



THE NORTHERN ILLINOIS CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

# THE drum roll

405th Regular Meeting Volume 41 Number 7 March 1, 2024



## PLEASE NOTE!!!!

The March meeting will be in person at the Arlington Hts. Library on Friday, March 1, 2024, and on ZOOM, at 7:00 P.M. The library is at the corner of W. Euclid Ave. and N. Dunton Ave. in Arlington Hts. Underground parking is available, and you can take the elevator to the second floor and be right at the meeting site.

Our speaker will be Steve Alban who will talk about The Election of 1860.

“Shadows in Washington, the Election of 1860” delves into how Abraham Lincoln was elected president. How did a country lawyer get elected to Congress, run for the Senate, and later become the President of the United States?

Despite widespread opposition and the fact that his name did not appear on the ballots in the Southern States, Lincoln won the four-way election. That victory was the catalyst for the

secession of seven states and the onset of the Civil War.

This month, Steve Alban who looks into dark corners and under dusty beds will describe Lincoln’s unlikely ascension to the nation’s highest office in the face of rivalry, betrayal and good old-fashioned skulduggery.

Steven is a graduate of Northern Illinois University. With degrees in Political Science and History, he brings a unique perspective of the time period. Over the last few decades Steve has owned and managed an organization named 1 Step Strategy. As a professional speaker, mentor, and guide he has helped individuals and organizations increase revenues in these difficult times. Also, for decades Steve has been an avid historian. Focusing on the American story, Steve has both written and spoken about the political chain of events surrounding the American Civil War. A contributor to several publications, he is still writing the elusive never finished novel.

## ILLINOIS AT GETTYSBURG

The overwhelming majority of Illinois volunteers in the Civil War served in the Western armies. However, scattered units did campaign in the East; three such units served at Gettysburg. On February 2, Professor Dennis Doyle presented their story.

Two of the three were mounted units, the 8th and 12th Illinois Cavalry regiments. The 8th Illinois Cavalry was known as the "Abolitionist Regiment," raised primarily from residents of Kane, Will and DuPage Counties. Its first commander was prominent Illinois politician John Farnsworth. He was back in politics by July 1863; as Doyle related, his nephew Elon Farnsworth, also of the 8th, was a brigade commander in a different division at Gettysburg and was killed in a rash charge ordered by Judson Kilpatrick. Another member of the regiment, Major John Beveridge, would be a future governor of the state.

Beveridge commanded the 8th Illinois at Gettysburg because the lieutenant colonel, Irish-born William Gamble, commanded the 8th's brigade. The division was led by Brigadier General John Buford, a Kentuckian who had lived in the Quad Cities before the war. Buford reached Gettysburg on June 30, and positioned his troopers west and north of town. On the morning of July 1, Henry Heth's Rebel division approached from the west (Heth and Buford had served together pre-war). The first to encounter Heth was an outpost of the 8th; Lieutenant Marcellus Jones, borrowing a carbine from Sergeant Levi Shafer (reportedly exclaiming "Give me the honor of opening the ball"), loosed off a long-range shot, commonly recognized as the opening shot of the epic battle. Doyle credited the shot with delaying the Confederate approach by two hours, as well as alerting other Union units to the enemy's presence. In 1886 a stone "First Shot" marker was erected on the spot; it still stands.

As Heth closed in, the 8th joined the rest of Gamble's brigade (and eventually the rest of Buford's division) in a classic "defense in depth", buying time for the Federal infantry to arrive. The first Union soldier killed at Gettysburg, David Duffenbaugh, was from the 8th. The first shot was

about 7:30 AM; the horsemen fell back to McPherson's Ridge, where infantry arrived a couple of hours later. The 8th Illinois Cavalry brought some 470 men into battle on the 1st of July; casualties were light, with 1 killed, 5 wounded and 1 missing. (The Vermont-born Lieutenant Jones would survive until 1900, and is buried in Wheaton).

Joining the 8th in the defense in depth was the 12th Illinois Cavalry, or more accurately one battalion of that unit. This regiment was recruited primarily in Kankakee County; its first Gettysburg death was Private Ferdinand Ushuer, who is buried in the Kankakee area. The 12th was paired with a portion of the 3rd Indiana Cavalry, under joint command of Colonel George Chapman. As the infantry took over the main combat at Gettysburg, Buford's stalwart troopers shifted to the flanks. On the Union left, a charge including the 8th and 12th Illinois was ordered against the Confederate right. In response, the brigade of James H. Lane formed a Napoleonic square, a rarity in Civil War combat. On July 2, Buford's division was sent to the rear to guard trains at Westminster, Pennsylvania. The 12th brought 233 men into action, of which 4 were killed, 10 wounded, and 6 missing.

The final Illinois regiment at Gettysburg was infantry: the 82nd Illinois Volunteers, in the ill-fated 11<sup>th</sup> Corps. The 82nd was a heavily German unit from Chicago, and also had a significant Jewish presence. It was known as the "Illinois Dutch Regiment," the term "Dutch" being regularly applied to Germans in that time period. The original commander, Frederick Hecker, was wounded at Chancellorsville and missed Gettysburg, though he would later return. As 11th Corps arrived on the afternoon of July 1, Lieutenant Colonel Edward Salomon led them into battle; he had been an alderman in Chicago before (and early in) the war, and post-war went on to be Cook County Clerk and, briefly, Governor of Washington Territory in the Grant administration. Another officer of the 82nd, Captain Emil Frey, was a future president of Switzerland.

The 82nd was part of Alexander Schimmelpfennig's brigade of Carl Schurz's division. As the 11th Corps took position on the Federal right, it was once again (as at Chancellorsville) hit in the flank by the

Confederates (a situation exacerbated by Francis Barlow's decision to overextend his division to cover a knoll by the Alms house, which – as pointed out by Doyle – was a microcosm of Dan Sickles' mistake the next day). The 11th Corps was crumpled, and although elements put up stiff resistance, the corps retreated precipitously, including through Gettysburg itself. The 82nd Illinois brought 318 men to battle; of these, 4 were killed, 23 wounded, and 89 missing, a loss rate over 35%.

Most of these losses were incurred on July 1, but – unlike their mounted counterparts – these Illinoisans saw service the next two days. On the morning of the 2nd, Austrian-born Captain Joseph Greenholt led 50 volunteers in a mission to clear out Rebel sharpshooters from houses on the fringe of town. That evening the regiment was shifted to Culp's Hill to aid George Greene's defense (and is mentioned on the Greene monument on the hilltop). On July 3, the 82nd was in reserve in the Culp's Hill sector.

Overall, Illinois sent 1,027 soldiers to Gettysburg, of which 140 became casualties.

On behalf of the Round Table, I would like to thank Dennis Doyle for spinning the tale of Illinois at Gettysburg.

Pat McCormick

Sept. 1, 2023: Jerry Allen: Old Abe the War Eagle  
 Oct. 6, 2023: Bruce Allardice: "Loose Lips"--  
 Military Secrecy During the Civil War  
 Nov. 3, 2023: Dave Powell Grant at Chattanooga  
 Dec. 1, 2023 Rob Girardi Stonewall Jackson  
 Jan. 5, 2024: Larry Hewitt Combat Photography  
 Feb. 2, 2024: Dennis Doyle Illinois Units at  
 Gettysburg  
 Mar. 1, 2024: Steve Alban: The Election of 1860  
 Apr. 5, 2024: Leslie Goddard TBA  
 May 3, 2024: Jon Sebastian TBA  
 June 7, 2024: Diana Dretske: The 96<sup>th</sup> Illinois



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## Upcoming Events

At this time, we are not charging dues for the 2023-2024 year.

Join Zoom Meeting on Friday, March 1, 2024, at 7 PM.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81433758155?pwd=S1FqVjJlWmZsTTd1VIJNRCTlCjJLdz09>

LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN: For decades, a former 1940s travel motel blemished approximately an acre of land next to the Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park. But in June 2023, the Trust was able to demolish the motel and lay down sod to restore the field. Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg used the strong position of Lookout Mountain to pin the Union army at Chattanooga, but on November 24, 1863, after the Union capture of Orchard Knob, Gen. Joseph Hooker attacked the Confederate left. The Wauhatchie Pike, through which this tract was part of the main road over the mountain, was also a route of Confederate retreat that helped lead to Union success at Missionary Ridge on November 25. (Reprinted)

## Important Announcements!!!!!!

Our February discussion on Longstreet was great. We had 6-7 participants, and all contributed, and we learned something new about Old Pete.

Our Saturday discussion will be on the third Saturday of March, the 16<sup>th</sup>! The topic will be: George Thomas, The Rock of Chickamauga. We will be discussing other sometimes lesser-known Union and Confederate leaders in future discussions.

We have shortened our Saturday discussion in order to attract more participants. It will go from 10 AM to around 11:30 AM. Please try to get in on this. Pat does a great job, and everyone can jump in on the discussion. These Saturday sessions are in danger of being dropped if we cannot attract more participants, so please consider tuning in. If you have any ideas on how to increase participation, please forward them to the newsletter.

The link works for this meeting, also. Don't miss it.