

THE FLAGBEARER

....News from the New Bedford Civil War Round Table

Membership dues for 2017-2018 Round Table season are now due. Please fill out the enclosed Membership Form and return it with your check to our Treasurer, Martin Flinn.

We have scheduled a number of very exciting speakers for the new season. However, in order to keep this excellent run of speakers going, we need your support, your presence, and your hard work to bring in friends that might become new members. We are non profit, open to the public, and certainly looking for additional members, - folks with an interest in history, particularly the most divisive war in our history, - The American Civil War. Please consider telling a friend about us, and invite them to our next meeting.

....Thank you to Frank Grzyb, author, and our September speaker. His talk /book was very interesting— *The Last Civil War Veterans*.

2017-2018 Executive Board

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bobbylee76@comcast.net

Greater New Bedford Civil War Round Table

Tuesday, October 24, 2017 @ 7:00 pm

We meet at the Fort Taber~Fort Rodman Military Museum



Meet our October speaker

James E. Thayer, "Olmsted's War"

James Thayer holds three degrees from the University of Massachusetts: a BA in Philosophy, and a BA and MA in History. He also holds a Computer Science degree from Dean College.

Under the direction of Professor Michael B. Chesson, a member of Olde Colony Civil War Round Table, Thayer completed his graduate work with "Fag an Bealac: The Twenty-Eight Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1865, From its Formation to the Battle of Fredericksburg, 13 December 1862", a thesis that chronicles this hard fighting Irish regiment's tumultuous first year of service. Thayer is revising and expanding his thesis to produce a book-length manuscript suitable for publication.



From July through December 2014, Thayer served a six-month internship at the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Olmsted's former home in Brookline and location of the nation's first, large, landscape-architecture firm. In addition to conducting ninety site tours as a docent, Thayer wrote several site-bulletin texts and a research paper, "Frederick Law Olmsted's Tenure as Secretary General of the Unites States Commission, 1861-63," from which the October 24th lecture at the New Bedford Civil War Round Table is derived. Thayer has delivered the "Olmsted's War" lecture at several New England venues.

HOLD THE DATE OPEN

It's our Annual Holiday Dinner and Book Raffle

Tuesday December 19, 2017 6:00 pm

Me and Ed's Restaurant Buffet \$27.00 per person

Look for the sign up invitation/ticket info in this mailing



Abraham Lincoln, Our Greatest Presidential Writer
By New Bedford Civil War Round Table Member *Peter Rioux*

Edmund Wilson, the great 20th Century essayist and literary critic, once said that Abraham Lincoln, as a writer, “stood alone among American presidents. He could summon an art of incantation with words and then practice it magnificently. He surely could have made a living as a writer.” For Lincoln, at a very early age, writing became a self-willed skill, a skill that was originally derived from his continuing fascination and love for his reading of the written word as expressed in the Bible, Shakespeare (especially Macbeth), Aesop's Fables, and many 18th Century essayists. His reading served as the basis for the formulation of his own writing craft. He would learn to develop and continuously refine this craft over time by first writing in his copy book as well as on any other material he could find, including tree bark, snow, and sand. He then worked to enhance his skill by writing letters for illiterate neighbors to send, and then, as a young man, essays, poetry, and satires.

Lincoln also learned to appreciate the value of his skilled pen, which he would need to effectively convey his message to a wider audience and to achieve eventual political success. Through the constant application and refinement of his developing skill, he became a serious literary craftsman in the 1850's and dramatically culminated during his presidential years. In doing so, he employed several personal skills to achieve this stature:

He closely listened to the expressions of his Illinois friends and constituents so that he could employ written language that was simple and direct so that it would be easily understood and recognized. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “He reflected a human tone to his writing.”

He had a powerful memory, one that enabled him to recall stories he had heard years earlier. He described himself as having “a mind like a steel plate, once etched on, it stays.” John Hay, his assistant, had written that Lincoln, in preparing a speech or letter, could write the first half of a sentence, pause for an extended interruption for hours and then resume the second half of the sentence without re-reading the first half.

He was an auditory writer in that he wrote for the appreciation and attentiveness of the listener. He would often say that “I write by ear.” As he composed, he would then read aloud what he had written to himself and to others in order to determine and refine the sound, cadence, and rhythm of his work.

He was often described as a pre-writer. He would write very carefully, never impulsively or spontaneously, with extensive pre-thought, always applying the patience to use the precise words to accurately convey his meaning. When preparing a speech, he would first record on small pieces of paper fragments his thinking on a particular topic, later collecting and assembling them to construct and craft his written text.

His reasoning skill and logical ability was superior. A testimony to this was his ability to memorize all six volumes of Euclid's propositions on geometry. His arguments were tightly reasoned, laying the foundation for his powerful conclusions rendering them almost impossible to refute (i.e. his legal appeals, Cooper Union speech contesting the extension of slavery). He had the ability to compress a complicated legal or policy argument into a brief and coherent form.



*by the people, for the people, shall not per-
ish from the earth.*

Abraham Lincoln.

November 19, 1863.

(...Lincoln the WriterCon't)

When preparing his speeches, which he authored entirely, he would employ certain techniques in his expression that would more easily enable the listener to retain his words, such as the following:

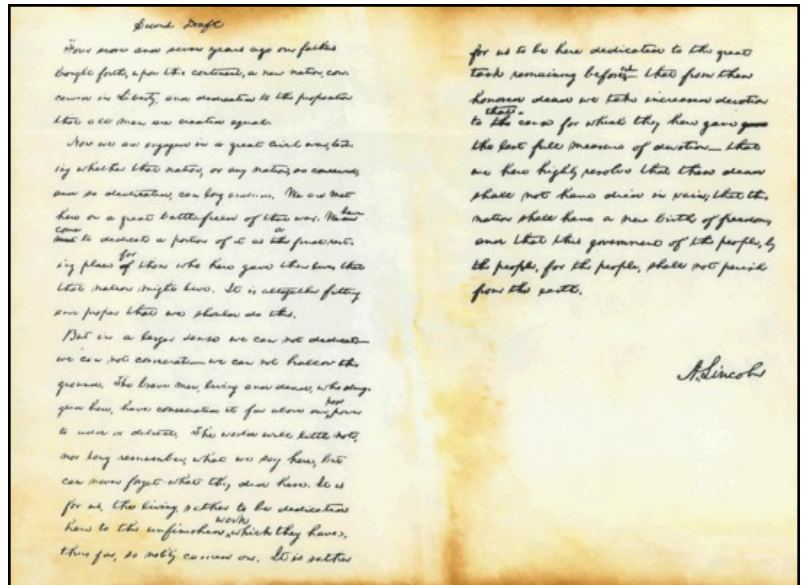
- the use of the elevated opening to signal the importance of the text to follow (i.e. “Four score and seven years ago”)
- the use of prose trinity (i.e. “of the people, by the people, for the people”)
- the use of antithesis (i.e. “With malice toward none, with charity for all”)
- the use of one syllable words in sequence to heighten their impact (i.e. “ And the war came.”)

Those written skills and techniques made such an expression on Frederick Douglass that he was able to completely recall the last six sentences of Lincoln's Second Inaugural (starting with “With malice”) when he was unexpectedly called upon in a Rochester church on the Sunday after the assassination to offer a tribute.

Upon taking office in 1861, Lincoln, by virtue of his geographic origin, was generally perceived as having woefully deficient writing and expressive skills. That view rapidly extinguished once his written words as President were actually read and heard for the first time. His words were a true representation of him - his experience, his roots, his clarity of purpose, his vision, his values and his character. And for this reason, these words, as we read and hear them even today, still so clearly resonate with us.

SOURCES CONSULTED:

- Ted Sorenson: “Lincoln, A Man of His Words”
- Dr. Fred Kaplan: “Lincoln, Biography of a Writer”
- Douglas Wilson: Lincoln's Sword
- Dr. Peter Schram: “Lincoln's Writing Style”
- Ronald C. White: “Lincoln's Faith”



United States Sanitary Commission

The United States Sanitary Commission (USSC) was a private relief agency created by federal legislation on June 18, 1861, to support sick and wounded soldiers of the United States Army during the American Civil War. It operated across the North, raised an estimated \$25 million in Civil War era revenue (assuming 1865 dollars, \$391.14 million in 2017), to support the cause and enlisted thousands of volunteers. The President was Henry Bellows, a Massachusetts clergyman, and Frederick Law Olmsted, famed landscape architect who designed New York's Central Park, acted as executive secretary. It was modeled on the British Sanitary Commission, set up during the Crimean War (1853-1856)



Frederick Law Olmsted, oil painting by John Singer Sargent, 1895, Biltmore Estate, Asheville, North Carolina

Come hear the rest of the story, Frederick Law Olmsted's story, on Oct 24th.

Oliver W. Holmes Dinner Announcement

The Civil War Roundtable of Central Massachusetts and the Greater Boston Civil War Roundtable invite you to the Oliver Wendell Holmes Awards Dinner.

Garry Adelman will be the keynote speaker and award recipient. He is a well known author, educator, and battle guide. The dinner is scheduled for Saturday October 28th at Ken's Steak House , 95 Worcester Road (Route 9) Framingham, MA. To reserve your place , please send a check for \$45.00/ per person , made out to The Civil War Roundtable of Central Massachusetts, to: John Hussey , 99 Mason Road, Jefferson, MA 01522.

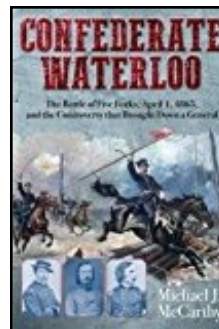
*** It should be noted that while I cannot be present for the dinner, I highly recommend this one to you. I have attended these dinners in the past. First , these folks do a whale of a job putting on a first class evening , and second , having Garry Adelman, the Director of History and Education for the Civil War Trust as the keynote speaker will be worth the effort to get there early and get a front row seat. I follow Garry's Facebook page—he is really enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Please give some serious thought to attending this dinner. Reservation deadline is October 14th.Bob Lytle

UPCOMING SPEAKERS FOR THE NEW BEDFORD CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE.

November 14, 2017

Michael McCarthy

Confederate Waterloo—The Battle of Five Forks, April 1, 1865, and the Controversy that Brought Down a General



Jan 22, 2018

Chuck Viet

Chuck returns with the story of the U.S.S. Alligator



We are holding the Feb 2018 date open in hopes that we can host a visit by one the rock stars of the Gettysburg National Park Service Ranger Corps. We are keeping our fingers crossed.

SAVE THE DATE !!!!

**New Bedford Civil War Round Table Annual
Holiday Party at Me and Ed's Restaurant**

TUESDAY DECEMBER 19, 2017, 6:00 PM

WHEN DID THE CIVIL WAR END???

April 3, 1865 : Richmond Falls

April 9: Lee Surrenders Army of Northern Virginia

April 26: Johnston Surrenders Army of Tennessee

(30,000 soldiers)

May 8: General Richard Taylor Surrenders 42,000

Soldiers in Dept. of Alabama, Mississippi, and Eastern Louisiana

May 10: General Samuel Jones Surrenders Dept of

South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida

May 26: Gen'l Edmund Kirby Smith Surrenders

Trans-Mississippi Department (18,000)

June 23: Gen'l Stand Watie Surrenders Cherokee,

Creek, and Seminole Allied to CSA

November 6: C.S.S. Shenandoah Surrenders in

Liverpool England

By end of 1865 329,963 Confederate Soldiers and

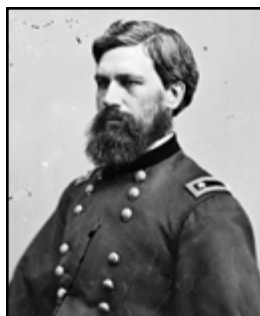
Sailors were Surrendered

August 20, 1866: U.S. Government Declares War to

Be Officially over

Test your knowledge !

Name this Major General



2018 Speakers.....Continued

November 13, 2018

Megan Kate Nelson returns.

She will feature her newest book , "Path of the Dead Man: How the West was Won,- and Lost- during the American Civil War." Kate was recently honored as a recipient of a 2017 NEH Public Scholar Award. This is her 3rd or 4th appearance here.



.....More on 2018 Round Table Speakers

March 27, 2018

Susan B. Smith

Jackson's 'Little Sorrel'



Jackson and Little Sorrel, painting by David Bendann

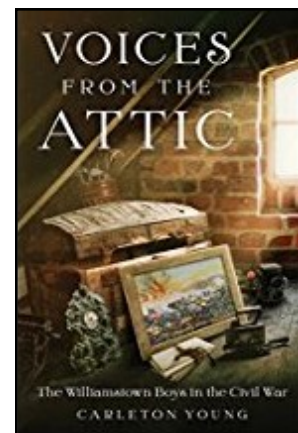
April 24, 2018

Carlton Young

Book author from Pittsburgh, PA

Voices from the Attic: The Williamstown Boys in the Civil War

Carlton's new book has received excellent reviews. We are pleased to have him on our 2018 speaker schedule.



September 25, 2018

.....The return of

Col. Kevin Weddle

Professor of Military Theory and Strategy at the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, Pennsylvania



October 23, 2018

Kate Ramirez, Living Historian

Mary Surratt, Lincoln Assassination—Co-conspirator

Hung on July 7, 1865

"Guilty or Not Guilty"

This will be Kate's first New England appearance. You will not wish to miss this performance, - historical, educational, and thought provoking. Guilty ???



New Bedford Civil War Round Table

2017- 2018 Membership/Dues Renewal Form

Membership is valid for 2017-2018 Program year, beginning September 1, 2017. Please fill out this form, and along with check payable to "New Bedford CWRT" send to:

*New Bedford Civil War Round Table
C/O Martin Flinn, Treas.
39 Little Oak Road
New Bedford, MA 02745*

Name(s): _____ (Please PRINT clearly)

Type of Membership: _____ Individual (\$25.00) _____ Family (\$30.00)

Home Address: _____

City, State, & Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E Mail Address: _____

Date: _____