



THE drum roll

Volume 31

294th Regular Meeting
Number 3

November 2, 2012

Under the Gas-Light

Friday, November 2, 2012, 7:30 p.m.

Arlington Heights Memorial Library
500 North Dunton Avenue, Arlington Heights, Illinois

Capt. Daniel Leib Ambrose, the 7th Illinois Infantry, and the Twilight of Memory

Daniel Leib Ambrose, at the age of 18, was one of the first farm boys to enlist for the union cause when the call went out for volunteers in April 1861. Ambrose, who was a native of Logan County, served 4 years with the First Infantry. He saw battle at Shiloh, Pittsburg Landing, Allatoona Pass, and the Battle of Atlanta before the march with Sherman to the Sea. He was mustered out of the army in July 1865.

Ambrose came home and wrote the first military history of the 7th Illinois and then became a newspaper reporter and editor for the *Sangamo Monitor*, describing politics and street life in the city during reconstruction. A chaplain in the G.A.R., he continued to do service for veterans. But it was as a husband and father that the story of Ambrose unfolds, against the backdrop of the unfolding 20th Century. He lived until 1922 and is buried in Canton, Illinois.

William Furry, the executive director of the Illinois State Historical Society and editor of *Illinois Heritage* magazine, will tell the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table about Ambrose's Civil



William Furry

War service and his life after the war on Friday, November 2, 2012. The former editor of *Illinois Times* newspaper, a Springfield alternative news-weekly, Furry is also the editor of *The Preacher's Tale: The Civil War Journal of Rev. Francis Springfield, U.S. Army Chaplain of the Frontier* (University of Arkansas Press), and took collections of prose work by and about Springfield poet Vachel Lindsay. He is a fifth generation resident of Springfield and the father of two boys: Joel, a musician, and Galen, who aspires to be a historian.

All who would like to join us for dinner with William Furry at 5:30 p.m. on November 2 at Sam's of Arlington restaurant, 1863 West Central Road, Arlington Heights, please notify me at gaviganthomas@comcast.net or (847) 985-1466 no later than Wednesday, October 31. — *Tom Gavigan*

Please send dues checks to Tom DeFranco as soon as possible

Life During Wartime

By Tom DeFranco

Over the past few years, the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table has been visited by an increasing number of Civil War figures. We've had visits from President and Mrs. Lincoln, Miss Clara Barton, and General George Thomas. On Friday, October 5, Mrs. Mary Chesnut, the Confederate diarist, paid us a visit. We were transported to the end of the war, when most of her belongings were in varied states of disrepair.

From there, Mrs. Chesnut took us to where it all began, in April 1861. Believing that she was about to witness momentous and important times, she thought it a good idea to keep a journal. And she indeed would witness some of the war's early events.

She was in Charleston, South Carolina, within earshot of the bombardment of Ft. Sumter. A few months later brought news of the Confederate victory at Manassas, Virginia, in July 1861. While hope sprang eternal and there was much pride over the battle's outcome, there was nagging concern about why the victorious Rebels didn't chase the Yankees all the way to Washington. The concern continued and only increased with time. Despite Confederate victories in the East, thanks to General Robert E. Lee and his lieutenants, the casualty lists mounted and hope was steadily turning into despair. Mary Chesnut would come to realize that even a general as gifted as Robert E. Lee could not continue to hold for an extended length of time.

But there were other activities for Mrs. Chesnut to concern herself with. Unlike her husband, James, who was directly involved in politics and

military affairs, she had the time and opportunity to engage in gossip and matchmaking. One example of the latter was her fostering of a budding relationship between General John Bell "Sam" Hood and her friend and eligible bachelorette, Miss Sally "Buck" Preston. Alas, the affair never really took off (much to Hood's dismay) as Miss Preston did not care for the idea of Hood's losing his limbs (or the use thereof) in battle.

Finally, as the war came to its conclusion, the Chesnuts (after staying near Richmond and in North Carolina) returned to their property, Mulberry (near Camden, SC), only to find it an utter shambles. Mrs. Chesnut eventually saw to it that her diary was rewritten, and it was published posthumously. Mary Chesnut died in 1886 at the age of 63, having outlived her husband by about a year.

On behalf of the Round Table, I'd like to thank Leslie Goddard-Allardice for bringing Mary Chesnut to life. And

I offer apologies to David Byrne and the Talking Heads for the title usage. I couldn't get the song out of my head as I wrote this article.



Mary Chesnut

Dues Are Due

Dues forms and checks should be sent to treasurer Tom DeFranco, 4844 North Ridgewood Avenue, Norridge, Illinois 60706-2941, as soon as possible. Dues for the 2012-2013 year are \$55 family, \$45 individual, and \$5 student. A sustaining membership is defined by any payment over and above the normal rates. Save \$5 on membership by receiving the newsletter via e-mail.

Roster Changes

New recruits

Ms. Marybeth Foley
7225 Division Street, #7
River Forest, Illinois 60305-1229
(708) 366-5593
e-mail mbfoley@earthlink.net

Mr. John Badamo
245 West Main Street, Apt. 311
Lake Zurich, Illinois 60047-3116

Reenlistment

Ms. Madeleine Brennan
17 Belle Plaine Avenue
Park Ridge, Illinois 60068-4913

Women's Civil War Book Club

Several members are interested in starting a women's Civil War book club. The first meeting/discussion will be on Saturday, November 17, at Denise Limburg's home, 451 Woodview Road, Lake Barrington, at 1:00 p.m. There will be a pot-luck lunch.

The book to be discussed is *The Black Flower* by Howard Bahr (suggested by Sarah McDougall). Please contact Denise Limburg or Mary Banks if you are interested in attending. If you cannot join the group in November, but are interested in future discussions, please let them know. Those who attend the first meeting will decide how often the group will meet. Contact Denise Limburg at dlimburg@prodigy.net or (847) 382-1022, or Mary Banks at zeller1@comcast.net or (847) 497-3149.

Book Discussion Group

Tom DeFranco has started a Civil War book discussion group at the Eisenhower Library, 4613 North Oketo Avenue (just south of Lawrence Avenue), Harwood Heights. The group meets on the first Saturday of the month from 10 until 11:30 a.m. The topics for the next few months are as follows: on November 3, *Perryville: This Grand Havoc of Battle*, by Dr. Kenneth Noe; and on December 1, *No Better Place To Die* by Peter Cozzens.

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November Events

November 3, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. The theater will present "William Herndon: The Man Who Knew Lincoln" at 1 p.m. Information on all Civil War Museum programs is available at (262) 653-4140 or www.thecivilwarmuseum.org.

November 7, Lake County Civil War Round Table. Dave Oberg, director of the Grayslake Heritage Center, will present stories and images of Lake County residents who served during the Civil War.

November 9, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. Dave Oberg will present stories and images of Lake County residents who served during the Civil War, noon.

November 11, Chicago Civil War Round Table. Tom Clemens will speak on Antietam.

November 13, McHenry County Civil War Round Table. Ward Brown will speak on Cavalry Tactics.

November 13, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. Steven Rogstad will lead a workshop on Lincoln and the Emancipation Proclamation, 7 p.m.; \$20, \$15 for Friends of the Museums.

November 16, Salt Creek Civil War Round Table will hold its annual auction.

Final Words

"They couldn't hit an elephant at this distance." Union General John Sedgwick just before he was killed by a sharpshooter at Spotsylvania Courthouse.

"Sir, I am reading my Bible. I expect to be killed in a few minutes." Sergeant Benjamin Wall's reply when his lieutenant asked what he was doing. A few moments later he was killed in a charge at the Battle of Mansfield.

"All right, men, we can die but once. This is the time and place. Let us charge." Union General William Lytle, just before he was killed at the Battle of Chickamauga.

"If you are not going, just move out of the way and I will go ahead!" Gunboat Commander Thomas M. Buchanan, ignoring warnings of rebel sharpshooters; killed as he stood on deck, at Bayou Teche, Louisiana.

From *A Military Miscellany* by Thomas Ayres



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To Contribute to the Drum Roll

All members are welcome to contribute items to the newsletter. Appropriate subjects include (but are not limited to) book reviews, family histories, travel reports, and recent research. If you have information to share, please send it to Sally Smith, 328 Eastern Avenue, Barrington, Illinois 60010-4629; telephone (847) 381-6486; or e-mail drum_roll4@juno.com.

2012–2013 Speakers

December 7	Father Robert Miller	Lincoln's Faith
January 4	Tom DeFranco	To Meet Every Contingency: George Meade, the Pipe Creek Plan, and Gettysburg
February 1	Bruce Allardice	Chicago in the Civil War
March 1	Rob Girardi	To be announced
April 5	Tom Clemens	Antietam (tentative)
May 3	Gloria Swift	To be announced
June 7	George Buss and Tim Connor	Lincoln–Douglas (tentative)

October Raffle

The October raffle winners were Tom DeFranco, who won *Coburn's Brigade* by Frank J. Welcher and Larry G. Ligget, donated by Charlie and Mary Banks; Mark Ostrand, who won *Jackson and Lee: Legends in Gray* by Mort Kunstler and James I. Robertson, donated by Emil Bahnmaier; Ed Stipulin, who won *Mary Chesnut's Civil War*, edited by C. Vann Woodward; Chuck Young, who won *Voices of the Civil War* by Richard Wheeler, donated by Ron Feltz; and Jim Noble, who won *High Tide at Gettysburg* by Glenn Tucker, donated by Kurt Carlson and Janet Linhart.

Congratulations to the winners and sincere thanks to the donors. If you would like to donate Civil War–related books or items, please contact Charlie Banks.

November Saturday Discussion

All members and guests are invited to participate in the session to be held in the Zimmerman Room at the Barrington Area Library, 505 North Northwest Highway, Barrington, on November 17, 2012, from 10:00 a.m. until noon. The discussion will cover tactics, cavalry and artillery. The discussion will be led by second vice president Dave Powell. 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.

To learn more about this Round Table call Sully Sullivan at (847) 259-5577 or visit our website at www.northernilcwrt.org