

THE FLAGBEARER

Greater New Bedford Ma Civil War Round Table

Tuesday March 24, 2020 7:00 pm

at the Fort Taber~Fort Rodman Military Museum

1000c Rodney French Blvd. New Bedford

Open to the public , no fees, no reservations needed



IN MEMORIUM



New Bedford Civil War Round Table President

Joseph E. Langlois

Died February 29, 2020

2019-2020 Executive Board

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bobbylee76@comcast.net

Tuesday March 24, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

Speaker—David A. Kelly Jr.

Associate Professor, Joint Military Operations

Program Manager, Graduate Degree Education, College of Distance Education

U.S. Naval War College— Newport, RI

Topic: "The Sultana Tragedy"



Joe Langlois.... Another founding father of our Round Table has fallen. It doesn't seem fair. We are but less than 15 years old as an organization. In the beginning, March , 2007, the Round Table met in a side room at the Museum ,(now the Armory), not at a round table , but a rectangular table, with about 8-9 members in attendance. Enthusiasm was high. We did not worry about growing as a group, but figured that with good speakers we could indeed share our enthusiasm with others.



Today that group is nearing 50 dues paying members. What Joe and his friends began In 2013, can and must continue. The Round Table will need your help for without you, we have no organization.

Interest in the American Civil War goes to the heart of our shared experience as a country. I tell people who ask how I'm coping with present day national conflicts, - I say that I hide in my reading of American history, the original historical record, loaded with stories, conflicts, triumphs, failures, and so on. And with validity, I can say , we've seen this before, and as a nation, we will be ok.

But it all started with local civic action, and in our case, Joe Langlois and the formation of the Civil War Round Table , which led to the monthly meetings, the Annual Memorial Day Service at Rural Cemetary, the summer picnic, and the December Holiday Dinner.

Our charge from Joe, I'm sure, is to stay on the offence, keep the army advancing, pitch in when needed, and if along the way , you hear of a good Irish story, think of Joe Langlois.

...Bob Lytle

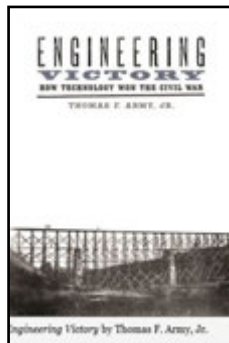
Spring 2020 Speaker/Meeting Schedule

April 21, 2020

Tom Army Jr.

Engineering Victory; How Technology Won the War for the Union

Dr. Thomas F. Army is an adjunct professor at Quinebaug Valley Community College, Connecticut

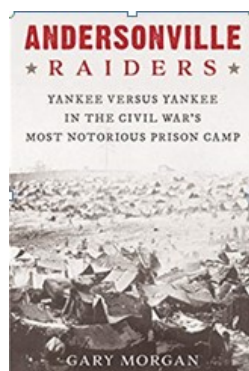


May 26, 2020

Mary Gorman A.K.A. Gary Morgan

"The Andersonville Raiders"

The first book devoted exclusively to the Andersonville Raiders.

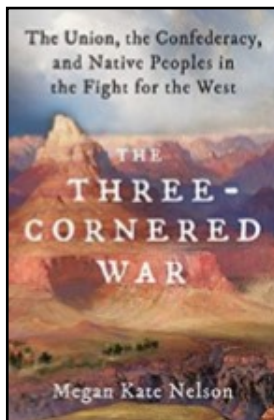


Latest news from Megan Kate Nelson

....A frequent speaker and friend of this Round Table , Dr. Megan Kate Nelson, has kicked off her 2020 book tour and will be our speaker in September at the New Bedford Civil War Round Table. Mark your calendar for September 22, 2020. Her new book, Three Cornered War, is getting excellent reviews.

One review noted, - " A dramatic, riveting , and deeply researched narrative account of the epic struggle for the West during the Civil War, revealing a little-known, vastly important episode in American history. "

I urge you to order a copy of her new book, " The Three-Cornered War"



....From the New Bedford Civil War Round Table

...As always, we need several of you to arrive around 6:30 pm on meeting night and help set up the room. It is very much appreciated.

...Don't forget to tell your friends that we have a Facebook page. It is an excellent source of information about our upcoming meetings.

...Our January Flagbearer mailing contained a flyer on the "5 Days in May" annual field trip/tour sponsored by Al Smith and the Greater Boston Civil War Round Table. If you believe you might want to be on this trip, make your reservation soon.

NEW BEDFORD CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

2019-2020 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Membership is valid for 2019-2020 Program Year, beginning September 1, 2019. Please complete this form, along with check payable to "New Bedford CWRT" and mail to:

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

Name(s): _____ (Please print)

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

Home Address: _____

City, State, & Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email Address: _____

This month in Civil War history—March 1861

...Mar 2. The Provisional Confederate Congress meeting in Montgomery , Ala. provided for the admission of Texas to the Confederacy. The Union set up two new territories , Nevada and Dakota. President Buchanan said troops had been ordered to Washington D.C. for the purpose of preserving peace.

...Mar 3 President-Elect Lincoln had a full day in Washington , hosting a dinner for his new cabinet, visiting the Senate, and conferring on appointments. At Charleston, Brig. General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard assumed command of Confederate troops around Charleston Harbor.

...Mar 4 Abraham Lincoln is inaugurated as President of the United States. The cloudy weather cleared and the President came out of the Capitol about 1:00 pm. When he arose to speak, he could not find a place for his hat and Senator Douglas reached out and held Mr. Lincoln's hat during the ceremonies.

Over the next week, the North debated what to do about Ft, Sumter, reinforce, resupply, or give it up. Meanwhile the Confederacy is taking over forts, armories, and property throughout the south.

...Mar 18 Aging hero Sam Houston, governor of Texas, refused to take an oath of allegiance to the new Confederacy because he did not believe that secession necessarily meant adherence to the new nation. It was the last act of the frontier leader's public life.

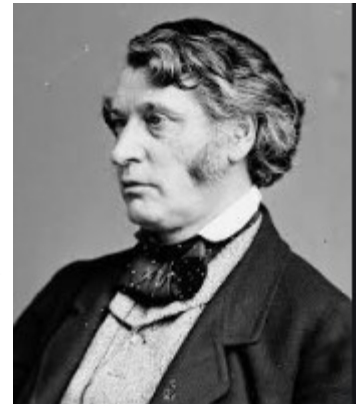
...Mar 29 President Lincoln had made his decision , - "I desire that an expedition, to move by sea, be got ready to sail as early as the 6th of April next" to attempt to resupply and perhaps reinforce Fort Sumter.

...Mar 31 President Lincoln ordered a relief expedition prepared to go to Ft. Pickens Florida. And in Texas, Fort Bliss was turned over to the Confederacy.

Senator Charles Sumner

The Moral Inspiration of an Abolitionist—by Peter Rioux

Throughout the mid Twentieth Century, one of the most persistent, eloquent, and forceful voices advancing the cause of the abolition of slavery and the promotion of black human and civil rights was that of Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, perhaps the strongest non African American advocate in American history. For over half of his life, he maintained an unrelenting drive toward the achievement of human equality, despite constantly experiencing severe political opposition and physical threats. His dynamic and unrelenting voice echoes one hundred and forty-six years after his death.



Sumner was born in 1811, the son of Charles Pickney Sumner, who had served as a Suffolk County Sheriff and also held strong abolitionist views. The sustaining message that he conveyed to his son early in young Sumner's life was that the eradication of slavery was a necessity and the achievement of equality and the advancement of human growth beyond the elimination of this evil institution was a primary moral law for governments. His father had said to him, "It will do no good to make blacks as free as whites unless we learn to have good feelings toward them and treat them equally as well."

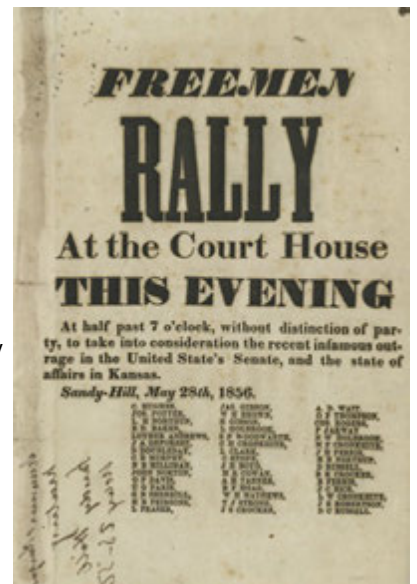
Early in his life, Sumner was exposed to a series of influences that motivated the development of his strong abolitionist and human rights view. He was raised in a largely African American neighborhood on Beacon Hill in Boston. While residing in this area for most of his adult life, and immersing himself into its cultural, social, and political life, he established close and trusting relationships with members of the black community's clergy and influential political leaders. While attending Harvard Law School, his abolitionist view took further shape, as he was heavily influenced by Joseph Story, Associate Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court.

In the early 1830's, upon his graduation, he worked for Benjamin Rand, a strong abolitionist advocate. In 1834, while traveling through the slave state of Maryland, he saw first hand the deplorable condition of working slaves. In the late 1830's, Sumner traveled to Paris and studied law at the Sorbonne where he directly experienced the free association and intermingling of white and black law students, prompting him to write that, "Slavery is a national and individual sin." Upon his return to America to practice law, Sumner was further influenced by William Channing, a Unitarian minister whose abolitionist message would resonate throughout his sermons. Sumner wrote of Channing after the minister's death, "I hear his voice pleading trumpet tongued for humanity, for right, for truth."

During the early 1840's, Sumner became even more assertive in advancing his anti-slavery and human rights positions, advocating for penal reform and the improvement of prison conditions, opposing laws prohibiting interracial marriage, opposing the Mexican War in that it would result in the annexation of Texas as a slave holding territory, opposing segregation in the Boston Public Schools, and joining with the "Conscience Whigs" to oppose the "Cotton Whigs" referring to them as, "lords of the loom and the leash." As a Conscience Whig, he opposed the presidential nomination of slaveholder Zachary Taylor in 1848 and helped form an anti-slavery Free Soil Party with a coalition with some Democrats stating that, "Our loyalty to principle is greater than our loyalty to party."

During the 1850's, Sumner's prominence grew further. In 1851, he was elected to the US Senate as a Free Soiler, ironically taking the seat formerly occupied by Jefferson Davis. He vigorously attacked the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, sought to abolish the domestic slave trade and slavery in Washington, D.C., opposed the Kansas - Nebraska Act of 1854, and advocated the admission of Kansas as a free state.

In 1852, using his immensely powerful speaking and memory skills where he could deliver long speeches without a prepared text and presented in the form of his large, physical presence and booming voice, he delivered his "Freedom National" speech on the Senate floor opposing any Federal appropriation to support the Fugitive Slave Law and calling for its repeal. Considering himself a "conservative reformer," he said that "Slavery must be destroyed as it is an offense against human law. There is nothing in the Constitution that sanctions it, nor should there be any national law or power to enable or enforce it." After the delivery of this speech, the Southern oriented Senate refused to allow him to speak further. However, despite receiving physical threats, this did not prevent him from opposing every pro-slavery measure that was advanced. As a Republican in 1854, his firm abolitionist position gained him increasing respect throughout the North. He became friendly with Salmon Chase and William Seward and life long friends with Emerson, Longfellow, and the entire Adams family.



In 1856, he delivered his famous "The Crime Against Kansas" speech. In this two day oration, delivered from his prodigious memory, he vigorously attacked popular sovereignty in Kansas as becoming popular slavery, labeled Senator Andrew Butler of South Carolina and co-author of the Kansas - Nebraska Act as the "Don Quixote" of slavery, and labeled Senator Stephen Douglas as an enabler of slavery. The speech was praised by ardent abolitionists and condemned by Southern Senators.

One congressman, Preston Brooks, a thirty-six year old cousin of Andrew Butler, physically confronted Sumner as he sat in his Senate seat. Brooks approached Sumner from the front, striking him with twelve blows over the head using a cane made of gutta-perch (tough plastic substance from Malaysian trees) with a tapered gold head. He continued the assault upon Sumner with a broken cane while the Senator lay defenseless in the aisle of the Senate chamber. Suffering extensive cuts and bruises, Sumner was taken to his lodging in Washington. As a result of this vicious attack, Sumner suffered extensive long term cranial pressure, imbalance, and diminished physical energy, requiring him to leave the Senate for a three year recuperation period. In Europe, he pursued diverting interests; such as books, language, opera, music, art and poetry to assist him in his recovery. Longfellow wrote to him praising him as “the greatest voice on the greatest subject that has been uttered since we became a nation.” Brooks resigned his seat and was fined three hundred dollars. The Senate had failed to obtain the necessary votes to expel him, regaining his seat two years later.



Sumner returned to the Senate in 1859, retaking his seat which had been left unfilled during his absence. Both Brooks and Butler had died by this time. Shortly after his return, Sumner regained his strong abolitionist position by delivering his “Barbarism of Slavery” speech. In this four hour oration, he proclaimed that “Slavery is barbarous.” Despite the continuation of threats directed to him, he stated that he, “accepted the consequences” if he is to be a spokesman for a “righteous cause.” The speech was circulated throughout the North, generating extensive public support for Sumner.

During the Civil War, Sumner constantly encouraged Lincoln to enact Emancipation, expressing his view that Lincoln could invoke martial law and ban slavery and have the effect of keeping Great Britain out of the war. Although he told the President that, “The war had given him the right to emancipate slaves,” Lincoln chose to pursue a more gradualist approach. Lincoln viewed Sumner as the conscience of abolitionism and maintained a close relationship with Sumner, referring to him as “my idea of a bishop.”

In the aftermath of the war, Sumner maintained his strong advocacy for black civil rights. He supported the Freedman's Bureau, partial black suffrage, opposed too lenient post bellum policies for the South, advanced by President Andrew Johnson, wanted to require Southern states to requalify for Union admission by first establishing adequate rights for black persons providing them with land and education assistance, favored equal accommodations to oppose segregation in public places (not enacted until almost 100 years later), and worked to achieve the Civil Rights Bill of 1875.

Senator Charles Sumner died of a heart attack in 1874 at the age of 63. In his honor, he became only the second Senator (Henry Clay being the first) to lie in State in the Capitol Building. He was buried at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, with his close friends Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier, and Oliver Wendell Holmes serving as pallbearers.

Emerson stated of him, “He did not bend. Every man of worth loves his virtues.” Sumner's passionate voice may have been silenced, but his words vigorously promoting the cause of human rights continue to resonate today. Schools, towns, avenues, and libraries throughout the country are named in his honor.