



THE drum roll

414th Regular Meeting Volume 42 Number 6 February 7, 2025



PLEASE NOTE!!!!

The February meeting will be in person at the Arlington Hts. Library, Feb. 7, 2025, and on ZOOM, at 7:00 P.M. The library is located at the corner of W. Euclid Ave. and Dunton St. in Arlington Hts.

Our speaker for February is Father Robert J. Miller.

Robert J. Miller is a Catholic priest of 48+ years, retired from 35 years of inner-city Chicago ministry. He has Masters degrees in Religious Education and Divinity, has authored 5 books on spirituality and faith, and was an adjunct professor of Church history at the University of St. Mary of the Lake. A former President of the Chicago Civil War Round Table, he frequently speaks on topics of spirituality and history, especially on Civil War religion. His 2007 book, *Both Prayed to the Same God – Religion and Faith in the Civil War*, was the first book-length overview of the topic. His newest book - *Faith of the Fathers – A Comprehensive*

Study of Catholic Civil War Chaplains - will be published by Notre Dame Press in April 2025. A summary of his years of work in this area, and a documentary film, can be found at www.faithofthefathers.net.

Topic: “From Rome to Appomattox – A History of Military Chaplains”

Description:

Military chaplaincy has existed in a recognizable form for over 1,600 years, with its earliest foreshadowing being seen as far as 3,000 years ago. Throughout history, as humanity has struggled and died through times of war, battle and empire-building, they have sought help and personal support from Divine sources for their efforts. Whether Through sacrifices or cultic rituals in pagan times, or praying with troops and celebrating sacraments or worship with modern troops, for centuries soldiers have respected the role of faith and belief as they struggled to survive and make sense of the stark reality that indeed “war is hell” (as William Sherman reputedly said).

In this talk, we will briefly outline the history of religious people being actively involved with the military. We will review its earliest roots with the Assyrians and Israelites, to the coming of Christianity into the Roman Empire, the gradual systematizing of chaplaincy in the Middle Ages, and its role in the wars of the United States. The American Civil War provided the historical foundation for our modern American military chaplaincy, and we will review both Union and Confederate attitudes towards chaplains, what they did during the war, attitudes towards them, and introduce a few more well-known chaplains.

Irish Brigade chaplain William Corby wrote in his Memoirs that “courage is the currency with which men’s loyalty is purchased”. Indeed, not only during America’s Civil War was this true, but likely throughout history – the power of religious people to influence, encourage, support, challenge and bring God into the hell of war is a topic well worth exploring.

MUSIC OF THE WAR

As in many if not most walks of life, music played an important role in the Civil War. On January 3, Gordon Ramsey led the Round Table through the world of Civil War music.

Civil War military music comes first to mind. However, as Ramsey noted, the music of the era can be broken down into two broad (and sometimes overlapping) categories – military and civilian – each of which breaks down into subcategories. Civilian music has another significant branch, that being slave music. Music was, and is, significant in a number of ways: it lights up vast areas of the brain, reflects society, and can even provide regulations. Major types of the Civil War era included classical, folk, sacred, gospel and military – employing strings, brass, woodwinds and percussion.

Classical music of the era was found in symphonies, piano virtuosity, and operas. This was the Romantic era of classical music, yet not without new instruments and techniques. (One of the most recent introductions was the saxophone, first introduced in Europe in the 1840’s and 1850’s.) Sacred music was spirituals and hymns, with gospel coming from African Americans.

Outside of the military, bands were featured primarily at holidays and summer concerts. Folk music, as one might expect, was the haven for popular tunes (such as those of Stephen Foster).

Military music served a number of purposes, involving mainly brass, woodwinds, percussion and singing, especially on the march. The loud, bright, rich sounds of brass instruments made them ideal for marches and fanfare, while the softer sounds of woodwinds were useful for countermelodies and solos. Bugles and fifes, as contrasted to their more complex cousins in brass and woodwinds, were more limited in range of notes, due to their lack of keys. But their simplicity of maintenance and ease of carrying made them ideal for troops on the march. Fifes and drums set the pace for marching; drummers were, famously, often young boys, as were some fifers. Bugles implemented their sharp, far-carrying sound to transmit orders. Most of us are familiar with at least a handful of bugle calls: charge, reveille, taps. But while these were among the standards, there were plenty of refinements: different units would have their own unique bugle calls.

While the functional buglers, drummers and fifers were military musicians, many regiments also featured bands, a different category entirely. These were larger assemblies, with more complex instruments (especially in the brass realm), performing in camp and on parades. The latter did pose a challenge: the band would lead the unit on parade, but how would the rank and file react if the horns of the brass faced forward? The solution: instruments designed for military bands had the bells facing backwards, over the musicians’ shoulders. Ramsey noted that, with fewer resources, Confederate regimental bands often made do with simpler instrumentation; one example being the famous 2nd South Carolina String Band. Bands were also used in recruiting, as well as playing patriotic songs.

Naturally, mounted regiments had mounted bands (also utilizing backwards-facing bells on their brass instruments). While mounted bands were used as much for funerals as anything else, late in the war leaders such as Philip Sheridan and George Custer used mounted bands in combat to buoy their troopers’ fighting spirit. And, of course, cavalry had a number of specialized bugle calls: stable calls, boots and saddles, water, etc.

Another category of military music was camp music. The regimental bands would play in camp, but among themselves the soldiers would play, and sing, a wide variety of music: Folk songs such as Oh! Suzannah, patriotic tunes like Hail Columbia. There were tributes to fallen comrades, sentimental ballads like Home Sweet Home, lively tunes such as the Irish Garryowen and The Girl I Left Behind Me (itself based on an Irish melody, incidentally).

Folk tunes, popular among soldiers in camp, were also a staple of civilian music, as were patriotic songs. The former were often written by the legendary Stephen Foster: Oh! Suzanna, Camptown Races, My Old Kentucky Home, and a host of others. Stirring and often patriotic compositions were also popular on the home front; John Brown's Body (not written about THAT John Brown, Ramsey related) eventually was recast as The Battle Cry of Freedom, joining other staples like We Are Coming Father Abraham, Marching Through Georgia, Goober Peas, Dixie, Rally Round the Flag. Many of the North's favorites were written by George F. Root. Some, like Lorena and Maryland My Maryland, were favorites on both sides.

African American music was a blend of spirituals and hymns from the new country, often complemented with drums, tying back to the drum circle tradition of Africa. Often they had a religious basis (Michael Row the Boat Ashore), or were lamentations of slavery (Poor Old Slave).

Ramsey also demonstrated how Civil War era music retains strong ties to modern music. Gospel is one genre; ragtime, jazz, and blues also have roots in Civil War era music. Southern rock such as Sweet Home Alabama maintained ties to Confederate mythology; Elvis Presley performed an "American Trilogy" of Battle Hymn of the Republic, Dixie and the Dying Song in the 1970's. In fact, one of Elvis's earliest hits, Love Me Tender, was a reworking of the period song Aura Lee.

Ramsey summed up by affirming that music got us through the Civil War, and continues to affect us in different ways. On behalf of the Round Table, I would like to thank Gordon Ramsey for this journey.

Pat McCormick

At our regular meetings of the NICWRT on the first Friday of the month, Wayne Rhine will conduct a raffle of books and other memorabilia. Raffle tickets are \$2 each, which will go into our regular fund. If you have books or other materials to donate, please bring them to our meeting, and Wayne will put them into his store for the raffle. Since we are not collecting dues now, this is our only source of revenue. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Many thanks.

NOTE PLEASE: Our April meeting will be on Saturday morning at 10:00 AM instead of Friday night. It will be held in the Arlington Heights History Museum. This is for April and will be broadcast again.

SATURDAY/TUESDAY Discussion

The next Discussion will be virtual on Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 7 PM until about 8:30 PM. The topic will be The Trans-Mississippi action. This is in continuation of our discussions of actions away from the Carolina-Virginia area. Any aspect of the subject is welcome for discussion. The link for the reg meeting works for this.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81433758155?pwd=S1FqVjJ1WmZsTTd1VlJNRcTlCjJLdz09>

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: A History of Military Chaplains
Mar. 7, 2025, Jan Rasmussen: The Dakota War
Apr. 4, 2025, Brian Conroy: TBA
May 2, 2025, Dave Powell: TBA
June 7, 2025, Bob Presman: Could the South Have Won the Civil War?



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Appointed Positions

Newsletter Editor Jerry Rodosky

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847-420-1639

Upcoming Events

Join Zoom Meeting on Friday, Feb. 7, 2025, at 7 PM.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81433758155?pwd=S1FqVjJ1WmZsTTd1VlJNRctLcjJLdz09>

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!

An obituary for Frank Crawford follows.

Obituary for Franklin Rutherford Crawford

Franklin Rutherford Crawford of Caledonia, IL, died Tuesday, December 31, 2024, at McCall Hospice Hospital in Simpsonville, SC at the age of 83. Born to Charles and Harriet Rutherford Crawford in Champaign, IL, he was united in marriage to Velma Brown on June 21, 1963, in Oakland, Illinois. He attended The Hill School in Pottstown PA and graduated from Lake Forest Academy before attending Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He earned his bachelor's degree from Rockford College and a Master's Degree from Northern Illinois University. Frank was a retired instructor at Belvidere High School, as well as a baseball coach and manager of teams ranging from Little League, High School, and post-school competition, most notably the Belvidere Blades. He was an active participant in the study of the American Civil War since grade school. He enjoyed reenactments, serving with Camp Fuller in Rockford, Illinois, and was an active member of several Civil War Round Tables in many states. He was the proud recipient of many awards and accolades, including The Jefferson Davis Award from the Daughters of the Confederate Veterans. He authored the Illinois Encyclopedia of the Civil war, was a three-time published author, contributed several articles to various Civil War publications and frequently lectured to various organizations.

Frank was preceded in death by his wife, Velma Brown Crawford, and his only brother, John Crawford. He is survived by his son Charles R. Crawford, daughter Nena (Jeff) Vincent, grandchildren Kathryn Vincent (Satendra Varma) and Jonathan Vincent, and dear-family friends Valentin and Milo Polito Ixtepan.

Memorials in honor of Frank may be made to the Frank Crawford Memorial

Fund at:

The Civil War Museum

Attn: Doug Dammann

5400 1st Avenue

Kenosha WI 53140

"Now he belongs to the ages" – Edwin M.

Stanton, Secretary of War under

President Lincoln.