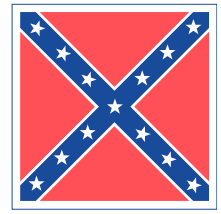


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Founded December 3, 1940



Volume LXXVI, Number 2

Chicago, Illinois

October 2015



745TH REGULAR MEETING

★★★★★

Friday, October 9th

★★★★★

HOLIDAY INN O'HARE

5615 N. CUMBERLAND, CHICAGO

Cocktails at 5:30 p.m.

Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

\$50 - Members/Non-members

*Entrée: Prime Rib
or Salmon*

Please Note:

Make your reservations by Sunday, October 4, by emailing dinnerreservations@chicagocwrt.org, or calling 630 460-1865 with the names of your party and choice of entrée.

If a cancellation becomes necessary after dinner reservations have been made, please email us at 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.

Nevins-Freeman Address Dennis Frye on John Brown: The Spark That Ignited the War

BY BRUCE ALLARDICE

Dramatic and divisive words define John Brown. Martyr or madman? Saint or the Devil? Terrorist or Freedom Fighter?

Few individuals have stirred America like John Brown. His attack on Harpers Ferry - designed to launch his war to end slavery - proved a media sensation. No one, North or South, ignored Brown. No one could predict what he had wrought. Brown's attack ended in failure. But did John Brown fail?

In 1974, The Civil War Round Table of Chicago established the Nevins-Freeman Award, and bestows it annually on an individual whose advancement of American Civil War scholarship and support for the Round Table movement warrant special recognition. This award is named for two men whose legacies have come to be synonymous with the Civil War era—Allan Nevins and Douglas Southall Freeman.

The very first Nevins-Freeman recipient was famed author Bruce Catton, a Civil War Round Table of Chicago charter member. We're proud to announce that the 2015 Nevins-Freeman Award



is presented to esteemed historian Dennis Frye.

Dennis E. Frye is the Chief Historian at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. Writer, lecturer, guide, and preservationist, Dennis is a prominent Civil War historian. Dennis has numerous appearances on PBS, The History Channel, The Discovery Channel, and A&E as a guest historian, and he helped produce Emmy award-winning television features on the Battle of Antietam, abolitionist John Brown, and Maryland during the Civil War. Dennis is

one of the nation's leading Civil War battlefield preservationists. He is co-founder and first president of the Save Historic Antietam Foundation, and

he is co-founder and a former president of today's Civil War Trust, from whom he received the Trust's highest honor - the Shelby Foote Award. Dennis is a tour guide in demand, leading tours for organizations such as the Smithsonian, and Civil War Round Tables. Dennis also is a well-known author, with 95 articles and nine books. His Harpers Ferry Under Fire received the national book of the year award from the Association of Partners for Public Lands.



NPS FAVORS SHEPHERDSTOWN BATTLEFIELD BECOMING PART OF ANTIETAM NATL. PARK

(September 2015 Civil War News)

SHEPHERDSTOWN, W.Va. — The Department of Interior has released the final study documents of the National Park Service's Special Resource Study (SRS) of the Shepherdstown Battlefield, according to President Edward Dunleavy Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association Inc.

The SRS concluded that the 510-acre site of the Battle of Shepherdstown would be preferably included within the Antietam National Battlefield park.

The 1862 Maryland Campaign of the Army of Northern Virginia included battles of South Mountain, Harpers Ferry and Antietam, ending near Shepherdstown in what is now West Virginia. That final battle on Sept. 19 and 20 involved approximately 8,000 to 10,000 troops and resulted in 677 casualties.

The SRS studied various options and possible boundary adjustments including having the Shepherdstown site be within the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, said Dunleavy.

The report noted Antietam National Battlefield was "preferable option due to its historical and geographical connections to the Battle of Shepherdstown."

The SRS concluded that "The inclusion of the Shepherdstown battlefield into Antietam National Battlefield would provide visitors the opportunity to have an expanded understanding of the events directly following the Battle of Antietam and the culmination of the Maryland Campaign."

The National Park Service (NPS) study proposed that the Antietam National Battlefield boundary be adjusted "to include areas of the Shepherdstown battlefield that contribute to an understanding of the significance of the Battle of Antietam and the Maryland Campaign."

The NPS report follows two early 2012 meetings seeking public comments regarding the proposed SRS. Approximately 136 people attended the so-called "scoping" meetings.

Public response "was predominately supportive of the study and enthusiastic concerning the interpretation and protection of the Shepherdstown battlefield."

The preliminary SRS was released in August 2014 followed by a two-month public review period. During this period, 334 individuals corresponded with the NPS. Approximately 93 individuals attended two public meetings in September.

"Commenters expressed overwhelming support for" ... the management option that the ... "Antietam National Boundary Adjustment as the most effective and efficient way to preserve the Shepherdstown battlefield," according to the final study.

It noted that if Congress were to authorize a boundary change to encompass the Shepherdstown battlefield as part of Antietam National Battlefield, "there would be no change to existing landownership."

"Any change to land ownership or use would be in the future as the National Park Service is able to acquire

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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.

battlefield land from willing sellers and donors."

The Shepherdstown Battlefield Preservation Association, a non-profit corporation organized in 2004, is dedicated to saving and preserving the core of the Battle of Shepherdstown site. It has worked to involve the Federal government in helping meet those goals.

Approximately 105 acres have been saved through conservation easements and land purchases. Dunleavy said some \$1.1 million has been raised to save battlefield land through grants and membership contributions during the last 10 years.

To help the effort or learn more about SBPA, go to www.battleofshepherdstown.org.

September Meeting

By Mark Matranga

The fate of the South's largest city lay at the heart of Dale Phillips' September 11th presentation to the 744th Regular Meeting of The Civil War Round Table, "The Capture of New Orleans." New Orleans was not a typical southern city. The 1860 census revealed a cosmopolitan population of 168,675 souls (the largest by far in the Confederacy), over 64,000 of whom were foreign born. Its port receipts in 1860 were 186 million dollars, 110 million of that for cotton. Banks holding 24 million dollars in capital lined its streets. River commerce accounted for 240 million dollars in trade; sea borne commerce was rated at 184 million dollars. Its factories and wharves contained the infrastructure necessary for the south to wage a successful war for independence. Much was at stake for the south in holding New Orleans.

Louisiana was a reluctant secessionist state, but upon secession, the federal arsenal and all forts were seized. These included Forts Jackson and St. Phillip. The administration was, of course, keen on opening the Mississippi River, and New Orleans held the key. Its plan to open the river included the blockade of the mouths of the Mississippi. Thus shortly after secession, the USS Brooklyn dropped anchor at the Head of Passes to enforce the Anaconda Plan.

New Orleans is more than 100 miles up river from the Gulf. Ft. Jackson

is some 90 miles from the city. The Confederacy did not adequately recognize the downriver threat to New Orleans, and the first commander at New Orleans, David Twiggs, was an aged general who lacked the energy to build and oversee its defenses. Also, based on the experience in the War of 1812 when ships relied on wind and not steam power, there was a misconception regarding the ability of forts' cannons to repel warships. This conceit resulted in the government siphoning off manpower and war material to other theaters.

Ft. St. Phillip was the older of the two forts, dating from 1797 and having walls 20 feet thick. Its parapet was 17 feet high; the fort mounted 62 pieces of artillery. Ft. Jackson was built during the period 1822 - 1832. It had a 25 foot parapet and mounted 74 guns. The two forts could bring 80 guns to bear on the main channel of the river. Cross-river chains were also used to impede upriver progress, with little effect. More attention was paid to developing a river fleet. This included the semi-submersible cigar shaped vessel *Manassas* which pushed the union fleet into the Gulf in October 1861.

Twiggs was eventually replaced by Mansfield Lovell, a younger, more energetic general. Lovell oversaw the construction of two ironclads, the *Louisiana* and the *Mississippi*, a behemoth that was to be 260 feet long with 20 guns. If finished, it

could have destroyed any ship in the union fleet. But Lovell was also subject to directives from Richmond for men and material.

The forces arrayed against the forts, 46 ships with 248 guns with an army of 15,000 under Ben Butler, were commanded by David Glasgow Farragut. They began to move in early March 1862; bombardment of the forts began on April 15th. Due to the weather, the forts were inundated; living conditions were miserable. On April 24th, Farragut moved on the forts. After a ferocious point blank exchange, the fleet passed the forts and engaged the river fleet and fire rafts. The *Verona* was sunk; the *Governor Moore*, largely responsible for sinking the union ship, was in turn sent to the bottom. The *Manassas* was sunk as well.

New Orleans did not surrender immediately. It was not until April 28th that the mayor capitulated following a Farragut ultimatum. Thus the south lost its major city. Counter attack was not possible as the Confederacy had no appreciable navy. Phillips holds with Charles Dufour who termed the loss of New Orleans *The Night the War Was Lost*. Others have offered competing turning points, and the war continued another three years, but there is no question that losing its major port so early in the war crippled the south.

GRAPESHOT



The Kankakee Civil War Symposium will be held October 10th at the Kankakee Community College. Among the speakers is our own **Rob Girardi**, who will present "The Real War Never Got into the History Books." Rob will speak at the Twin Cities CWRT Oct. 20th, on "The Murder of General Bull Nelson."

On Oct. 10th **Larry Hewitt** will be speaking in South Carolina on "Lee's Most Maligned General: Richard Heron Anderson"

On Monday, October 5th, **Brian Conroy** will speak on "Irish Americans in the Civil War" to the Joliet Community College adult learning center. The program is from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., and cost is \$24.

Bruce Allardice will speak on "Tracing your Civil War Ancestor" at 2 p.m. October 17th at the Zion-Benton Public Library, as part of a day-long symposium on genealogy.

On October 15th **Leslie Goddard** will present "Clara Barton" at the Geneseo Public Library.

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

SCHIMMELFENNIG BOUTIQUE

Sixty plus years of audio recordings of CWRT lectures by distinguished historians are available and can be purchased in CD format. For pricing and a lecture list, please 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.

More Upcoming Civil War Events

Oct. 2nd, Northern Illinois CWRT: John Horn on "The Petersburg Campaign"

Oct. 2nd-3rd, Lincoln College, Lincoln, IL: 30th Annual Lincoln Colloquium

Oct. 7th, Kankakee Valley CWRT: Ron Stack on "Lee at Cheat Mountain"

Oct. 8th, Lake County CWRT: Rich Garling on "The 9th Virginia Cavalry"

Oct. 9th, Milwaukee CWRT: Dennis Frye on "John Brown: The Spark that Ignited War"

Oct. 13th, McHenry County CWRT: Jerry Allen on "Black Hawk War Veterans in the Civil War"

Oct. 15th, Champaign County CWRT: Bjorn Skaptesen on "Four Campaigns in Missouri"

Oct. 16th, Salt Creek CWRT: Dr. David Maas on "How DuPage Won the Civil War"

Oct. 20th, Lincoln-Davis CWRT: Tom Bogar on "Backstage at the Lincoln Assassination"

Oct. 22nd, South Suburban CWRT: Vince Heier on "The Custer-Mosby Feud"

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 or (630) 297-8046.

Bulletin Board



FUTURE MEETINGS

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

Nov. 13: Philip Leigh on "Trading with the Enemy"

Dec. 11: Dave Keller on "Camp Douglas"

Jan. 8, 2016: David Moore on "William S. Rosecrans"

Feb. 12: Don Doyle on "The Cause of All Nations"

March 11: Bruce Kraig on "Why the Civil War Made our Modern Food"

April 8: Greg Biggs on "Nashville: Siren's Song of the Confederacy"

May 13: Glenna Schroeder-Lein on "The Solders' Home in Civil War America"

June 10: Dale Phillips on "Ben Butler and the Federal Occupation of New Orleans"

Virtual Book Signing

Join the **Abraham Lincoln Book Shop** on October 1, at 6 p.m., when we welcome **John Horn**, **Ted Karamanski** and **Eileen McMahon** to the program. John talks about The Siege of Petersburg: The Battles for the Weldon Railroad, August 1864. Ted and Eileen will talk about Civil War Chicago: Eyewitness to History. On October 17th, at noon (Central) we welcome **Kathryn Canavan** and **Dave Powell** to the program. Kathryn discusses Lincoln's Final Hours: Conspiracy, Terror, and the Assassination of America's Greatest President; Dave will talk about The Chickamauga Campaign-Glory or the Grave: The Breakthrough, Union Collapse, and the Retreat to Chattanooga, September 20-23, 1863. Learn more about these books and order yours at http://virtualbook-signing.net/book-information/#anchor_2.