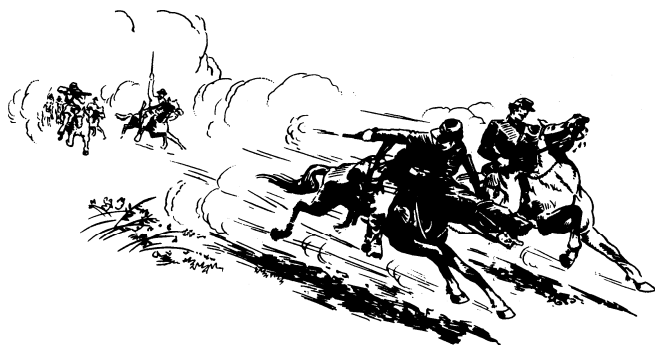


THE CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



News Letter

February 2009
Volume 58, Number 6

The Madness of Mary Todd Lincoln

In 2005, historian Jason Emerson discovered a steamer trunk formerly owned by Robert Todd Lincoln's lawyer and stowed in an attic for forty years. The trunk contained a rare find: twenty-five letters pertaining to Mary Todd Lincoln's life and insanity case, letters assumed long destroyed by the Lincoln family. Mary wrote twenty of the letters herself, more than half from the insane asylum to which her son Robert had her committed, and many in the months and years after.

The Madness of Mary Lincoln is the first examination of Mary Lincoln's mental illness based on the lost letters, and the first new interpretation of the insanity case in twenty years. This compelling story of the purported insanity of one of America's most tragic first ladies provides new and previously unpublished materials, including the psychiatric diagnosis of Mary's mental illness and her lost will.

February 2009 Meeting

Date:	Tuesday, February 10, 2009	Place:	Officers' Club Fort Lesley J. McNair Washington, DC
Price:	Dinner \$29.00 per person Lecture only \$5.00		
Agenda:	6:00 pm Social Hour: 6.45 pm Dinner:	Cash Bar Pork Chops Vegetable of the Day (Vegetarian meals are available upon request in advance.) Mashed Potatoes Apple Pie	
	8:00 pm Speaker: Topic:	Jason Emerson The Madness of Mary Todd Lincoln	

Guests are always welcome to attend our meetings.

The deadline for reservations is Monday, February 9, 2009. Please send them to:

Mr. John Restall
3324 Glenmore Dr.
Falls Church, VA 22041-3317

Phone: 703-578-1942
Email: restall@joimail.com
If reserving a dinner by email, make
such you receive a confirmation email.

As the Round Table must pay for all meals ordered, members and guests are obligated to pay for the meal in the event they do not attend.

PLEASE NOTE IMPORTANT SECURITY NOTICE ON PAGE 2

Note: The entrance to Ft. McNair is now on 2nd Street.

Officers and Board of Governors for 2008-2009

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Membership in the Civil War Round Table of the District of Columbia is open to anyone interested in the study of the American Civil War or American history. Our program year runs from September through June of the following year. Dues are \$30.00 per year (\$15 if you join after January 31, 2009) and should be mailed with a membership application form (available on our web site or from the address below) to:

CWRT of DC Membership Committee
Kenneth R. Rice
4110 N. 17th Street
Arlington, VA 22207-3005

Checks should be made out to **The CWRT of DC**. Membership includes a subscription to the monthly newsletter which contains notice of dinner meeting dates, speakers, and topics; information on field trips, and various Civil War related articles. Dinner meetings are held from September through June on the second Tuesday of each month at the Fort Leslie J. McNair Officer's Club in Washington, DC. Guests are always welcome at our meetings.

For further information about the Round Table, to submit a newsletter article, or present a program to the Round Table, please contact the newsletter editor.

IMPORTANT SECURITY NOTICE

The entrance to Ft. McNair has been moved to a new gate and search facility on 2nd Street. Please be prepared for a short delay getting through the gate when you arrive. This is for both vehicles and pedestrians. They will ask for a picture ID, search bags, and cars without a current DOD sticker.

Newsletter by Email

This newsletter is now available by email as an alternative to US mail. All recipients of this newsletter are requested to choose the email version of the newsletter. This will reduce newsletter expenses and allow the money to be used for things like battlefield preservation. To receive this newsletter by email, please indicate so on your membership form, or email the newsletter editor. The newsletter is published on our web site listed below. The newsletter editor's address is:

Kenneth R. Rice
4110 N. 17th Street
Arlington, VA 22207-3005
Email: kennrice@erols.com
Phone: 703-527-0077

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Visit our web site at: <http://users.erols.com/kennrice/cwrtdc.htm>

Jason Emerson

Jason Emerson is an independent historian and freelance writer living in Cazenovia, NY. He has published numerous articles and book reviews in both scholarly and popular publications, links to some of which can be found on this page. His first book, **The Madness of Mary Todd Lincoln**, was released in September 2007. His second book is **Lincoln the Inventor**, which was recently released on January 8.

He has worked as a National Park Service park ranger at the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, Gettysburg National Military Park, and the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (the Arch) in St. Louis; a costumed interpreter at the Genesee Country Museum in Mumfordsville, KY, a professional journalist, a newsletter publisher, and a freelance writer.

The Reel Civil War: The Civil War in the Cinema

On March 27-28, 2009, Liberty University will present its 13th annual Civil War Seminar. This year's program is entitled **The Reel Civil War: The Civil War in the Cinema**. Featured speakers include the following nationally renowned authors whose books are familiar to all Civil War enthusiasts:

Bruce Chadwick: *The Reel Civil War: Myth Making in American Film*
A Dramatic Homage to *Gone With the Wind*
Ron Maxwell: *Producer/Director of Gettysburg and Gods and Generals*
CBN Anchorman Lee Webb: *Walking a Minefield: Reporting the Civil War Today*
David Sachsman: *Memory and Myth: The Civil War in Fiction and Film*
Ken Elston: *Raising the Ghost: Composing Engaging Theatre from the Story of John S. Mosby*
Mel Reid: *Glory, Twenty Years after the Fact*
Katharine Lane Antolini: *Scarlett O'Hara as the Confederate Woman*

Paul Ashdown: *From Cold Mountain to the Carpathians: Filming a Civil War Odyssey in Transylvania*

Dr. Brenda Ayres: *Reconciliation in Civil War Movies: The Colt, Shenandoah, Mosby's Marauders, Little Colonel, Little Rebel, Johnny Shiloh*

Kevin Hershberger of Lions Gate Films: *Filming The Civil War Documentary*

Kenny Rowlette: *Civil War Films of the Centennial Celebration (1961-1965)*

Dr. Brian Wills: *Screening History: Hollywood's Depiction of the American Civil War*

In addition to the speakers' presentations, there will be numerous exhibits of Civil War artifacts and memorabilia for the public, vendors of Civil War items, and a special exhibit of Civil War movie posters. The Seminar will conclude with a special period church service on Sunday, March 29, led by the Reverend Alan Farley of Reenactor's Mission for Jesus Christ.

The event will be held at the Kirkley Hotel on Friday, March 27, 2009, and the Saturday, March 28, 2009, session will be held in DeMoss Hall on the campus of Liberty University, located in Lynchburg, Virginia. Everyone is encouraged to secure reservations for this seminar by Wednesday, March 25. Admission to the seminar is \$65 (which includes all of the seminar sessions, the Friday night banquet, and Saturday's luncheon). Admission for Friday only is \$35; admission for Saturday only is \$40.

Special lodging rates at the Kirkley Hotel of Lynchburg are available for those who will be attending the seminar. For pricing and location of lodging, call 434-237-6333.

For special group pricing for the seminar or more information, call 434-592-4366 or email klburdeaux@liberty.edu. You may also access more info at:
<http://www.liberty.edu/index.cfm?PID=8516>.

Invitation from Bull Run CWRT

The Bull Run Civil War Round Table has invited our members to join them in attending one or two plays that will be performed at Ford's Theatre in honor of its reopening and the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth:

The Heavens Are Hung in Black

Saturday, March 7, 2009, 2:30 P.M.

"Highlighting the five months between the death of Lincoln's son Willie and the delivery of the Emancipation Proclamation, **The Heavens Are Hung in Black** will offer audiences a glimpse into the person who was Abraham Lincoln. Faced with unbearable personal, political and historical pressures, watch how Lincoln copes with the world around him and eventually, through an amazing transformation of thinking, conquers it.

The Civil War

Sunday, April 26, 2009, 2:30 P.M.

"A musical landscape of the people, voices and sentiments of the American Civil War, the show is inspired by the words of Walt Whitman, Frederick Douglass, Sejourner Truth, and Abraham Lincoln as well as the lives (as documented through letters, photographs, and journals) of ordinary people in extraordinary times."

Invited participants: Round Table members, their families and invited guests

Ticket cost: \$43.00 (a savings of nine dollars) per show if twenty or more members go. No refunds will be available.

Sign-up instructions: Sign up with Jill Hilliard at jbroiling@live.com or (703)866-0569 as soon as possible. We will reserve tickets as soon as we have twenty or more people. Indicate how many tickets you wish to purchase and your e-mail and phone number.

Detailed instructions for payment of tickets, assembly location, transportation, and restaurant reservations (for those who wish) will be provided.

Lincoln and His Admirals

By Craig Symonds

Abraham Lincoln once wrote very honestly to his Navy Secretary, Gideon Welles: "I know little about ships." Lincoln preferred to leave the Navy to his advisors and admirals in the early days of the Civil War. Eventually, Lincoln transformed himself into one of the greatest naval strategists of his age and came to preside over the largest national armada the U.S. had ever had. In *Lincoln and His Admirals*, prize-winning historian Craig L. Symonds unveils this previously unexamined aspect of Lincoln's presidency, showing how the activities of the Union Navy under President Lincoln ultimately affected the course of history.

A unique and riveting portrait of Lincoln and the admirals under his command, *Lincoln and His Admirals* offers an illuminating account of Lincoln and the nation at war. In the bicentennial year of Lincoln's birth, it offers a memorable portrait of a side of his presidency often overlooked by historians.

Symonds is Professor Emeritus at the U.S. Naval Academy and the author of ten previous books, including *Decision at Sea: Five Naval Battles that Shaped American History*, which won the Theodore and Franklin D. Roosevelt Prize in 2006.

25 Years Ago

Dr. Mark E. Neely, Jr., gave a presentation to the Round Table on February 14, 1984. His topic was "Mary Todd Lincoln Declared Insane." This was a joint meeting with the Lincoln Group of Washington.

50 Years Ago

On February 10, 1959, Rear Admiral John B. Hefferman spoke to the Round table about “The Capture of New Orleans.” Admiral Hefferman was the President of the Round Table in 1954-55.

**Tenth Annual Civil War Seminar
Secret Missions And The Uncivil War**

Saturday, February 28, 2009

Appomattox Court House National Historical Park and the Department of History and Political Science at Longwood University are pleased to present the Tenth Annual Civil War Seminar, Saturday, February 28, 2009. This year’s seminar will focus on “Secret Missions and the Uncivil War.” The program begins at 9:35 a.m. on the campus of Longwood University in the Hull Building, room 132, in Farmville, VA. The seminar is free and open to the public. Lunch is available at the Longwood University dining hall. The following is a list of times, speakers, and topics:

9:35 a.m. Introduction by Dr. David Coles, History Professor, Longwood University

9:45 a.m. Tonia “Teej” Smith—
“Gentlemen, You Have Played This Damned Well’: The Execution of Confederate Spies Colonel William Orton Williams and Lieutenant Walter Gibson Peter.”

10:30 a.m. James Blankenship—“Like the Crater of a Volcano: The Ordnance Wharf Explosion at City Point.”

11:15 a.m. Tracy Chernault—“Sheridan’s Scouts: Cheerfully going wherever ordered.”

1:15 p.m. David Long—“Black Flag Warfare: When Lincoln Tried to Kill Jefferson Davis (The Dahlgren Raid).”

2:30 p.m. Robert Mackey—“John S. Mosby’s and Partisan Warfare.”

Signs will be posted on the Longwood University Campus. For directions to the campus go to www.longwood.edu . For more information contact Dr. David Coles at 434-395-2220 or Patrick Schroeder at 434-352-8987, Ext. 32.

Dinner Reservation Form For Tuesday, January 13, 2009.

The deadline for reservations is Monday, January 12, 2009.

The cost is \$29.00 per person. Please make your check payable to CWRT of DC.

Member’s Name: _____ Number of people: _____

Guest’s Name(s): _____ Cost of dinners: \$_____

Contribution to Edwin C. Bearss Award: \$_____

(Please see the description on the opposite side of this form.)

Phone Number: (____) _____ - _____

(Needed in case the meeting must be cancelled .)

Total enclosed: \$_____

Please mail this form and your check to: Mr. John Restall
3324 Glenmore Dr.
Falls Church, VA 22041-3317

Emancipation Proclamation On Display

In honor of the Lincoln Bicentennial, the original Emancipation Proclamation will be on display at the National Archives on February 12-16 (M-F). Due to the fragility of the document, it is infrequently displayed for view so don't miss this opportunity.

“Authors on Deck” Book Series at the US Navy Memorial

The United States Navy Memorial presents “Authors on Deck,” an ongoing series of lecture programs, showcasing books on the sea services. These free, noon-time presentations are open to the public and aimed at a general adult audience. During the one-hour programs, authors will discuss their books, take questions from the audience and sign their books. Our gift shop will have the books available for sale. Audience members are welcome to bring a “brown bag” lunch.

The events take place in the Presidents Room of the Naval Heritage Center, located adjacent to the Navy Memorial at 701 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20004. The Naval Heritage Center is just steps

from the Archives/Navy Memorial/Penn Quarter METRO station. There is also a parking garage in our building, accessed from D Street, NW. Visit www.navymemorial.org or contact Mark Weber, at 202-380-0723, or by email at mweber@navymemorial.org for additional information.

2009 “Authors on Deck” Series

February 10: **Lincoln and His Admirals** by Craig L. Symonds, Oxford University Press

February 17: **The Messman Chronicles: African-Americans in the US Navy 1932-43** by Richard E. Miller, Naval Institute Press

February 26: **The Golden Thirteen: Recollections of the First Black Naval Officers** by Paul Stillwell, Naval Institute Press

March 4: **First Class: Women Join the Ranks at the Naval Academy** by Sharon Disher, Naval Institute Press

March 26: **Life in Mr. Lincoln's Navy** by Dennis Ringle, Naval Institute Press

April 2: **A Sailors History of US Navy** by Tom Cutler, Naval Institute Press

Get Serious about Preservation!

This past June, the DC Round Table awarded its annual Ed Bearss Preservation Award to the Friends of Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. The award, totaling \$1000, was given to the group at the request of the man himself – Ed Bearss. As all of you know, this is something the Round Table does every year to honor Ed and to repay him, in some small way, for speaking to us and leading our field trip for free – yes, without compensation.

We're not alone. Ed donates his time to many groups in order to spark interest in the Civil War and to build momentum to preserve the Civil War landscape. This is an important time, because more of that landscape is disappearing every year. Therefore, now is the time to save it.

Your dinner reservation form has a spot to make a contribution. In addition, the Bearss' Bear, to collect money for the same purpose, is on the table at every meeting. Think what five or ten dollars from each of you every month would add up to at the end of the year. Added to the monies that we manage to set aside from book raffles, etc., we could contribute more than \$1000 to battlefield preservation.

There are many deserving Civil War preservation efforts out there, some large like the Civil War Preservation Trust, and some small like the Friends of Chickamauga and Chattanooga. Ed manages every year to choose those who are most deserving, so let's help him out and help out a good cause. Literally, we are the people who can help save history.