



January 2009
Volume 15 Number 5

The Battlefield

Newsletter of the Onondaga County Civil War Round Table

January 15th Meeting

We begin the new year with our annual Civil War Jeopardy competition. Member teams will vie with one another to answer questions quickly and correctly to win the *I Wish I Had Known That* certificate, signed by honorary member A. Lincoln. Just a few clues about the categories. Yes, Lincoln will be one of the categories - after all this is his bicentennial year. The entire past year of newsletters including info from the articles and trivia questions will certainly be a category. The remaining five categories will be a surprise because no cramming is allowed! Just bring along your years of reading and study and prepare to have fun. See you on the 15th.

December Meeting with Scott Cauger

Thirty-eight members enjoyed Missouri native and member Scott Cauger's excellent introduction to the Trans Mississippi theater of war with a focus on Missouri's importance to the Union cause. Lincoln was determined to hold Missouri. The nation's major western lines of communication and travel were anchored in the state. The Missouri, Mississippi, and Ohio rivers were also anchored in the state. Ranking eighth in population made it a manpower resource for an army. It's rich deposits of lead and iron and its agricultural production were invaluable to an army as well. As a border state it sent men, generals and supplies to both sides, had its star on both flags, and had state governments representing each side. By the end of the Civil War, Missouri had supplied nearly 110,000 troops for the Union Army and nearly 50,000 troops for the Confederate Army.

Scott focused on the first phase of battles (May - July 1861) when Missouri's neutrality was tested. Nathaniel Lyon (Union) had seized the St. Louis Arsenal. At the same time Missouri Governor Jackson had called up the Missouri State Militia for maneuvers at Camp Jackson near St. Louis. Lyon saw these maneuvers as an attempt to seize the Arsenal and attacked the militia with his troops comprised mainly of German immigrants. When Governor Jackson refused to honor Lincoln's demand for troops from the state citing Missouri's neutrality, Lyon pursued both Jackson and Sterling Price, now leading the Missouri State Guard, through the Battle of Boonville (June 17, 1861) and the Battle of Carthage (July 5, 1861). Thus began the battles to control the state. Of the 6,600 battles fought during the Civil War, 1,100 of those battles were fought in Missouri. With the Confederate loss of the Battle of Westport in October 1864, the Union finally gained control of the state.

Directions to Town of DeWitt Community Room

From 481N take Exit 5W to Kirkville Rd West. Merge onto Kirkville Rd and travel 1.2 miles. Turn right onto Kinne St and travel 0.7 miles. Turn right at Sanders Creek Parkway and travel 0.2 miles to 148 Sanders Creek Parkway, the site of the East Syracuse Fire Department and the Town of DeWitt Community Room.

2007-08 OCCWRT Officers

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Meeting Site

Town of DeWitt Community Room

148 Sanders Creek Parkway
East Syracuse, New York

Civil War Jeopardy

Thursday, January 15, 2009
7:00 PM

Our 15th Year!

Meetings are held at 7 PM on the third Thursday of the month from September through June and are free and open to the public.

Thank You for Your Dues

2008-09 dues paid as of January 1, 2009: Lisa Bradley, Bob & Kathy Brown, Mike Carpenter, Scott Cauger, Marion Chester, Dick Crozier, Gordon Cruickshank, Dave Cuculich, Collyn Conrad and Mom, Darothey DeAngelo, Frank DeGrenier, Jim Dromgoole, Nancy Edwards, David Fedele family, Bill Goodwin, Beth Greenfield, Diane Haller, Lamont Hahn, Ruth Hotaling, Ted Jones, Martin Joyce, Cheryl LaManche, Kevin Milcarek, Steve Nathan, William O'Leary, Jane Maher Proper, M. Kent Russell, Kathy Ryan, Richard Scott, Charles Snyder, Pat Stepanek, Rich & Natalie Trump, Elaine Tucker, Eleanor & James Tyler, Valerie Williams, Marcus & Kristy Lee Witt.

BYO Cup to the January Meeting

Lincoln Birthday Cards

The Illinois Lincoln Bicentennial Commission has requested citizens of all ages to send birthday greetings, hand-made if possible, to Mr. Lincoln's official mailing address as recognized by the US Postal Service: *Abraham Lincoln, c/o Old State Capital, 1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Springfield, IL 62701.*

"Whether they are made with crayon and construction paper or lace and ribbons, we hope the cards from all over the world pour into Mr. Lincoln's home town in the weeks leading up to his birthday," said Commission Chair Marilyn Kushak.

Select cards received at the Old State Capitol may be used for physical or Web site displays, or for publicity purposes. This is a great project for kids and adults alike, particularly those who enjoy the stamping hobby.

OCCWRT and the Lincoln Bicentennial

Our tributes to Abraham Lincoln will begin in March and continue through May. We will have a presentation of Lincoln's lucrative and varied law practice and an examination of Lincoln's assassination and the drama that followed that event. Details are still to be worked out for our round table to participate in an official bicentennial event in May. More details will follow.

C-Span.org and lincolnbicentennial.gov/ are the two websites to keep abreast of the year long events and programming for the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth. C-Span.org offers videos of all their Lincoln programming for the past two years. Of course you will need DSL or Roadrunner and a fairly fast computer to receive these gems.

President-elect Obama's inauguration on January 20th will reflect Lincoln beginning with Obama's train ride from Springfield to Washington. Obama will take his oath using the same bible as Lincoln used. The Lincoln theme will be evident in Obama's inaugural speech as well.

On February 12th at the Old State Capitol in Illinois, new US citizens will be sworn in during a Lincoln Naturalization Ceremony.

New Georgia CW Heritage Trails

From Civil Engineering Sept. 2008

During the Civil War, Atlanta developed into an important industrial city in the South. Factories churned out essential war supplies that were stored in city warehouses and transported to the Confederate Army via rail lines. Indeed, the Union Army's chief objective from the autumn of 1863 through the summer of 1864 was to capture Atlanta and cut off the Confederate Army from its main source of supplies. Major General William Sherman's capture of the city, known as the Atlanta Campaign, and his famous 250 mile March to the Sea significantly aided the North's war efforts. Now, this path is scheduled to become two designated driving routes in Georgia that will extend from near Chattanooga to Atlanta and from Atlanta to Savannah. Four other heritage routes also are to be built, including one focusing on Jefferson Davis. The six routes will involve more than 100 local jurisdictions, as well as the Georgia Department of Transportation and other agencies and organizations. The two initial projects include the placement of numerous interpretive markers and other signs along the routes and in paved areas where motorists can pull over. In some rural areas, the same dirt roads traversed by soldiers will form part of the driving routes. The organizers anticipate that the influx of visitors from major cities through these rural counties will bring economic benefits to areas in need of them.

Confederate Bailout

by Otis R. Taylor, Jr. for the State.com

On the verge of crisis 145 years ago, the Confederate States of America sought an economic rescue not unlike the one US financial institutions recently got. Confederate accounts were overdrawn, and credit from overseas investment firms was about to dry up because lenders weren't confident the Southern states could repay their mounting debts. So, in 1863, Alabama businessman Colin J. McRae was sent to Europe to orchestrate a bailout of the Confederacy.

In 2002, a trove of documents from McRae's time in England and France was found in the attic of a home in Alabama. The papers revealed the impact of European financing on the CW and provided historic detail of the Confederate supply chain. More than 2,500 primary documents, including 1,000 that relate directly to the CW, make up the Colin J. McRae Collection housed at the South Carolina Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum. The entire collection will be exhibited in 2011 during the CW Sesquicentennial.

Nobody knew the collection existed until William and Wendy James bought an old Queen Anne house in Mobile, Ala., to turn it into a B&B. Now known as the Kate Shepard House, it once belonged to McRae's niece. In the attic in long-forgotten boxes, McRae's papers had sat for decades.

McRae, a cotton commission merchant in Mobile who had served on Alabama's delegation to form the South's provisional government, was sent to Europe to audit Confederate accounts and monitor the transactions of Caleb Huse, a Confederate purchasing agent. Given the title of chief financial agent, McRae's duties included the refinancing, maintenance and disbursement of a \$15 million loan from Emile Erlanger & Company, a French banking house. McRae refinanced the loan at a more favorable rate, and then backed the loan bonds with cotton shipments from the South.

McRae made the purchasing of goods - from munitions to printed currency - more efficient. He also supervised blockade routes, which took ships and cargo from England to the Caribbean and then on to Southern port cities such as Charleston, Wilmington and Savannah. Everything, it appears, was recorded and itemized. And McRae's bookkeeping makes this abundantly clear: *Imported goods were the lifeline of the Confederacy.*

On display now are invoices such as an order for projectiles, ammunition and cartridges. There is currency - 15, 25, 50 and 75-cent notes - printed on English watermarked paper. An 1835 Enfield Rifle has "SC" inscribed on the butt.

At the end of the war, the United States sought to prosecute McRae because the government assumed he was hiding money. McRae never returned to Alabama; he died in Belize. It is known that McRae's family visited him in Belize and may have brought his papers back to Alabama. The museum purchased the collection for \$250,000.

Fiction, Nonfiction and Lincoln

The demand for the latest Lincoln biography continues, and publishers have tendered at least 40 new offerings within the past 2 years. 50 new titles will appear by 2010. This might suggest that for all the research done about Lincoln, writers still haven't found him. It might also suggest that fresh perspectives still emerge about the man Carl Sandberg once described "as hard as rock and soft as drifting fog." Within the past few years leading up to Lincoln's Bicentennial, readers could study Lincoln, the

writer, or Lincoln as commander in chief of the Army and Navy, Lincoln as an icon in national memory, and Lincoln as President-elect. Just search for "Lincoln" on Amazon and you will find nearly a quarter million results.

The Library of American along with Lincoln scholar Harold Holzer adds another study. *The Lincoln Anthology: Great Writers on His Life and Legacy from 1860 to Now* (964 pp) is a collection of firsthand observations by poets, playwrights, novelist, essayists, historians, clergymen, satirists and statesmen from Lincoln's time to the present. Readers will rediscover Lincoln through the eyes of Winston Churchill, Walt Whitman, T. Roosevelt, Karl Marx, Ida Tarbell, Gore Vidal and Leo Tolstoy to name just a few.. For the first time editor Harold Holzer has brought together 110 diverse perspectives that trace Lincoln's "complex and crucial legacy" for the last 150 years. No doubt this composite portrait will continue to change as each generation continues to comment on Lincoln, a man who feared he would be forgotten.

Another Missouri First

Recently in Butler, Missouri a life-sized statue of a 1st Kansas Colored Volunteer Infantryman was dedicated on the Bates County Courthouse lawn. It commemorates the Oct. 28-29, 1862 skirmish at Island Mound in Bates County. The engagement marked the first time African-American troops defeated Confederate forces during the Civil War, an action that took place more than two months prior to President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and the recruitment of black soldiers.

Onondaga County Civil War Round Table

New Member/Renewal Form

Membership dues of the OCCWRT are:

Please Check one of the Following

_____ \$20.00 a year

_____ O.H.A. members \$10.00

_____ Seniors and Students \$15.00

_____ Family rate (2 or more) \$30.00

Dues may be paid at meetings or sent to:

Onondaga County Civil War Round Table

ATTN: A. Scott Cauger Treasurer

216 Windebank Lane

Minos, NY 13116

Please find \$ _____ enclosed in form of
Circle One:

Check M.O. Cash

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Please check if you prefer an emailed newsletter
and can receive an Acrobat (pdf) file.

E-Mail _____

The Onondaga County Civil War Round Table was organized in 1994 and is now an incorporated non-profit educational organization. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month from September through June. The purpose of the OCCWRT is to stimulate and encourage interest in the American Civil War, to assist in community service in order to enhance the study and understanding of the Civil War, to provide educational and historical research of the period, and to promote historic preservation.

*Onondaga County
Civil War Round Table PO Box 175 Tully, NY 13159-0175*