



THE drum roll

415th Regular Meeting Volume 42 Number 7 March 7, 2025



PLEASE NOTE!!!!

The March meeting will be in person at the Arlington Hts. Library, Mar. 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 March is Jan Rasmussen.

Jan Rasmussen is a graduate of the University of Minnesota Technical College-Waseca with a degree in Veterinary Technology. While there, she developed an interest in Minnesota history. She has made numerous trips to the forts and battle sites related to the Sioux Uprising. Jan has been a dedicated member of the Salt Creek Civil War Round Table since 1990, holding every position at one time or another. She is currently Secretary/Treasurer. In addition to her Civil War interests, Jan is also a photographer of round barns having photographed over 250 in the Midwest.

THE DAKOTA CONFLICT 1862-1865

In August of 1862, as the United States focused its attention on the Second Battle of Bull Run, the Minnesota frontier exploded in violence. Provoked by a corrupt treaty system, waves of immigration, indifferent and dishonest Indian agents and traders, and forced cultural changes, the Santee Sioux led by Chief Little Crow killed at least 600 settlers living in their former homeland. The Indians hemmed in on a narrow reservation were near starvation due to crop failure and late annuity payments. Between August 17, 1862, and the final battle at Wood Lake on Sept. 23rd, there were a total of 17 actions ranging from the town of New Ulm, as far as Ft. Abercrombie on the Minnesota-North Dakota border 200 miles to the northwest. More white settlers were killed in the first few days of the uprising than at the Battle of the Little Big Horn. White civilians and military units defended their towns and forts and eventually forced the hostile Indians to flee or surrender. Thirty-eight Santee were executed, over 300 were imprisoned and

the Sioux were exiled from the state. The uprising was one of the bloodiest and worst in American history, and it launched a series of punitive expeditions on the Plains that did not end until the Massacre at Wounded Knee in 1890.

The presentation gives a balanced history of this tragic conflict using information and illustrations from white and Indian participants and observers.

CHAPLAINS IN THE ARMY

Military chaplains have been a feature of armies for a long time, in one form or another, and of course were staples of Civil War units. On February 7, Reverend Robert Miller led the Round Table through the years with the spiritual advisors.

The importance of faith, or “believing in belief” as Miller put it, was strong in the mid-19th Century. Its roots, in a military sense, go back to ancient times. As far back as the Assyrians, individuals served as intercessors, or go-betweens, with the higher power; they had a cadre of experts in ritual intended to aid their armies in their struggles, and read the signs of the times. By the first millennium, these practitioners were many: the Celtic Druids utilized them, and there are a sizable number in the Old Testament, of which Miller gave a few examples.

The Romans regularly had religious representatives in their armies, who used shrines and altars to pay ritual homage to their various deities. The emperor himself was the religious as well as military head of the Roman state – the pontifex maximus. The emperor Constantine, after having a vision the night before the battle of Milvian Bridge, embraced Christian iconology, including emblazoning the army’s shields with the Chi Rho – and Christianity became the official state religion in 313 AD. Priests accompanied troops into battle.

Under Charlemagne, the importance of religion to the military increased. The cloak of St. Martin of Tours, “cloak” being “Cappa” (cape) in Latin, was carried on campaigns; the man who bore the object was the “cappalanus”, or carrier of the cloak. “Cappalanus” evolved into “chaplain.” What was the role of the chaplain? Performing mass,

taking confessions, Communion, preaching, and special prayers. They were not supposed to fight or carry weapons; St. Thomas Aquinas coined the term “noncombatants” for them. (Miller pointed out that there were many exceptions to this stricture.) In 742 AD, the Council of Padborn specifically authorized chaplains to travel with the troops, subject to the above restrictions regarding arms and combat.

By the 18th Century, all European nations had some sort of chaplaincy in place. (Going forward, the Duke of Wellington specifically asked for capable chaplains.) This extended to America: In July 1775 the Continental Congress officially recognized chaplains, giving them modest pay. 218 chaplains saw service in the Revolutionary War, of which 25 were killed – the highest percentage of any U.S. conflict. In the War of 1812, 13 official chaplains served (none unofficial). Mexican War chaplains were almost all Protestant, in line with the Army as a whole; the limits on, and at times persecution of, Catholics in the Army was a spur to the Catholic deserters (mostly Irish) who joined the famous San Patricio battalion in Mexican service against the U.S.

Which brings us to the Civil War. In mid-May, 1861, the Union expanded the size of the chaplain corps, laying down guidelines as to their role and their dress regulations, the latter of which were often ignored. Pay was set at \$100.00 per month, with 2 daily rations and forage for their horses included as well. This was for official chaplains; Miller noted that around 40% of Civil War chaplains were unofficial. In the South, chaplains were appointed by President Davis, with pay at (or supposed to be) \$80.00 per month. There were no descriptions regarding duties, age, education, or clerical status. 58% of Confederate chaplains were deacons, preachers, or even laymen.

On both sides, the quality of chaplains was uneven, and there were many complaints, especially early on. Chaplain was said to be a position that was the “easiest to fill, hardest to fill well.” By mid-war, most of the bad ones had been weeded out, and by late in the war the reputation of chaplains was much better. They had a wide variety of duties, but perhaps the most basic requirements were what Miller referred to as the three critical qualities: faithfulness, flexibility, and courage.

A number of chaplains gained notoriety during the war. Perhaps the most famous on the Union side was William Corby of the 69th New York, of the Irish Brigade; another was McCabe of the 22nd Ohio, known as the "singing chaplain." In the Confederate army, the Reverends Dabney, Quintard, and J. William Jones were perhaps the most famous. Some chaplains, despite the strictures against such activity, even participated in combat (a man named Tichenor, known as a "fighting chaplain," served at times as a sharpshooter.)

Miller took things forward to the modern U.S. military. Today, there are perhaps 3000 chaplains in active service, and another 2000 in the Reserves. There is a lot of variety of both faiths and denominations in the modern armed forces, and he opined that faith is perhaps even more important than ever in warfare, citing the Middle East as an example. He summed up the role of chaplain by quoting Isaiah 6:8 - "Here I am Lord, Send me."

On behalf of the Round Table I would like to thank Reverend Robert Miller for his enlightening account of the military chaplain.

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.

Wednesday Discussion

The next Discussion will be virtual on Wednesday, Mar. 11, 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. Please join us.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81433758155?pwd=S1FqVjJ1WmZsTTd1VlJNRClLcjJLdz09>

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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Upcoming Events

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

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81433758155?pwd=S1FqVjJ1WmZsTTd1VlJNRcUcjlLdz09>

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!

The sites committee has decided to donate to these 3 sites.
They are:

Kenosha Civil War Museum \$200 in honor of Frank Crawford.

Save the Dalton Battlefields \$300

The Hunley \$150.

Our own Charlie Banks will be speaking on Tuesday, March 11, at 7 PM at the Woodstock Library on Confederate Railroads. This is part two of his presentation.

