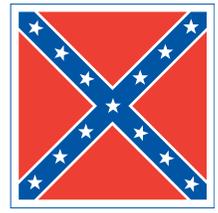


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Founded December 3, 1940

Volume LXX, Number 8

Chicago, Illinois

April, 2010



690th REGULAR MEETING

David O. Stewart

on

“The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson”

★★★★★

Friday, April 9

★★★★★

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: Chicken Heartland.
Baked Halibut. Vegetarian
Plate or Fruit Plate*

please note

Make your reservations by Monday, April 5 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.

David O. Stewart

on

“The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson”

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

By 1868 President Andrew Johnson’s inept, often brawling political style and his inept, pro-Southern handling of Reconstruction, disgusted the nation in general and Congress in particular. Congressional Republicans, led by the fiery but mortally ill Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania, seized on a legal technicality — whether Johnson had the legal right to fire his own Secretary of War — as the basis for impeachment. The Radical Republican majority in the House impeached (indicted) the President, but the Senate, by only one vote, failed to convict. The Senate trial featured the most brilliant lawyers of the day, along with some of the least scrupulous, while leading political fixers maneuvered in the dark corners to save Johnson’s presidency with political deals, promises of patronage jobs, and even cash bribes.

On April 9th David O. Stewart, the author of the acclaimed bestseller The Summer of 1787 will challenge the traditional version of the pivotal 1868 clash between Congress and President. Rather than seeing Johnson as Abraham Lincoln’s political heir, Stewart views Johnson (a southerner and a Democrat) as squander-



David O. Stewart

ing Lincoln’s political legacy of equality and fair dealing. The talk is based on his new book, Impeached.

In the words of historian David Herbert Donald, the book is “Vigorously written, it is by all means the best account of this troubled episode in our history. It demolishes the myth that Johnson’s impeachment was unjustified and that those who defended him were heroes. Stewart proves that impeachment may be an unwieldy tool for recapturing control of the national government but at critical times it can be an essential one.”

David O. Stewart is the author of three history books, including Impeached: The Trial of President Andrew Johnson and the Fight for Lincoln’s Legacy (2009). A graduate of Yale Law School, Mr. Stewart is a Washington DC based attorney who has appeared on CNN and authored numerous articles on the law and history. His The Summer of 1787: The Men Who Invented the Constitution (2007) won the Washington Writing Prize for Best Book of 2007.



Battlefield Preservation

BY BRIAN SEITER

Knoxville Foundation Buys 70-Acre 1863 Battle Site

KNOXVILLE, TN. — Knoxville's Legacy Park Foundation (LPF) recently purchased 70 acres of land known for the Nov. 25, 1863, Battle of Armstrong Hill. The non-profit that is dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of key Knoxville historical and wilderness areas.

LPF has raised \$1.4 million price for the Armstrong Hill 70 acres so far, according to executive director Carol Evans. The foundation plans to eventually turn the property over to the city park system. "We have also been given a year to raise \$800,000 to buy 22 acres that once was part of nearby Fort Stanley as well," Evans says.

In late 1863, Confederate troops under General James Longstreet laid siege to the town and faced a series of works that included Forts Higley, Dickerson and Stanley, earthen structures thrown up to protect the city from Longstreet's effort to free Knoxville from Federal control.

The siege followed a series of failed attacks by Confederate General Joe Wheeler to take the high ground. From these forts the Union army could control the Tennessee River in their front as well as use their artillery to challenge Confederate positions in the area.

In between these defended hills was an area controlled by neither army, some say a no-man's land, where the Battle of Armstrong Hill was fought. These sites are directly across the river from downtown Knoxville and touch each other on a north to south series of ridges. Standing on the Fort Dickinson crest one can get a great view of the location of a different type of modern-day contest, the University of Tennessee football stadium. These lands have remained mostly untouched but are under constant development threat with some homes already on parts of the hilly ridges.

The Battle of Armstrong Hill was

not well recorded but it was an important event in Knoxville's Civil War history. Armstrong Hill was a two-hour fight involving hundreds of Confederates hoping to take the high ground and taking more than 100 casualties in the attempt. "The fortified ridges and hills where the battle was fought were a major reason the Union was successful in ending the Confederacy's siege of Knoxville," says Steve Dean, president of the Civil War Alliance (CWA). The CWA is a coalition of historical and heritage groups, including the Knoxville Civil War Round Table, that is contributing to the preservation efforts of these riverfront lands. Much of the history of these forts comes from Ohio and Illinois regimental histories according to Dean. "There was a United States Colored Troop regiment on those hills from 1863 until the war ended," he reported. A lot of the activity in this area remained relatively obscure until now.

The Armstrong Hill purchase comes on the heels of the preservation of 100 acres known as Fort Higley by the Aslan Foundation, a philanthropic group also located in Knoxville. This ground had been slated to become a condominium development in 2005 and at that time was on the Civil War Preservation Trust's most endangered battlefield list. The recent economic downturn ended an Atlanta developer's plans for more condominiums and Aslan bought the property in 2008 for \$2.3 million. "We were not thinking anything positive was going to happen before Aslan saved Fort Higley," says CWA vice president and archeologist Joan Markel of the University of Tennessee's McClung Museum.

Since Fort Higley's purchase, there has been an archaeological survey on site with funds provided by a grant from the Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area and the Knoxville Civil War Round Table, of which Markel is a member. Aslan is now determining how to best preserve and interpret the historical as-

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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,

1039 Hinswood

Darien, Illinois 60561, or contact

bsa1861@att.net.

pects of Fort Higley. "How do we best protect 146-year-old earthwork's?" asks Markel. "The spectacular view we enjoy today is part of what makes these locations so special and during the war these same views provided great strategic benefits." Aslan's long-term goal is to turn Fort Higley over to a group that would continue to protect it as a historical asset. "The preservation of Higley, Stanley and Fort Dickerson, already a city park, along with the Armstrong Hill battle site, is a key part of LPF's Urban Wilderness and Historic Corridor," Evans says.

LPF refers to the 1,000-acre historic corridor on its Web site (www.LegacyParksFoundation.org) as an effort to save all three forts along "with historic settlement sites, diverse ecological features and recreational amenities." Evans says they will eventually connect all the sites with a trail system that will become a vital part of Knoxville's outdoor landscape. Noting the cooperative spirit of several preservation groups such as the CWA, Evans says, "Give all the credit to the Civil War folks. They saw the potential of all of this before anyone else."

from February/March *Civil War News*

March Meeting

BY JACKIE WILSON

On March 12, 2010, at the 689th meeting of The Chicago Civil War Round Table, Eric Jacobson asked the question: "Was the Battles of Spring Hill and Franklin important?" The people who live in Franklin wanted it forgotten and most historians have ignored it in the past as of little consequence, but Jacobson disagrees vitally important. If Hood is able to reach Nashville, the end of the war would be entirely different. This action was the death knell of the Confederacy! He opines that these two battles equaled Iwo Jima in the Pacific during World War II.

Hood decided to head to Nashville, where General George Thomas had only 8,000 Quarter Master troops. Hood had 30,000 men. Thomas requested re-enforcements, but Sherman delayed in sending them. If Hood reached Nashville before the Yankee troops arrived, he had a very good chance (at least 50/50) of taking it back for the Confederacy.

Hood has spent the war studying the actions of Lee and Jackson and attempted to follow in their footsteps. If he wanted to do as they did, he needed an excellent support staff, which he did not have. This meant that he would be kept informed of all needed information and that his orders were carried out. He also did not have the use of his cavalry and did not know where the Northern Army was located. Schofield has no idea where the Rebel Army is and being cau-

tious sends about 5,000 men to Spring Hill. General Forest does not report that the Federals are at Spring Hill. Why not? Hood gives orders to attempt to out flank Schofield, but it seems no one could follow orders or else they got lost. Yes, as the man in charge Hood is responsible, but what was the problem with Forest, Stewart, and Cheatham?

General Sherman finally sends General Schofield to Nashville to support Thomas and his army is marching up the road to Nashville right past the enemy. No one knew they were there. Hood believed that Forest could block the road, not realizing that the Federals were already marching past. In over five hours during the night, 22,000 Yankees marched past the Confederate Army. If Schofield reaches Nashville, Thomas will have about 30,000 men and fortifications that have been three years in the making. The Union retreat halts at the unbridged Harpeth River. General Schofield sets up a defensive perimeter south of Franklin and anchored on the river, while the engineers go to work building bridges.

This sets the scene for some of the nastiest, bloodiest fighting in the war. Hood believes that if he fights, he is damned and if he doesn't—same thing. He decided that he would rather face an army that had only 24 hours to fortify rather than an army that had three years to do the same. Six Generals died that day along with about 10,000 casualties. The fighting did not just include

artillery and rifle fire, there was some of the fiercest and bloodiest hand-to-hand fighting ever seen during the war. There was bitterness, burning animosity between the two sides. Jacobson stated that one of the reasons for this emotional fighting was that, although the Union soldiers were fighting for an abstract reason such as preserving the Union, the Rebels were fighting for "home."

On an interesting side note, there was music that day. The Union band was playing the *Bonnie Blue Flag*. Confederate General Francis Cockrell remarked to his son, that if we were going out, we were going out in style. A second interesting point, Jacobson could find no evidence from that time period that Hood took any narcotic for pain. He merely suffered from the after effects of his wounds and exhaustion.

Thus, the Battles of Spring Hill and Franklin are some of the most important in the war. This ended the war in the west making this action more important than both Gettysburg and Vicksburg. The biggest casualty of the Battle of Franklin was the heart of the Confederate Army—it died that day.

A recording of this (and every) meeting is available from **Hal Ardell**, audio librarian. Contact Hal at (773) 774-6781 or hal229@ameritech.net. ***This is a recording well worth having as Eric Jacobson is a dynamic speaker.***

GRAPESHOT



The **Barrington Area Historical Society**, will host an exhibit on “Lee and Grant” this April and May. The exhibit is organized by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Virginia Historical Society.

Ex-President **Bob Miller** will be speaking on “Religion and the Civil War” April 21st at the Des Moines, Iowa CWRT.

Larry Hewitt will be speaking on “Slandered Heroes: Deserters Who Didn’t” at the U. of Alabama on April 3rd, and at the Deep Delta Symposium on June 5th.

Leslie Goddard will be presenting “Clara Barton” April 20th at the 20th Century Club of Park Ridge.

John Kociolko will be speaking on “Whatever Became of the Union” to the Cicero Rotary on April 13th, at noon.

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.

SCHIMMELFENNIG BOUTIQUE

Sixty plus 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

April 2nd, Northern Illinois CWRT: **Gale Pewitt** on “The St. Albans Raid”

April 7th, Kenosha Civil War Museum, 6:30 p.m.: **Dr. Gordon Dammann** will speak on Civil War medicine. Visit www.thecivilwarmuseum.org for more details.

April 7th, Lake County CWRT: **Phil Angelo** on “Illinois at Vicksburg”

April 7th, Kankakee Valley CWRT: **Dick Torgerson** on “Governor Richard Oglesby”

April 8th, Milwaukee CWRT: **David O. Stewart** on “The Impeachment of Andrew Johnson”

April 10th, Marian Center for Nonprofits, Milwaukee. “A Civil War Ball”. Phone (414) 427-3776 for details.

April 10th, Kenosha Civil War Museum: Musical presentation on Abolitionists, “I will not retreat a single inch”

April 16th, Salt Creek CWRT: **Brian Seiter** on “General William Starke Rosecrans”

April 17th, Kenosha Civil War Museum: **Marty Cain** on “Baseball in the Civil War”

April 17th, Du Page County Fairgrounds: Civil War Collector’s Show

April 18th, McHenry Co. CWRT: Breakfast Brunch with General John Buford. Pinecrest Golf Course, 11-2

April 20th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: **Bruce Allardice** on “Who the Heck is Abner Doubleday, and Why Did He Invent Baseball? Baseball in the Civil War”. Meets at the Country House Restaurant in Alsip, at 7 p.m.

April 22nd, South Suburban CWRT: **Vince Heier** on “Custer in the Civil War”

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*.

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

May 14: **William W. Freehling**, “The Strange, Difficult Triumph of Southern Secession”

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

Reminders

The battlefield preservation committee is accepting donations for the annual Edwin C. Bearss battlefield preservation fund where Ed chooses the battlefields he wants the money to go to on this year’s tour. And in May, the CWRT will be electing officers for the 2010-2011 year.

Bjorn Skaptason at the **Abraham Lincoln Book Shop** reminds us that the next “Virtual Book Signing” will be noon, March 27th, with Paul Taylor talking about his new book, Orlando M. Poe. On April 16th at 6 p.m. Seth Grahame-Smith will talk on Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter. For more information on this and upcoming events, visit www.virtualbooksigning.net or www.alincolnbookshop.com.

Laney Prize

The Austin, TX, CWRT is accepting nominations for its Fifteenth Annual Laney Prize for distinguished scholarship and writing on military or political history. Send four copies of your book to the Austin CWRT’s Laney Prize Committee, 413 Canyon Wren, Buda, TX 78610.