



THE drum roll

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Number 2 October 5, 2012

Witness to many crucial events in the South

Friday, October 5, 2012, 7:30 p.m.

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

Civil War Diarist Mary Chesnut



Leslie Goddard

Daughter of a wealthy planter and wife of a brigadier general and top presidential aide, South Carolina native Mary Chesnut witnessed many of the most crucial events in the South during the Civil War. She recorded her experiences in a diary now considered one of the most compelling personal accounts of the war.

In this first-person portrayal, set in April 1865, Leslie Goddard portrays Mary Chesnut at a critical moment. As she debates whether or not to flee from rapidly approaching Union forces, Chesnut reads from her journal, sharing stories of her experiences throughout the war. She describes her friendships with top Confederate officials, her impressions of events unfolding around her, and her often surprising perspectives on race, political power, and social status.

Although Mary Chesnut rewrote and revised her journals in the 1870s and 1880s, the journal was not published until 1905, after her death. It was reworked and reissued in 1949 by novelist Ben Ames Williams and in 1981 by historian C. Vann Woodward. Woodward's annotated edition, *Mary Chesnut's Civil War* (1981), won the Pulitzer Prize for history. Literary critics have called Chesnut's diary the most important work by a Confederate author and "one of the best windows we have into southern society during the American Civil War."

Trained as a historian, Leslie Goddard has presented first-person programs and history lectures at dozens of museums, civic and cultural organizations, and academic institutions, including the Illinois Humanities Council, Chicago's Navy Pier, the Civil War Museum in Kenosha, WI, WBEZ-Chicago Amplified, DePaul University, Questers International, and the Victorian Society in America. For the past 10 years, she has been working as a museum educator and exhibit developer, and she currently serves as the executive director of Graue Mill and Museum in Oak Brook. Arcadia Publishing recently published her books *Remembering Marshall Field's* (2011) and *Chicago's Sweet Candy History* (2012). She earned a Ph.D. from Northwestern University and holds both master's and bachelor's degrees in theater. She lives in Chicago's southwest suburbs with her husband, Bruce Allardice. She can be found on the web at www.lesliegoddard.info.

All who would like to join us for dinner at 5:30 p.m. on October 5 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 3. — *Tom Gavigan*

Please note change of location for October Friday night meeting

The Valley

By Tom DeFranco

The Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table began a new season of Friday nights on September 7, 2012, with our own Frank Crawford talking about the Shenandoah Valley and its significance to the Civil War.

Crawford started his talk by describing the sheer beauty of the Valley, stating that it is quite likely the most beautiful place in the United States and has beautiful sunrises and sunsets. The Valley runs southwest to northeast and is bracketed by the Great North Mountain to the west and the Blue Ridge Mountains to the east. In between, the Massanutten Mountain and the Shenandoah River form another valley known as the Luray Valley, to the immediate east of and parallel to the Valley proper.

The Valley is lined with towns from Lexington (home of Virginia Military Institute, VMI) in the south to Harpers Ferry (at the confluence of the Shenandoah River and the Potomac River) in the north. In terms of elevation, one descends driving north through the Valley, so going in that direction is said to be going down the Valley. Besides the towns, the other significant manmade feature in the Valley is the Valley Turnpike, running straight up and down the Valley like a spine in the human skeleton.

The people of the Valley were peaceful folk, many of whom were not necessarily interested in taking sides in the coming national struggle (much like Jimmy Stewart in the movie, Shenandoah). Many belonged to pacifist sects, but despite their aversion to war, it was coming to their towns, farms, and backyards, and in full force. There were several reasons for this. First, it was rich farmland, with a great variety of crops and livestock. Thus, the South was looking to protect that land for purposes of supplying the Confederate armies operating in the Eastern theater. The

Union was no less interested in denying those Southern armies the bounty of the Valley.

The man selected to operate in the Valley for the Confederates in the winter and spring of 1862 was Thomas Jonathan Jackson, who had already gained some notoriety at the First Battle of Manassas. Jackson had lived in the Lexington area, having taught at VMI before the war. He was as pious as many of the Valley's inhabitants but did not share their pacifist nature. In fact, he saw his job as a crusade to rid the Confederacy (and more immediately, the Valley) of invading Federal forces. Although he was not a tactical genius, he combined a gift for operational movement with his religious zeal. Even though he lost his first battle at Kernstown and committed some tactical errors in the following battles, he ran circles around his Federal opponents, John C.

Fremont, Nathaniel Banks, and James Shields, and convinced the political powers in Washington to leave Irvin McDowell's Corps in limbo for fear that it would be needed to defend the capital. Since Washington was not truly in danger (as Jackson did not have sufficient forces to actually strike Washington), McDowell's Corps was useless to the Federal effort under George McClellan to capture Richmond from the Peninsula.

A little over two years later, fighting again came to the Valley. Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia was on the verge of being penned in Petersburg, VA, by the Federal Army of the Potomac under Ulysses Grant. Lee took advantage of Grant's crossing of the James River to send the Confederate Second Corps (many of them men who served under Jackson in 1862) under Jubal Early to counter Union efforts already being made in the Valley. On May 15, 1864, Franz Sigel lost decisively at New Market to Confederate forces under John C. Breckinridge.

Despite many residents' aversion to war, it was coming to the Shenandoah Valley, and it was coming in full force

As Early was headed to the Valley, Federal forces under David Hunter defeated Confederate forces led by William “Grumble” Jones on June 5, 1864, at Piedmont, killing Jones in the process. In return Early beat Hunter at Lynchburg; rather than retreating in a direction to cover Washington, Hunter retreated into West Virginia, taking his forces out of the action. Early was now free to do what his actual objective was — capture Washington. Part of the plan called for releasing Confederate prisoners at Point Lookout (ostensibly with the help of the Confederate navy) and then moving on the capital.

Thanks to Major General Lew Wallace and a quickly created scratch force (including most notably the 8th Illinois Cavalry) Early’s timetable to Washington was disrupted. This interruption bought time for the bulk of H. G. Wright’s Sixth Corps to arrive to defend the capital. Eventually, Grant detailed Philip Sheridan to deal with Early as he headed back to the Valley. For another three months, battle and destruction was the way of life in the Valley for civilians and soldiers alike. Crops and livestock were destroyed in unimaginable numbers. Early and Sheridan battled tooth and nail; Confederates outmaneuvered the Federals on several occasions as they had done in 1862, but finally the Battle of Cedar Creek marked the end of the campaign on October 19, 1864. It was a near Confederate victory, but Sheridan’s bluster and force of will won the day.

It is a testament to the farmers of the Valley that not long after the War they were back growing crops and raising livestock as they had been before.

I know the members of the Round Table will join me in thanking Frank Crawford for his wonderful presentation on a place the War couldn’t keep down — the Shenandoah Valley.

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.

drum roll, October 2012

October Events

October 3, Lake County Civil War Round Table. David Noe will speak on Pony Express.

October 6, First Division Museum at Cantigny, Wheaton. 15th Annual Civil War Symposium and Reenactment will feature Peter Cozzens speaking on Stonewall Jackson’s Shenandoah Valley Campaign; Judith Ann Giesberg on Northern Women During the Civil War; Richard S. Slotkin on the Battle of Antietam; and Timothy B. Smith on the Battle of Shiloh and the Western Theater. Registration information is available from the National Archives at Chicago, (773) 948-9001 or www.archives.gov/great-lakes/public/programs/calendar.html.

October 9, McHenry County Civil War Round Table. Fred Reczkowicz and Jeff Rees will speak on Judson Kilpatrick.

October 12, Chicago Civil War Round Table. Ed Bonekemper will speak on Lincoln and Grant: Westerners Who Won the War.

October 12, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. James Heinz will speak on the only battle of the Civil War in which African Americans are known to have participated on both sides; noon, no fee. Information on all Civil War Museum programs is available at www.thecivilwarmuseum.org or (262) 653-4140.

October 16, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI. Dr. Gordon Dammann will offer a visual tour of Antietam National Battlefield and the surrounding area; 7 p.m.; \$15, \$10 Friends of the Museums.

October 19, Salt Creek Civil War Round Table. Jan Rasmussen will speak on Civil War Mascots: Old Abe and Friends.

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 October 6, Dave Powell will discuss his Chickamauga books; November 3, *Perryville: This Grand Havoc of Battle*, by Dr. Kenneth Noe; and December 1, *No Better Place To Die* by Peter Cozzens.



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September Raffle

The September raffle winners were Tom DeFranco, who won *Deeds of Valor*, edited by W. F. Beyer and O. F. Keydel; Mark Ostrand, who won *Richard Taylor* by T. Michael Parrish; Jerry Allen, who won *Team of Rivals* by Doris Kearns Goodwin; and Mary Banks, who won *McClelland* by Richard L. Kiper.

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.

October 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 October 13, 2012, from 10:00 a.m. until noon. The discussion will cover Civil War infantry, artillery, and cavalry tactics. The discussion will be led by second vice president Dave Powell.

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

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

November 2	William Furry	To be announced
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)

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