



# THE drum roll

Volume 32

302nd Regular Meeting

Number 1

September 6, 2013

## *The Fort Henry-Fort Donelson Campaign*

Friday, September 6, 2013, 7:30 p.m.

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

### Debacle on the Rivers



Greg Biggs

It will be a pleasure to have Greg Biggs visit the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table again on September 6, 2013. Biggs has spoken here in the past and was also the guide for our tour of the Fort Donelson Campaign in October 2009.

Biggs will analyze the command decisions and battle tactics of both sides that led to the collapse of the Confederate western defense line and brought about the capture of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson. The lack of Confederate command organization coupled with conflicting missions served to bring about the disaster that the capture of these two forts inflicted on the Confederacy. Although the Union side was better off, it too had command problems that served to complicate General U. S. Grant's role in the campaign. De-

partment commander Henry Halleck's dislike of Grant often complicated their relationship and threatened the results. In the end the Union forces won because they were able to bring superior resources to bear as well as focus their mission better than the Confederates could.

Biggs is president and program chair for the Clarksville, Tennessee, Civil War Round Table, a former associate editor of *Blue & Gray* magazine, and a research contributor or primary researcher for Civil War books by Larry Daniel, Robert Maberly, Gordon Rhea, Russell Brown, John Coski, Wiley Sword, and John Sexton and upcoming books by Eric Wittenberg and Andrew Johnson. He has served as a flag research consultant to Civil War artists Don Troiani, John Paul Strain, and Dale Gallon, as well as flag consultant to various state museums including Tennessee, Georgia, Ohio, Alabama, North Carolina, and Texas. Biggs has authored numerous articles and books. He also has served as a tour guide for many Civil War round tables, historical societies, and U.S. Army staff rides.

All who would like to join us for dinner with Greg Biggs at 5:30 p.m. before the meeting on September 6 at Sam's of Arlington restaurant, 1863 West Central Road, Arlington Heights, please notify me at (847) 382-1022 or [dlimburg@prodigy.net](mailto:dlimburg@prodigy.net) no later than Wednesday, September 4. — *Denise Limburg*

### In Memoriam

Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table member Carol Berry passed away on June 7, 2013, after a brief illness.

Past president David Mills passed away on July 8, 2013. We extend condolences to their families.

**Please send dues payments to Tom DeFranco as soon as possible**

# Lincoln and Douglas

By Tom DeFranco

**A**t the Northern Illinois Civil War Round Table's annual banquet on June 7, 2013, historians George Buss (Abraham Lincoln) and Tim Connors (Stephen Douglas) gave a wonderful presentation revealing their rivalry and different stances on the spread of slavery in the United States and its western territories.

One was a tall, awkward-looking fellow; the other was short and stout. Both migrated to the state of Illinois as young men. Douglas came to the state from New England by way of Cleveland, Ohio. Lincoln, of course, arrived in Illinois from Kentucky by way of Indiana. Each lost a parent at any early age. While Douglas's father was a physician, Lincoln's was a farmer. Both worked hard to further their careers in the law and politics. Lincoln's motivation was his father's disdain for education and being used by him as a laborer for other farmers. Lincoln aspired to higher things than breaking his back behind a plough. He worked as a store clerk and in the postal trade before entering the law. After toiling as a clerk in the auctioneering business, Douglas used his proceeds to run a school for clerks. Both men served in the Illinois state legislature.

Where Douglas and Lincoln deviated though, was in politics. Douglas was a Democrat, Lincoln a Whig (and later a Republican). Lincoln had a short stint as a congressman, during which time he was a pronounced and vocal opponent of the Mexican War. He admired Henry Clay, the great compromiser, and came to share many of his beliefs. Lincoln apparently was tired of national politics, working in only one term. What piqued his interest once again was his dislike for renewed efforts to change the old compromise of 1820 (basically, it stipulated that no slavery in the western territories was to exist north of Missouri's southern border). That compromise seemingly settled the question of the spread of slavery.

Then, thirty years later, the vast lands (as far north as the Great Salt Lake) gained from the spoils of the Mexican War changed the slavery equation again. Douglas, ever the politician, worked with the aging Henry Clay to develop a

new compromise meant to calm the roiling seas of the great slavery debate. Included in the compromise was the condition of "popular sovereignty." This became Douglas's pet condition in the new compromise. Essentially, popular sovereignty allowed for the territory's citizenry to vote for or against slavery before the territory became a state. Douglas's reasoning was that pure democracy was the answer to the squabbling.

But where Douglas thought that this was the ideal way to solve the slavery question, Lincoln saw real danger. Non-residents could easily enter a territory and flood the ballot boxes, skewing the vote. In fact a pro-slavery legislature did something akin to that in Lecompton, Kansas, voting to allow slavery in that territory. An anti-slavery government in Topeka felt it held the rightful claim to Kansas. So to this end popular sovereignty muddied the waters. Still, Douglas saw this as the best remedy of the slavery problem. And Douglas had other problems.

President Buchanan was a northern man with southern leanings. Most, if not all, of his cabinet and other appointees were southerners. In addition, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney was vehemently pro-slavery. In 1857, Taney and the Supreme Court ruled that a slave, Dred Scott, had no rights that had to be acknowledged or recognized by a white man. Scott's contention was that under the terms of the 1820 compromise his owner could not rightfully bring him to Minnesota, and as such, he should have been recognized as a free man. What's more, Taney ruled that Congress could not ban slavery in the territories, and thus popular sovereignty was null and void since the territories were products of Congress.

If popular sovereignty piqued Lincoln's interest, the Dred Scot decision drew his ire. If it angered Lincoln, it made Douglas into a pariah in the Buchanan administration. President Buchanan saw Douglas as a political rival who wanted eventually to succeed him in the White House. Thus began Douglas's run for re-election to the Senate with Lincoln as his opponent. It started one of the most famous series of debates in history, with

Douglas winning back his Senate seat but losing to Lincoln (along with John Breckinridge and John Bell) in the 1860 presidential election.

So, if Lincoln and Douglas were rivals, the real enemies in this political play were President Buchanan and Roger Taney. Both of the latter men worked their magic to instill their political will upon Douglas and the nation. At the banquet, both President Lincoln and Senator Douglas admitted to this. Both Douglas and Lincoln earnestly did what they thought was right, but President Bu-

chanan's fear of Douglas and Taney's vitriol against the North in general hurt Douglas's chances for higher office by splitting the Democratic Party into smaller factions with a northern wing and a southern wing, thus allowing Lincoln to win the election with only 40 percent of the vote. It proved to be the straw that broke the proverbial camel's back and led to civil war.

I wish to thank George Buss and Tim Connors for their excellent living history presentation as Lincoln and Douglas.

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## September Events

**September 4, Lake County Civil War Round Table.** Frank Crawford will speak on the Baltimore Riots of 1861.

**September 10, McHenry County Civil War Round Table.** Frank Crawford will speak on Medicine on the Mississippi.

**September 11, Wood Dale Public Library.** Dr. David Maas will speak on DuPage County and the Civil War at 7 p.m. The Wood Dale Public Library is at 520 North Wood Dale Road, Wood Dale; registration recommended. More information on all library programs is available at (630) 766-6762 or [www.wooddalelibrary.org](http://www.wooddalelibrary.org).

**September 13, Chicago Civil War Round Table.** John Michael Priest will speak on South Mountain.

**September 14, 6th Annual Great Lakes Civil War Forum, Civil War Museum, Kenosha, WI.** Forum honors the 150th anniversary of the summer campaigns of 1863. Speakers: Lawrence L. Hewitt, Lance Herdegen, Betsy Estilow, and James Marten. Cost is \$60/\$50 for museum members. Advance registration recommended. Information on all Civil War Museum programs is available at (262) 653-4140 or [www.thecivilwarmuseum.org](http://www.thecivilwarmuseum.org).

**September 18, Garlands Center for the Performing Arts, Barrington.** Dr. Sarah Moats will present Reflections on the Battle of Gettysburg: 150 Years Later at 7 p.m. Sponsored by the Barrington Area Library; registration recommended. The Garlands is just south of the Barrington Area Library at 1000 Garlands Lane. Information on all library programs is available at (847) 382-1300 or [www.balibrary.org](http://www.balibrary.org).

**September 20, Salt Creek Civil War Round Table.** Father Bob Miller will speak on Notre Dame in the Civil War.

**September 20, Wood Dale Public Library.** Nancy McCully will discuss Lincoln, Grant, and local heroes who led DuPage County during the Civil War at 7 p.m.; registration recommended.

**September 24, Garlands Center for the Performing Arts, Barrington.** In Women of the Civil War, Jim Weren discusses ways the Civil War transformed gender roles and long-held attitudes about women at 7 p.m. Sponsored by the Barrington Area Library; registration recommended.

## Book Discussion Group

The Civil War book discussion group at the Eisenhower Library, 4613 North Oketo, Harwood Heights, meets on the first Saturday of the month from 10 until 11:30 a.m. On September 7 they will discuss *Failure in the Saddle* and *Maps of Chickamauga* by David Powell. The author is tentatively scheduled to attend.

## Women's Civil War Book Club

The next book for the Civil War book club for women is *Civil War Stories* by Ambrose Bierce. The next meeting of the group is scheduled for Sunday, September 29, at 4 p.m. at the Clayson House Museum, 224 East Palatine Road, Palatine. If you are interested in joining the group, please contact Denise Limburg at [dlimburg@prodigy.net](mailto:dlimburg@prodigy.net) or (847) 382-1022, or Mary Banks at (847) 497-3149 or [zeller1@comcast.net](mailto:zeller1@comcast.net).



## 2013–14 Officers and Trustees

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### Appointed Positions

<b>Book Raffle</b>	<b>Charles Banks</b>
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	<b>Sally Smith</b>

## 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 2013–14 year are \$55 family, \$45 individual, and \$5 student. A sustaining membership is defined by any payment over and above the normal rates.

## 2013–2014 Speakers

September 6	Greg Biggs	Debacle on the Rivers: Fort Henry–Fort Donelson Campaign
October 4	Terry Winschel	Vicksburg Campaign
November 1	Bruce Kraig	How the Civil War Changed Our Food Culture
December 6	Charles Banks	U.S. Military Railroads
January 3	Wayne Rhine	Lincoln the Lawyer
February 7	Doug Stiles	Lincoln's Watch
March 7	Bruce Allardice	The Election of 1864
April 4	David Keller	Camp Douglas
May 2	Betty Kay	Three Illinois Women During the Civil War
June 6	Tim Smith	Corinth

# June Raffle

The June raffle winners were Gerry Barry, who won *Deeds of Valor*, edited by Beyer and Keydel, and Jerry Allen, who won *The Battle of the Wilderness* by G. C. Rhea, both donated by Ron Feltz; George Bass, who won *The Civil War Extra* by Eric Carren, donated by Madeleine Brennan; Rob Girardi, who won *The Battle of Glorieta Pass* by T. S. Edrington and J. M. Taylor; Elliot Kist, who won *Abraham Lincoln* by B. P. Thomas; Mark Ostrand, who won *Master of War* by Benson Bobrick; and Sheldon Cooper, Ph.D., who won *The H. L. Hunley* by Tom Chaffin.

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.

## September Saturday Discussion

All members and guests are invited to participate in the session to be held at the Hoffman Estates Community Bank, 1375 Palatine Road, Hoffman Estates, on Saturday, September 21, from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Attendees are asked to park in the adjacent lot rather than in spaces provided for bank customers.

The discussion of the Vicksburg Campaign will be led by second vice president Pat McCormick. These discussions are generally held on the third Saturday of the month from September through June.

**To learn more about this Round Table call Ellen Allen at (847) 516-6429  
or visit our website at [www.northernilcwrt.org](http://www.northernilcwrt.org)**