



THE drum roll

416th Regular Meeting Volume 42 Number 7 April 5, 2025



PLEASE NOTE!!!!!! PLEASE NOTE!!!!!!!!!!

The April meeting will be in person at the Arlington Hts. History Museum, Saturday April 5, 2025, and on ZOOM, at 10:00 A.M. The Museum is located one block West of the Ar. Hts. Library.

Our speaker for April is Brian Conroy who will talk about the 4th Illinois Cavalry.

Colonel Theophilus Lyle Dickey, a well-known and respected lawyer, petitioned and received permission to raise a regiment of cavalry. And on September 26, 1861, the 4th Illinois Cavalry was mustered into Union service at Camp Hunter in Ottawa, Illinois. Men of the regiment were recruited from over 14 counties and more than 30 communities throughout the state. The regiment provided their services of scouting, foraging, and battle against Confederate forces in Tennessee, Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi at battles such as Fort Donelson, Shiloh, Vicksburg, and the Meridian campaign.

In the spring of 2023, CDV images of members of the 4th Illinois Cavalry, Company D, were discovered in the archives of the Will County Historical Museum and Research Center in Lockport, Illinois. This discovery led to the beginnings of researching the history of the regiment, with a focus on the men of Company D who were recruited mainly from Will and Ogle Counties.

Brian Conroy received a BA in History from the University of South Florida in 2007. He is currently a records specialist For the DuPage County State's Attorney's office. He is also a volunteer and Vice President of the Will County Museum in Lockport, IL, since 2010. He is a Civil War reenactor portraying Camp Douglas (2000-2005) and 1st Michigan Engineers (2003-present).

UPRISING IN MINNESOTA

Although the vast majority of the United States Army was fighting Confederates during the Civil War, the Native Americans on the frontier

remained among military concerns. On March 7, Jan Rasmussen presented the story of the largest Indian uprising during the war - that of the Santee Sioux in Minnesota in 1862 – and its aftermath, which extended several years.

The Sioux nation was large, powerful, and varied, spread over a vast area of the northern Plains. Those most familiar to the public even today are the Lakota, the Western Council Fire of the tribe, who led the 1876 struggle that included Little Big Horn. But there were also Middle Council Fires (Yankton/Yanktonai) and Eastern Council Fires, the Dakota (aka Santee). For much of the 19th Century, the Santee were prominent in what is now Minnesota. But in 1851 they were forced to cede some 24 million acres of land and hunting ground, and were relocated to a narrow reservation along the Minnesota River, some 20 miles wide and 75 miles long. They were expected to settle down, farm the land, and to receive cash and provisions as annuities. Fort Ridgely was built in 1853 to keep a watch over the reservation tribes.

As was often the case, graft and corruption adversely affected the expected annuity payments to the Santee, while increasing white settlement put pressure on them; in 1858 their meager reservation was reduced by half, and the payment to the tribe for this land was dissipated, much of it going to and through the post traders instead of directly to the tribe. The arrival of the war exacerbated the problems, to the point that in 1862 the Indian Agent for the area, Thomas Galbraith, held back their \$71,000 payment and their provisions, partially due to some clerical problems (was the payment to be in gold or wartime greenbacks?) When Galbraith asked the advice of the local traders about releasing the provisions to the needy tribes – suffering from a poor growing season – trader Andrew Myrick reportedly replied, “Let them eat grass.”

The most prominent leader among the Santee was Taoyateduta (Little Crow), and he did what he could to keep the angered Indians at peace. For a while it worked, but on August 17, 1862, five white settlers were killed at Acton. The match was lit; Little Crow reluctantly agreed to lead an uprising. On August 18, the Santee struck settlements in the general area of the Lower Agency. Among the earliest victims was

Andrew Myrick, whose corpse would be found with grass stuffed in its mouth. Those settlers who were able to escape flocked to Fort Ridgely or the nearby town of New Ulm.

Appearing in force outside undermanned Fort Ridgely, the Indians decided it would be easier to attack New Ulm; their initial effort failed to make much of an impression. They then turned their attention to Fort Ridgely, which had been reinforced. They then made a stronger effort at New Ulm. Although ultimately repulsed there, much of the town (almost 200 buildings) was destroyed in the process. The town was evacuated, the population safely displacing to Mankato.

As the uprising spread, Minnesota governor Alexander Ramsey appointed Henry H. Sibley as colonel of the state militia. Sibley raised troops and brought them to Fort Ridgely (then sent out a detachment which was ambushed at Birch Coulee). Meanwhile the Santee were becoming divided, with some leaders arranging to turn captives over to Sibley. At Wood Lake on September 23, Little Crow and some 700 warriors attacked Sibley (who had over 1500 men himself), eventually being beaten back. The Indians mostly dispersed at that point, with some of the peace chiefs delivering 269 white and mixed-blood captives. Sibley gradually gathered up some 2,000 Indians and held them under guard at Fort Snelling. (Meanwhile, the government sent both reinforcements and General John Pope, who arrived in mid-September as the uprising was waning.)

In perhaps the most famous postscript of the uprising, over 300 Indian participants were sentenced to death by a military commission; President Lincoln reviewed all the cases, reducing the number of death sentences to 38 (those known to have committed murder or rape). All 38 were hung together on December 26, 1862, at Mankato. As for Little Crow himself, he would be killed by settlers in July 1863 while picking berries.

However, the story did not end with the uprising, and Rasmussen continued on to the campaigns of 1863 to 1865. Confinement of some tribesmen and exile (further west) of others did not end the troubles. Apprehensive of another outbreak, in 1863 Pope launched a preemptive expedition into

Dakota Territory, clashing several times with Santees led by Inkpaduta, as well as some Teton Sioux who had joined with him. The final battle of the 1863 campaign was at Whitestone Hill in September, where Alfred Sully killed or captured over 200 and destroyed their provisions. But much of the Sioux nation had been inflamed; a new campaign ordered by Pope in 1864 climaxed at Killdeer Mountain near the Dakota-Montana border. Despite Sully's victory there, the northern Plains remained unpacified into 1865 and beyond.

On behalf of the Round Table I would like to thank Jan Rasmussen for her wide-ranging presentation.

Pat McCormick

PLEASE NOTE:

Our discussion group will meet at 7 PM on Wednesday, April 9, 2025, the 160th anniversary of Lee's surrender, will be about the events leading up to, and including, Appamattox.

The link for the reg meeting works for this.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81433758155?pwd=S1FqVjJ1WmZsTTd1VIJNRCtLcjJLdz09>

Speakers

Sept. 6, 2024, Leslie Goddard: Clara Barton, Civil War Nurse

Oct. 4, 2024, Charlie Banks: General Herman Haupt

Nov. 1, 2024, Doug Stiles: Lincoln's Watch

Dec. 6, 2024, Dave Oberg: The First Illinois Light Artillery

Jan. 3, 2025, Gordon Ramsey: Music of the Civil War

Feb. 7, 2025, Father Bob Miller: Civilian Life in Vicksburg

Mar. 7, 2025, Jan Rasmussen: The Dakota War

Apr. 4, 2025, Brian Conroy: 4TH Illinois Cavalry

May 2, 2025, Dave Powell: The Union assault on Kennesaw Mountain, June 27, 1864.

June 7, 2025, Bob Presman: Could the South Have Won the Civil War?



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Appointed Positions

Newsletter Editor Jerry Rodosky

gjrodosky@gmail.com
847-420-1639

Upcoming Events

Join Zoom Meeting on Saturday, April 5, 2025, at 7 PM.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81433758155?pwd=S1FqVjJ1WmZsTTd1VIJNRCtLcjJLdz09>

This link works for the discussion group also.

Questions? Comments? Email me or call.

Jerry Rodosky

847-420-1639

gjrodosky@gmail.com

I will forward your questions or comments to the appropriate person.

Remember: The Board has decided not to charge dues for the upcoming 2024-2025 year. Let's use this to invite new members. What a way to try us out!