderness on May 6, 1864.

The regiment brought 339 men to the field and lost 27 killed, 133 wounded and 50 missing. This 62% casualty rate shows the vicious fighting along Willoughby Run and during the retreat to Seminary Ridge on July 1st, where the 19th Indiana served on the exposed left flank of the brigade. Five regimental color bearers were killed or wounded on July 1st.

Phil Spaugy has been a member of the North South Skirmish Association (N-SSA) since 1978 and as such has live fired almost every type of American Civil War firearm. He studies arms and accouterments of federal infantry soldiers with an emphasis on his home state of Ohio, the arms altered in 1861 by Miles Greenwood and the arms of the U.S. Arsenal at Harpers Ferry. He has a special interest in the study of the Black Hatted Iron Brigade of the West.

Phil is a retired general aviation services company owner who lives in Vandalia, Ohio, with his wife, Amy.

Phil serves as a senior editor for *Military Images* magazine, Arms Columnist for *The Civil War Monitor* and as a historical consultant to both the Adams County Historical Society and *Civil War News* magazine.

Battlefield Preservation

Dear ____:

... It's been 23 months since the Orange County Board of Supervisors voted on [a flawed rezoning proposal that stands to completely overwhelm the gateway to this important battlefield](#) [the Wilderness] and national park unit with data centers, distribution warehouses, industrial development and thousands of residential units.

It's been 22 months, since the American Battlefield Trust, the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust, Friend of Wilderness Battlefield and several private landowners filed a lawsuit in the aftermath.

And *just last Friday* we had a significant milestone in the case with a hearing on the county's motion to see it dismissed, as well as an effort to block the admission of "friend of the court" briefs filed by other conservation organizations.

[The hearing went all afternoon and into the evening](#) – the only member of the Board of Supervisors to attend in person exited before the judge finally adjourned. [And although he did determine that those important briefs from our allies would become part of the case's record, he did not issue a decision on whether the case would move forward to trial.](#)

I have to respect this approach. In addition to the hours of arguments he heard live, there are literally thousands of pages of documentation to digest in order to have a fully formed opinion. Lawyers and historians both believe in thorough documentation, after all! So as nice as it might have been to share a more decisive update with you, I appreciate it's important to take a thoughtful and considerate approach to a complex topic.

The judge indicated he would take at least a month to issue his written opinion. If he rules in our favor, the case will proceed to trial; if he doesn't [as with the Prince William Digital Gateway](#), we will look at our options for appeal.

And so we wait, knowing that we will fight it out on this line if it takes all summer, all year or even longer. The destruction of hallowed ground through ill-sited proposals and haphazard processes is too important an issue for us to stand down.

'Til the battle is won.

David Duncan, President, American Battlefield Trust

March Presentation

By Mark Matranga

Long before Podcasts were *Podcasts*, Gerald Prokopowicz was doing them. It was 2004 when he was approached to conduct a talk show format on Civil War topics. Since then, he has hosted over 800 interviews with a wide variety of authors as well as re-enactors, musicians, and collectors, among others, all with the central theme of the Civil War. Thus was born “Civil War Talk Radio,” this eponymous program and the subject of his presentation to The Civil War Round Table at its 835th Regular Meeting on March 14, 2025.

Prokopowicz did not attempt to summarize the many stories that unfolded during his shows, although there was the rather bizarre interview with two sisters, college graduates who had extremely limited knowledge of the Civil War who had produced a book with photographs of bearded generals – he described the episode as “the longest fifty minutes I’ve ever spent behind a microphone.” He related the history of CWTR as it evolved through the years. Subject to several corporate changes and mergers, the show was alternately available for free and, more recently, as a subscription device. But throughout the more than twenty years he has hosted the show he has welcomed almost all comers, not shying away from controversy but steering clear of some who may exhibit disinformation tendencies.

Prokopowicz’s main approach has been to witness scholarly trends, the movement in research now affecting the writing and presentation of Civil War history by both academics and non-professionals. In academia, there has been a balkanization in studies toward race, sex, and gender, with less emphasis on the traditional focus of campaigns, battles, and leaders which accompanied discussions of the causes of the war and the major political leaders who created and attempted to defuse the crisis of the union. Now academic publications *Civil War History* (Kent State Press) and *The Journal of the Civil War Era* (University of North Carolina Press) post reviews of books with titles such as *The Democratic Collapse: How Gender Politics Broke a Party and a*

Nation 1856-1861(reviewed in both periodicals), and *The Weaker Sex in War: Gender and Nationalism in Civil War Virginia*. Prokopowicz also mentions that these topics dominate academic conferences.

These books and others like them are certainly not uninteresting and do not represent the majority of books reviewed, but in terms of featured articles, military history is a minority topic. It should be noted that the recent *Journal* featured a round table on “The Civil War and Its place in Military History” as well as reviews of Tim Smith’s *Bayou Battles for Vicksburg* and Scott Hartwig’s *I Dread the Thought of the Place* on the Antietam Campaign – aspects of slavery, war, and Reconstruction remain adequately represented at present.

The vast majority of those of us who gained an interest in the Civil War did so through books: Bruce Catton, Shelby Foote, T. Harry Williams. Studying the war has necessitated immersing ourselves in the 19th century and staying there for lengthy periods of time. For this writer, I enjoyed spending time with Generals Grant and Sherman at Milliken’s Bend in the winter of ’62-’63 trying to assist them in figuring out how to cross the river and move on Vicksburg, always with a book in my hand. But, recently, having clicked on to a Chris Makowski *Emerging Civil War* interview with Jennifer Murray, one of The Round Table’s speakers in the Covid winter of ’21, I was at long last baptized into the world of the Podcast.

Gerald Prokopowicz was well ahead of his time; I was behind. But now I may just wade into Civil War Talk Radio, or as it has been called: digital humanities. Not likely to abandon books but listening to a great talk can be a whole lot of fun. Thanks to Mr. Prokopowicz for providing the perfect way to leap into the 21st century: Civil War Talk Radio.



BULLETIN BOARD

Our in-person meetings are currently held at:

Holiday Inn Oakbrook

350 W 22nd St., Oakbrook Terrace

Parking at the Holiday Inn is FREE

Dinner \$50.00 Members and Non- Members

Cocktails at 5:30, Dinner at 6:30

Presentation only is \$10 per person.

April 11th, noon at the **Kenosha Civil War Museum**, Nancy Shumm and E. Olivia Darden present “Two Histories Merge at the Underground Railroad: Abolitionists Seth Paine and Harriet Tubman”

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

On April 25 and 26, Carthage College, The Lincoln Forum, Kenosha’s Civil War Museum, and the Lincoln Presidential Foundation are proud to present the 4th Annual Carthage College **Lincoln Symposium**. This two-day Symposium will feature some of the leading Abraham Lincoln scholars from around the country.

More Upcoming Local Civil War Events

Apr. 5th (Saturday at 10 a.m.), Northern Illinois CWRT: Brian Conroy on "The 4th Illinois Cavalry"

Apr. 7th, Rock Valley CWRT: Gail Stephens on "The Assassination of Abraham Lincoln"

Apr. 8th, McHenry County CWRT: Bob Grenier on "Hidden History Along Florida's Civil War Heritage Trail"

Apr. 8th, Southwest Michigan CWRT: Michael Unsworth on "Canada's Role in the Civil War"

Apr. 10th, Milwaukee CWRT: Phil Spaugy on "The 19th Indiana and the Iron Brigade"

Apr. 13th, Northern Indiana CWRT: Bob Grenier on "Hidden History Along Florida's Civil War Trails"

Apr. 15th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Bob Grenier on "General Edmund Kirby-Smith"

Apr. 19th, Salt Creek CWRT: Bob Grenier on "General Edmund Kirby-Smith"

Apr. 24th, South Suburban CWRT: Phil Angelo on "The Lost Cause and Confederate Defeat"

Apr. 26th, DuPage Civil War and Militaria Show

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

Future Chicago CWRT Meetings

May 9th: Steve Phan on "Asian and Pacific Islanders During the Civil War"

June 13th: Dave Powell (Nevins-Freeman Award) on "Lost Opportunities in the Atlanta Campaign"

Sept. 12th: James Pula on "Dan Butterfield"

Oct. 10th: Kim Harris as "Libby Custer"

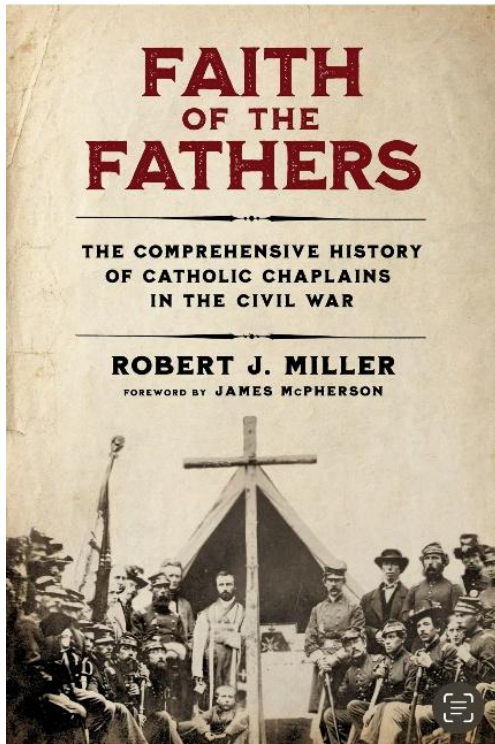
Nov. 14th: Chris Kolakowski, topic TBA

Dec. 12th: Brian Jordan, topic TBA

The **Abraham Lincoln Book Shop's** "House Divided" series will talk with Richard Carwardine April 17th, at noon, on his new book *Righteous Strife: How Warring Religious Nationalists Forged Lincoln's Union*.

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

Reminder—The **2025 Annual Battlefield Tour** (Shiloh and Corinth) is April 23-27, 2025. The registration form is on our website.

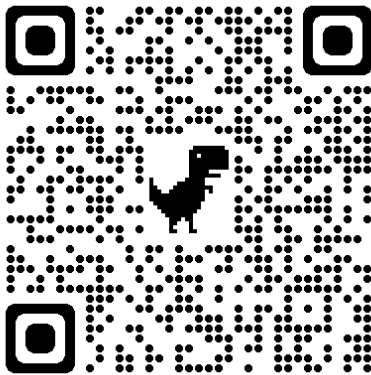


Our own **Rev. Bob Miller** has a new book coming out April 1st. In *Faith of the Fathers*, Reverend Miller examines the lives of 126 priest-chaplains—every Catholic priest who served during the Civil War.

People can order it now at Amazon or at Notre Dame Press itself

Faith of the Fathers brings to light the forgotten stories of courageous chaplains whose commitments to faith and to men at war during America's most divisive conflict have long been overlooked. The Reverend Robert J. Miller reflects on the importance of religion and faith in nineteenth-century America. As a culture of death and horror raged around them, Catholic priest-chaplains met the needs of soldiers and officers alike, providing years of faithful and dedicated service in hospitals, prisons, battlefields, and camps.

Whether ministering to Union or Confederate soldiers (or both), in eastern or western theaters, in battle or camp, these priests risked their lives to bring faith and hope to one of the darkest and most devastating periods of American history. (from UND Press)



CWRT Website QR Code