



THE drum roll

Volume 33 320th Regular Meeting
Number 9 May 1, 2015

A leading role in the Gettysburg campaign

Friday, May 1, 2015, 7:30 p.m.

Arlington Heights Historical Museum
110 West Fremont Street, Arlington Heights, Illinois

John Buford at Gettysburg



Eric Wittenberg

General John Buford has the rare distinction of becoming a film idol long after his death. Born in 1826, he breathed his last on December 16, 1863, but thanks to Michael Shaara, and the subsequent film adaptation of Shaara's critically acclaimed but little-known novel, *The Killer Angels*, John Buford would eventually take center stage.

Buford led one of three divisions in the Army of the Potomac's Cavalry Corps during the summer of 1863. His was not a widely known name. He was a West Pointer, class of 1848; pre-war service included action on the frontier, a stint in "Bleeding Kansas," and the Mormon Expedition. When the war came, he returned home.

For the first year of the war, Buford held down staff positions. In the summer of 1862, when Gen-

eral John Pope was brought east to invigorate the Union army in Virginia, Buford was given a brigade of cavalry. Pope failed, but Buford did not. After Chancellorsville, Buford was given a division.

This promotion positioned him perfectly for future stardom. He would now play a leading role in the upcoming Gettysburg campaign. On July 1, 1863, his thin line of blue-clad cavalry would face the van of Lee's infantry atop Herr's and McPherson's Ridges, just west of town. Buford bought time for Union General John F. Reynolds to bring up Union infantry, and the battle was on.

Buford's fighting, while impressive, did not garner great renown at the time. He sickened that fall and died just before the turn of the year — a death that left him out of the top tier of Civil War heroes. Although close students of the battle certainly appreciated his skills and performance on July 1, this was not always true of the larger Civil War audience.

Then, in 1976, Michael Shaara's *Killer Angels* made John Buford a central character, and a deeply sympathetic one at that. An obscure Maine colonel, Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, got the same treatment. Shaara's book won a Pulitzer Prize and drew the attention of filmmaker Ron Maxwell; in 1993 the film *Gettysburg*, based on Shaara's novel, was released. Actor Sam Elliott deftly portrayed Buford, and the cavalryman's place in history was secured.

The Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table is delighted to welcome an old friend, Eric Wittenberg, to our May meeting to discuss his new book, *"The Devil's to Pay": John Buford at Gettysburg*. Wittenberg is a noted cavalry scholar and prolific author, but his first love has always been Buford's fight on July 1, 1863. Please join us on Friday,

Send banquet reservations to Tom DeFranco by May 29, 2015

May 1, at the Arlington Heights History Museum for his talk.

If you would like to join us for dinner with Eric Wittenberg at Sam's of Arlington restaurant, 1863

West Central Road, Arlington Heights, at 5:30 p.m. before the meeting on May 1, please contact me at DPowell334@aol.com or (847) 343-2032 by Wednesday, April 29. — *Dave Powell*

Grant vs. Rosecrans

By Tom DeFranco

On Friday, April 3, 2015, Dr. Frank Varney engaged the round table with a presentation on how General Ulysses Grant's actions and writings during and after the Civil War affected the reputation of fellow general William Starke Rosecrans.

Varney started with Grant's early actions at Belmont and Fort Donelson, but the friction between the two did not begin in earnest until the efforts in northern Mississippi in the summer and autumn of 1862. An opportunity had arisen to attack and badly whip General Sterling Price's Confederate forces. Grant was supposed to have the two wings of his forces under Rosecrans and General E. O. Ord coordinate to trap Price near Iuka.

Rosecrans's men went into the attack without the expected support from Ord, and won an incomplete victory. For his part, Ord claimed that he never heard the sound of combat in Rosecrans's sector of the field. Afterward, Grant claimed that Rosecrans failed to follow the change in orders that he sent. However, Rosecrans never received those changes. Weeks later, Grant was also not enamored with Rosecrans's pursuit of Price after the battle of Corinth.

Rosecrans was transferred to replace the recently fired General Don Carlos Buell in charge of the Army of the Ohio (which eventually would become the Army of the Cumberland).

Not long after taking command in Nashville, Rosecrans began running afoul of Washington. He was apparently not moving his army quickly enough for their liking. Middle December 1862

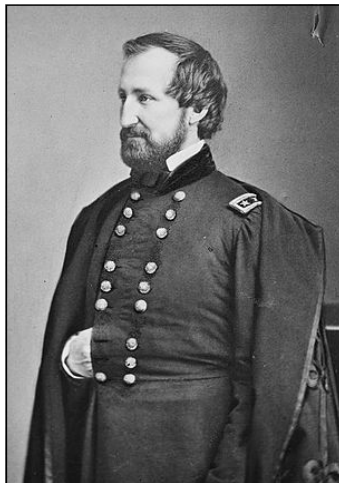
had seen a reversal of fortunes for the Federal war effort. The Army of the Potomac was slaughtered on the banks of the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg, Virginia. General William T. Sherman suffered a reverse in Mississippi near Chickasaw Bluffs. Lack of adequate horseflesh conspired to delay Rosecrans's move southward.

Washington saw an opportunity because the Confederates weakened Bragg's army to support their forces in Mississippi. However, Washington failed to appreciate the disadvantage that Rosecrans suffered from a paucity of horses. His supply lines were especially vulnerable with the likes of Nelson Bedford Forrest and John Hunt Morgan raiding him constantly. The opening moves southward left the Union with its only victory (however a very slim one) near Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

It also left Rosecrans with the need to fill a sudden void in the position of chief of staff. Enter General James Garfield. Garfield also provided Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton and Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P.

Chase with an ever-watchful eye in the army's camp. With Garfield and the soon-to-arrive Charles Dana (Assistant Secretary of War) on hand, Rosecrans's time in charge of the Army of the Cumberland was numbered. The faulty order at Chickamauga was the final straw. Grant would assume command in Chattanooga. Stanton gave Grant the choice to keep Rosecrans or relieve him, and Grant jumped at the chance.

Dr. Varney asserted that Rosecrans was a much more talented general than history, as told by



General William S. Rosecrans



2014–15 Officers and Trustees

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Appointed Positions

Book Raffle	Charles Banks
Newsletter Editor	Sally Smith

May Saturday Discussion

All members and guests are invited to participate in the session to be held at the Hoffman Estates Community Bank, 1375 Palatine Road, Hoffman Estates, on Saturday, May 16, from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Attendees are asked to park in the adjacent lot rather than in spaces provided for bank customers. Members are invited to discuss their favorite books. If time permits, the discussion will move on to Lincoln's assassination.

These discussions are generally held on the third Saturday of the month from September through June. They are held to generate and foster a free exchange of ideas on events that transpired during the Civil War.

Annual Banquet

The annual banquet of the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table will be held June 5, 2015, at Concorde Banquets, Kildeer, IL. Chris Kolakowski will speak on the Naval War in 1864.

April Raffle

The April raffle winners were Susan Hinsch, who won *Lincoln's Assassins: Their Trial and Execution* by James L. Swanson and Daniel R. Weinberg; Mark Ostrand, who won *Sherman: A Soldier's Passion for Order* by John F. Marszalek; Vernon Blessing, who won *The Cavalry at Gettysburg: A Tactical Study of Mounted Operations During the Civil War's Pivotal Campaign, 9 June – 14 July 1863* by Edward G. Longacre; and Mike Brown, who won *Monocacy: The Battle That Saved Washington* by B. Franklin Cooling.

Congratulations to the winners and sincere thanks to the donors. To donate Civil War-related books or items, please contact Charlie Banks.

Book Discussion Group

The Civil War book discussion group led by Tom DeFranco at the Eisenhower Library, 4613 North Oketo Avenue, Harwood Heights, meets on the first Saturday of the month from 10:00 until 11:30 a.m. On May 2, 2015, they will discuss *April 1965: The Month That Saved America* by Jay Winik, and possibly watch the documentary.

Women's Civil War Book Club

The next book for the Civil War book club for women is *Nostalgia* by Dennis McFarland. The location, date, and time of the discussion are to be determined. If you are interested in joining the group, contact Denise Limburg at (847) 382-1022 or dlimburg@prodigy.net, or Mary Banks at zeller1@comcast.net or (847) 497-3149.



**To learn more about this Round Table call Jerry Allen at (847) 516-6429
or visit our website at www.northernilcwrt.org**

Ulysses Grant, credits him to be. He mentioned that Rosecrans could have been used to good effect in the 1864 Valley Campaign.

On behalf of the Round Table, I wish to thank Dr. Frank Varney for his presentation on another victim of Grant's sometimes prickly nature.

2015–2016 Slate of Officers

The nominating committee of the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table is pleased to present the slate of nominees for election to each of the indicated offices for the 2015–2016 club year.

President	Patrick McCormick
1st Vice President	open
2nd Vice President	Chuck Carr
Secretary	Bruce Allardice
Treasurer	Tom DeFranco
Corresponding Sec.	Sarah McDougall
Membership	Jerry Allen
Historian	Kathleen Lange
Trustee	Danielle Kafka
Trustee	Fred Reczkowicz

The election will be held at the regular meeting on May 1, 2015. Additional nominations may be made at that meeting with the consent of the nominee, who must be a current member of the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table.

May Events

May 1-3, Lincoln's Assassination Sesquicentennial, Springfield, IL. Various events, including a Civil War encampment, lectures and discussions, musical performances, arrival of the funeral train, and a reenactment of the funeral procession, will commemorate the assassination and burial of President Abraham Lincoln. More information is available at www.lincolnfurtrain.com.

May 1–June 15, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. Remembrance Field: A Civil War Memorial Project is a visual representation of the loss of life suffered in the Civil War. Information on all Civil War Museum programs is available at (262) 653-4140 or www.thecivilwarmuseum.org.

May 5–8, Midway Village Civil War School Days, Rockford, IL. Battlefield Balladeers perform music from the Civil War era.

May 8, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. Tony Majewski will speak on the *CSS Shenandoah*,

drum roll, May 2015

noon. Program sponsored by the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table and the Iron Brigade Association.

May 8, Chicago Civil War Round Table. Eric Leonard will speak on Cartel, Code, and Consequences at Andersonville.

May 9, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. Debra Ann Miller presents Tea with Mrs. Lincoln, 1 p.m., \$35 (\$25 Friends of the Museum). Advance registration required.

May 12, McHenry County Civil War Round Table. Charlie Banks will speak on Lincoln's Final Journey.

May 13, St. Charles Public Library, St. Charles, IL. Battlefield Balladeers perform music from the Civil War era, noon.

May 14, Lake County Civil War Round Table. Gene Salecker will speak on the Sultana and the opening of the new Sultana Museum.

May 15, Salt Creek Civil War Round Table. A panel will discuss Ways the Civil War Changed American Life.

May 16–17, Civil War Days, Naper Settlement, Naperville, IL. Battlefield Balladeers perform music from the Civil War era.

May 21, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. Gregory Urwin will speak on the Rise of George Armstrong Custer. Dinner, 5:30 p.m., program, 7 p.m.; dinner and program \$45 (\$35 FOM), program only \$15 (\$10 FOM).

May 30, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. David E. Myers will discuss the creation and development of the U.S. Military Railroads and the Railway Construction Corps, 1 p.m.

It's a Fact

James A. Garfield could write Latin with one hand and Greek with the other — at the same time.

From *A Military Miscellany* by Thomas Ayres.