



# THE COURIER



## Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table



**Tuesday January 8th, 2012 Meeting #131**

**Dino's Restaurant at I90 & State Rt. 306 Willoughby, Ohio**

**Canteen at 6:00 Dinner at 7:00 Guests are Welcome**

**Speaker: Todd Arrington**

**Topic: "The Republican Party, the Civil War and the Western Expansion"**

**Reservations required Please call Mike Sears**

**Phone 440 257 3956 e-Mail: [mikeanddonnas@roadrunner.com](mailto:mikeanddonnas@roadrunner.com)**



**Todd Arrington** is a career National Park Service employee. He is currently Chief of Interpretation and Education at **James A. Garfield National Historic Site**, a position he has held since April 2009. Prior to his current assignment, he served ten years as Historian at Homestead National Monument of America in Beatrice, Nebraska. He has also worked at Gettysburg National Military Park and Eisenhower National Historic Site, both in his hometown of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. He received his Ph.D. in American History from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in May 2012. His dissertation, "**Free Homes for Free Men": A Political History of the Homestead Act, 1774-1863**", is currently nominated for the Agricultural History Society's prestigious Gilbert C. Fite

Award for the year's best dissertation in agricultural history.

He has been published several times on subjects related to the American Civil War, westward expansion, and African American settlement in the West. Most recently, his essay "**Industry and Economy during the Civil War**" was published in *The Civil War Remembered*, the National Park Service's official handbook commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War. He has spoken at dozens of academic conferences and meetings, including those hosted by the George Wright Society, the Nebraska State Historical Society, the Illinois State Historical Society, Lincoln Home National Historic Site, the University of Nebraska, and the Organization of American Historians. In discussing relevant history and National Park Service news and events, he has appeared on PBS, numerous television news programs, several radio programs, Radio Free Europe, and National Public Radio.

Arrington served in the United States Army from 1995-98. He is married to the former Kristy M. Riggle, and they have a daughter and a son.

## CIVIL WAR JOURNAL of Franco M. Sperrazzo, Events Coordinator

**December 11th Meeting with Kathie Purmal:** Ms. Purmal's communication skills were tested and shined brightly when her computer program malfunctioned. Kathie never missed a beat to the delight of 57 members and guests. Ms. Purmal's knowledge of the historical buildings of Lake County was accented by her ability to bring the mansions of Lake County to life with vivid stories of the people that built them and raised their families there. The Civil War Trust has dedicated its efforts to the difficult and expensive task of maintaining and restoring historic buildings and battlefields. Many artistic and architectural treasures are lost to demolition and natural erosion over time. Kathie's knowledge and warm personality were both evident during her presentation. Our "Out Going," Program Chairman Joseph E. Tirpak, made an outstanding selection in planning Kathie Purmal for our Holiday, Ladies Night Gala.



*Photographs above and below from our December Holiday Gala*

**Membership Dues for 2013 New Year:** Your NEOCWRT membership renewal time is here. We are constant at \$55.00. Your commitment includes 9 regular meetings, Spring Tour, Summer Speaker Symposium, Fall Field Trip, WR Historical Society admission and special events. You may bring your check to the Jan 8<sup>th</sup> meeting but separate it from the \$24.00 monthly dinner fees from Dino's. You may also, mail your check of \$55.00 to **Bill Meissner, Treasurer, at 9571 Headlands Road, Mentor, OHIO 44060**

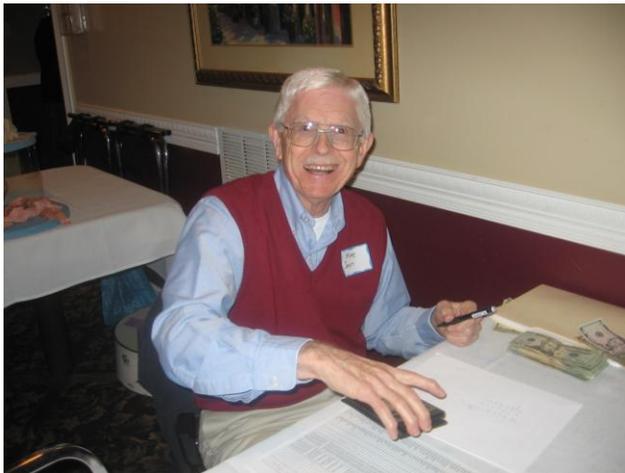


**James A. Garfield @ Mentor Library:** the *2013 Major Battles of the Civil War Series* continues at the Mentor Public Library on Wednesday January 9<sup>th</sup> from noon until 1-1:15pm. Learn more about the document that transformed the Civil War from a conflict to preserve the Union to one seeking to abolish slavery. The Emancipation Proclamation became effective January 1, 1863. The Garfield room is on the lower level. Location is 8215 Mentor Avenue. Please call: 440-255-8722 to confirm or just come. Bring your lunch if you like.

**Theodore J. Karle speaks in Painesville:** Ted has several talks not only Civil War related. He will speak to the Lake County Bar Association Literary Committee on Thursday January 17, at 4:45pm. The Lake County Courthouse is in Painesville and directions can be obtained by calling 440-350-5800. Ted's topic will be the *USS Michigan*. Be sure to see Ted, at our meeting, next Tuesday, for more details.

*"Proclaim Liberty throughout the Land unto all the inhabitants there of".....Leviticus 25:10*

**Todd Arrington, PH.D Engages NEOCWRT January 8, 2013:** The last couple of years a group of our Civil War Round Table members have been building a strong bond with the Chief of Interpretation and Education at James A. Garfield National Historic Site. Sherda Williams is the Park Manager and NEOCWRT member ,Scott Longert, is part of the National Park Service Staff that is always extending their hospitality and professionalism to many of our out of the region, guest speakers. Photographs below: “More from the Gala”



**NEOCWRT 2013 Executive Officers:**

**Tom Horvath: President, Carl Dodaro: Vice President, Bill Meissner: Treasurer, Steve Abbey: Secretary,  
Mike Sears: Sergeant at Arms Terry Reynolds: Membership Director Frank Yannucci: Constitution & Continuity  
Bob Baucher & Norton London: Program Chairmen, Franco Sperrazzo: Special Events Coordinator  
Arlan Byrne: Special Projects Manager**

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**Past Presidents of the Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table**

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|-------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Joseph Tirpak</b>    | <b>1998</b> | <b>Brent Morgan</b>     | <b>2006</b> |
| <b>Bob Baucher</b>      | <b>1999</b> | <b>J. Michael Sears</b> | <b>2007</b> |
| <b>Norton London</b>    | <b>2000</b> | <b>Bill Meissner</b>    | <b>2008</b> |
| <b>Bob Bayless</b>      | <b>2001</b> | <b>Arlan Byrne</b>      | <b>2009</b> |
| <b>Dr. Bob Battisti</b> | <b>2002</b> | <b>Terry Reynolds</b>   | <b>2010</b> |
| <b>Frank Yannucci</b>   | <b>2003</b> | <b>Franco Sperrazzo</b> | <b>2011</b> |
| <b>Ted Karle</b>        | <b>2004</b> | <b>Steve Abbey</b>      | <b>2012</b> |
| <b>John Sandy</b>       | <b>2005</b> |                         |             |

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**The Courier is the monthly newsletter of the Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table**

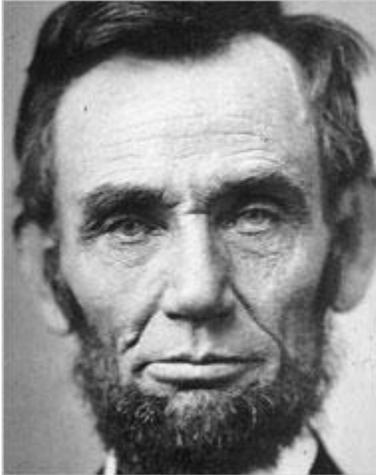
**John Sandy Editor,**

**Staff Writers: Tom Horvath, Franco Sperrazzo, Carl Dodaro, Scott Hagara**

**Arlan Byrne, Ted Karle, Joe Tirpak, Brent Morgan: Richmond, Virginia Correspondent**

## The Emancipation Proclamation by Arlan Byrne

Thursday, January 1 1863, was a cold, sunny day in Washington D.C. President Lincoln arose early. There was much to do, most importantly the formal signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. But first, General Ambrose E. Burnside called at the White House. He had just lost the poorly planned Fredericksburg Campaign, and he knew he had also lost the confidence of his men. He felt he should retire to private life. The President calmed the general and sent him back to his troops. Then Lincoln put the finishing touches on the Proclamation and sent it over to the Department of State for the superscription and closing.



At 10:45 the document was returned to the White House by Secretary of State William Seward. The President started to sign it, but then he noticed an error in the superscription. It read, "In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my name and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed." The President never used that form, always preferring to say "In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand..... etc." He asked Seward to make the correction so the formal signing could take place after the morning's reception.

The traditional White House New Year's Day reception began at eleven o'clock. Members of the cabinet and the diplomatic corps arrived first. Then at 11:30 officers of the Army and Navy arrived. The public was admitted at noon and the reception lasted until 2:00 P.M.

The corrected copy arrived during the reception and as soon as the last guests had left, the President went upstairs to his study with Seward and a few friends for the signing. As he started to sign, his hand shook violently. He hesitated, not wanting to sign his name with a shaking hand and have the public think he was unsure about the importance of this document. Then he remembered he had spent three hours shaking hands at the reception. He laughed, massaged his hand and as he wrote his name in a bold signature he said, "I never, in my life, felt more certain that I was doing right than I do in signing this paper." It was done.

One day in early June 1862, six months earlier, Lincoln had dropped into the telegraph room of the War Department where he was a frequent visitor. He ask Thomas T. Eckert, who was in charge of the office, for some paper. Then he sat quietly writing and thinking. When he left he asked Eckert to keep the paper and not show it to anyone. Eckert locked it in a desk drawer. For several weeks Lincoln would return. Sometimes he would only write a few lines; other times a whole page. Eckert later said he did not know what the President was writing until he was finished. Then, for the first time, he told Eckert he had been writing an order "giving freedom to the slaves in the South for the purpose of shortening the war."



During the next few weeks Lincoln talked to more and more people about his paper until finally, at a cabinet meeting on July 22, he told them he had resolved to issue a proclamation emancipating the slaves. Then he read the Proclamation. A lively discussion followed until Seward suggested postponing a public announcement of the Proclamation until "you can give it to the country supported by military success, attended by fife and drum and public spirit." Lincoln agreed.

Military success, however, was slow in coming until September 17, at the Battle of Antietam. Since McClellan refused to resume the battle the next day, it was not a clear cut Union victory; but because Lee's invasion of the North had been turned back, Lincoln decided it was sufficient. He called a cabinet meeting for Monday September 22 at which the Proclamation, commonly called the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation was read. It called for the emancipation of slaves in the states or parts of states then in rebellion against the Federal Government. It would be signed on January 1, 1863, about 100 days away. It did not mention slaves in the loyal states.

The next day 15,000 copies of the Preliminary Proclamation were printed for distribution to military commanders and their troops. Other copies were sent to newspapers, government agencies and diplomatic posts overseas. Immediately discussions and arguments, both pro and con began. They continued through the fall elections; and although the Republicans lost heavily to the Democrats, they still retained control of both houses of the government.

Washington had a quiet Christmas. Congress was in recess and many members had gone home; but the Cabinet met almost daily during the last week in December. At the Cabinet meeting on December 29, Lincoln read a draft of his Emancipation Proclamation and some discussion followed. In the December 30 Cabinet meeting, copies of the Proclamation were given to the members and cosmetic changes were suggested. On Wednesday, December 31, the Cabinet held its final meeting of the year at ten o'clock in the morning. When the Proclamation was taken up several members of the cabinet, especially Secretary of the Treasury, Salmon Chase, offered last minute changes. The President took the suggestions "written in order," and said "he would complete the document."

Tension had been building in the North for weeks; both for and against the next day's Proclamation. Some even doubted the president would sign the document. But the nation's blacks and their abolitionist allies were confident. Celebrations began at sundown on New Year's Eve with singing, speeches and prayers in churches, halls and outdoor camps all over the North; and continued far into the night, some even until dawn. Tomorrow would be their 'Day of Days', the 'Day of Jubilee', and the 'First Day of Freedom'.

In plain language, this is what the Emancipation Proclamation said:



*1. In states then in rebellion against the United States Government all slaves would immediately be free.*

When the war started there were approximately 4 million slaves worth about a trillion dollars in the South. Since the rich slave owning planters had started the war, it was felt only fair that they should lose their investments.

*2. Slaves in the loyal states and parts of Louisiana and Virginia that had rejoined the Union were not freed.*

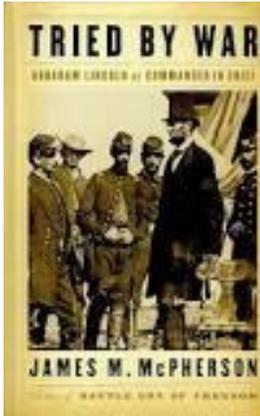
Lincoln intended to have the government buy the freedom of these slaves, as it had done with the District of Columbia [Washington] slaves in March of 1862. That way the loyal slave owners were not penalized. But first he had to get the money appropriated.

*3. All freed slaves were not to engage in violence, except in self defense.*

*4. All freed slaves should give an honest day's labor for an honest day's wages.*

*5. All freed slaves were eligible to join the United States Military.*

## **Tried by War – Abraham Lincoln as Commander in Chief by James M. McPherson** **Book Review by Scott Hagara.**



The United States Constitution states that “The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States.” The document, however, does not define the powers of the president, or give further guidance, in carrying out this task. With no guidance and very little military background, our 16<sup>th</sup> President, Abraham Lincoln, faced quite a challenge as he entered office in 1861.

On his first day in office, the very first document placed on Abraham Lincoln’s desk was a letter from Major Anderson at Fort Sumner, informing him that the garrison there must be withdrawn or resupplied at the risk of war. Lincoln took that risk, and his entire administration proved to be bound by war. During his time in office, military matters required more of the President’s time and energy than anything else. His success or failure as president, as well as the very survival of the United States, depended on how he performed his duties as commander in chief.

As president and commander in chief, Abraham Lincoln was principally responsible for shaping and defining the policy of the nation. This was the preservation of the United States as one nation, indivisible, and as a republic based on majority rule. He stated that secession “is the essence of anarchy” and believed that no compromise between a sovereign United States and a separately sovereign Confederate States was possible. As noted historian and author James M. McPherson quotes Lincoln: This issue “is distinct, simple, and inflexible.” as Lincoln said in 1864, and in the President’s words: “It is an issue which can only be tried by war, and decided by victory.”

Lincoln entered office with a nation that was primed for war, but inherited an army that surely was not. The U. S. Army numbered only 16,000 men, many stationed at frontier posts and led by a disproportionate number of officers from the South, including the general-in-chief, Winfield Scott. Lincoln initially deferred to Scott for military strategy and operations, but soon found that the general’s advanced age, poor health and lack of energy made it clear that he could not manage the war effort. His successor, General George McClellan, proved an even greater disappointment to Lincoln. A list of others, including Generals Halleck, Buell, Pope, Burnside, and Hooker also did not meet Lincoln’s expectations. The perceived shortcomings of these men compelled the President to become in effect his own general-in-chief as well as commander in chief.

Lincoln quickly grasped some military principals that eluded some of his generals. “In his conception of military strategy,” writes McPherson, “Lincoln was Clausewitzian. The Prussian theorist of war had written that ‘the destruction of the enemy’s military force is the leading principle of war,’ and it “is principally effected only by means of the engagement’, that is, by ‘hard, tough fighting.” It was only during the final year of the war that General U. S. Grant, along with Generals Sherman, Sheridan, Thomas and several others, followed Lincoln’s vision that the Union’s overwhelming number of men and supplies had to be used to vigorously pursue an aggressive strategy by attacking a number of fronts at the same time.

Tried by War is an interesting narrative and documents the President’s progression from “an amateur of war to America’s greatest war leader.” McPherson illustrates the evolution of Lincoln’s wartime policies as he exercised his right to take any measures necessary to preserve the union, including violating longstanding civil liberties, such as habeas corpus, and developing the Emancipation Proclamation to attack the South’s resource of slave labor. The book provides a nice timeline as it chronicles the development of military strategy with the major military conflicts of the war.

Despite Lincoln’s ultimate success with the Union victory, the book also discusses some of his failures as a military leader. Among them, giving too much command responsibility to political generals, as well as some poor appointments of generals to command the Army of the Potomac, including Burnside and Hooker.

I found Tried by War to be very well written with a level of detail that greatly added to my understanding of the Civil War, as well as President Lincoln. Similar to most of McPherson’s works, it is not too difficult to read.

This book was published in 2008 by Penguin Press and is a very manageable 270 pages long. It contains a nice index for reference purposes. It is available in hard cover and paperback through Amazon or other bookstores, as well as in circulation at the Mentor Public Library and the Morley Library.