



Founded at Fort Harrison
on February 8, 1951

RICHMOND CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE OCTOBER 2023

“The Civil War was the biggest thing that ever happened to us. It was our Iliad and our Odyssey – and it remains our least understood war.”

Bruce Catton

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**October 10, 2023
7:30 p.m.**

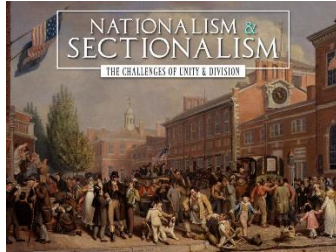
**At First Presbyterian Church
4602 Cary Street Road
Richmond, VA 23226
(The parking lot is behind the church; go up the
steps to fellowship hall on the left)**

DR. ROB HAVERS

**“Anticipations of War in the
Antebellum United States”**



How well imagined or predicted, welcome or feared was the idea of a Civil War? Did an acceptance of the likelihood of Civil War help contribute to the war itself? To the extent that Americans in the antebellum world thought about the future, and about the possibilities of a Civil War before it happened, were they accurate as to its form and what shape or form they imagined that future conflict might take?



Dr. Rob Havers serves as President and CEO of the American Civil War Museum. Prior to coming to the Museum, he served as President/CEO of the George Marshall Foundation, Director of the National Churchill Museum at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, and as a Senior Lecturer in War Studies at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Havers graduated from Queen Mary University of London with a bachelor's degree in history and politics; London School of Economics and Political Science with a master's degree in later modern British history and Pembroke College, Cambridge with a Ph.D. He is a published author with several books and articles to his credit and is a widely respected lecturer on military history.

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

In 2012 and 2013 I had the great good fortune to participate in two bus tours (ten days each) that were organized by the Licensed Battlefield Guides of Gettysburg for guides and associate members. Both tours were led by the inimitable Charlie Fennell, and I did both with my good friend, Janice. In 2012, we toured the “Western Battlefields:” Murfreesboro, Stones River, Vicksburg (where we were joined by Terry Winschel), Tupelo (where Elvis fans got to do a decidedly non-Civil War thing and visit his birthplace), Corinth, Shiloh, Franklin, Fort Donelson, Jefferson Davis State Park, Elizabethtown, Hodgenville and Lincoln’s Birthplace, and Perryville.

The 2013 tour – “With Fennell to the Sea” – started at Chattanooga and then took us to Kennesaw Mountain, Atlanta (and a ride up Stone Mountain), Andersonville, Fort McAlister, Fort Pulaski, Savannah, Charleston and all its great sites (including the Hunley), Averasboro, Bentonville, and finally the Bennett Place Surrender Site.

It was an intense, wonderful time with old friends and making new friends. One friendship that started then is the one with Vic Vignola. In the eleven years since that first tour, Vic and Charlie have come down to Virginia on a regular basis, sometimes with their wives, but mostly to do reconnaissance for tours they were planning. The “Baumann B&B” was their headquarters on these research trips and I was always invited to tag along, which I sometimes did. Eventually, Vic decided to focus on the Battle of Seven Pines, and specifically on the Fair Oaks portion of it. After many research trips to the Adams House, where most of the important fighting occurred, and to the office and research material of the incomparable Bobby Krick, a book has emerged that will at long last be released by Savas Beatie at the end of October 2023. Vic befriended

the owner of the Adams House property, which was in private hands, and was graciously granted access whenever he came down from New York. Now, after existing in obscurity, surrounded by modern development and the Richmond International Airport in the vicinity, this small but important parcel of land has been saved by the American Battlefield Trust! Were it not for Vic Vignola, I think we can safely say that it would have remained forgotten. (See Bert's "Preservation News" on page 6.)

The book, "Contrasts in Command," received advance praise from Gary Gallagher, Gordon Rhea, Chris Kolakowski, and our own Doug Crenshaw. The Foreword fittingly is by Bobby Krick. Vic will be at our November dinner meeting to tie in, quite appropriately, with Garry's topic of preservation in the Richmond area by the Battlefield Trust.

Ulli

OCTOBER FIELD TRIP **Saturday, October 28, 2023**

The Richmond Civil War Round Table is pleased to announce a Civil War educational tour of Grant's second attempt to capture the Petersburg and Weldon Railroad, part of the Fourth Offensive of the Petersburg Campaign, August 18-21, 1864. The tour focuses on the Fight for the Weldon Railroad, a supply line running from Wilmington to Weldon, North Carolina, and then from Weldon on into the City of Petersburg. This vital railroad line carried supplies from the last seaport of the Confederacy to forces of General Robert E. Lee and the beleaguered cities of Petersburg and Richmond.

The caravan tour will begin at Richard Bland College, 11301 Johnson Road, Petersburg, VA. Check-in is at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday, October 28,

2023 in the parking lot of the college. The tour will begin promptly at 9:00 a.m. and run until approximately 4:00 p.m. We will cover ten stops but will have an additional stop of approximately 30-45 minutes for lunch (BRING YOUR OWN) at a pavilion picnic area along the way.

This tour, led by RCWRT members Jerry Netherland and Mark Jacobson, will also showcase two core battlefield properties recently saved by the American Battlefield Trust and the Petersburg Battlefields Foundation. The tour will visit public, National Park Service, and private sites.

Cost per person is \$15; however, anyone who would be willing to drive a group of members will have their \$15 covered. Let Billie know if you would be willing to be a driver. **Registration is now open. Please sign up with Art at the meeting, or send your check to: Art Wingo, 1414 Patriot Circle, Glen Allen, VA 23059**

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

6 p.m.

**At Willow Oaks Country Club
6228 Forest Hill Avenue, Richmond**

The last two decades have been remarkable for the preservation of battlefield land around Richmond. From small areas preserved and a dearth of signs around Gaines' Mill, Cold Harbor, and Malvern Hill, these critical battlefields have seen exponential growth in



preserved acreage. Other, smaller battlefields – New Market Heights, Deep Bottom, Fair Oaks – have seen their first preservation

victories. If all of this has happened recently, what will the next couple of decades bring?

There is simply no one who could come close to Garry Adelman to walk us through these victories and hopes. Garry is known to many of you who have done tours or watched videos of the American Battlefield Trust. Garry is officially the Chief Historian of the Battlefield Trust, but we will need to fasten our seatbelts for his presentation about recent and future battlefield preservation around us. Garry's engine takes high octane fuel, and when Garry opens the throttle, look out! His high energy is as informative as it is infectious. We look forward to a real treat.

We have a new menu this year, which we hope will please everyone: House Salad with Balsamic and Ranch dressings; Chicken Marsala; Herb Roasted Salmon with Dill Mustard Cream Sauce; Roasted Creamer Potatoes; Buttered French Beans with Blistered Tomatoes; Freshly Baked Rolls and Butter; Dessert. **The cost this year is \$40 per person. You may register now with Art at the meeting or by sending a check to Art Wingo, 1414 Patriot Circle, Glen Allen, VA 23059.**

GARRY IS A VERY POPULAR SPEAKER. MAKE SURE TO REGISTER EARLY.

DANNY'S EXCELLENT HISTORY TRIP - 2023 EDITION -

I continued my quest to tent camp in all states East of the Mississippi River this July-August by traveling to New York and all the New England states. We know the battlefields on every corner we are used to in Virginia just don't exist there, but I am going to share with you the Civil War related sites I found and the Revolutionary War sites I visited.

The first stop was Springfield Armory NHS. Beginning in 1794, small arms research, development and production continued here until 1968. We are more familiar with the sister armory built at the same time in Harper's Ferry. Weapons were furnished from here for the War of 1812, Mexican War, Civil War, Spanish American War, WWI & II, Korean War and Vietnam. Today you can

see the machinery used and exhibits of guns with unusual histories.

Next was Hartford, CT, with a tour and discussion at the Harriet Beecher Stowe House. She lived in Hartford the last 33 years of her life. While on the subject, I also visited the house and the very room where she wrote part of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" when she lived in Brunswick, Maine.

In Rhode Island I went to Swan Point Cemetery and visited two graves. The first was of Sullivan Ballou, the Rhode Island soldier mentioned in the Ken Burns Civil War documentary released in 1990. He is buried next to his beloved Sara, whom the letter was written to, and read on the show, one week before he was killed at the first Battle of Bull Run. Also buried not far away in the same cemetery is Union Col. John S. Slocum, killed in the same battle.

My only stop in Maine was at the Joshua L. Chamberlain House in Brunswick. The house, now a museum, has a unique history itself. The one-story house was moved 100 feet in 1867 to its current location and in 1871 it was raised 11 feet in the air and a first floor was added



under the whole house. Some of the articles you find in the house are Chamberlain's boots worn at Gettysburg and the bullet that almost killed him in June 1864 around Petersburg. He went on to be the Governor of Maine four times. He is buried a short five-minute walk away in Pine Grove Cemetery.

On to New Hampshire and beautiful Lake Sunapee where The Fells, summer home of John



Hay, is located. Hay was one of two secretaries for Lincoln for the entire war and went on to become

Ambassador to the United Kingdom and Secretary of State to two presidents. I enjoyed seeing the guest book that displayed the signature of Theodore Roosevelt and a maple that Roosevelt planted while on a visit.

Driving to my next location, close to Cornish, NH, I passed a house with a roadside sign stating that Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury for Lincoln and later Chief Justice, was born here.

My next stop at Saint-Gaudens NHP was the most pleasant surprise of the whole trip. Augustus Saint-Gaudens was a renowned sculptor with many pieces of art we all recognize: the Shaw Memorial in Boston, Sherman Monument in NY, Farragut Monument in D.C., Standing Lincoln in Chicago, and the Standing Liberty on the \$20 gold piece. Copies of all these, except Sherman, are displayed in the park.

In Vermont I toured Hildene, the summer home of Robert Lincoln. In old English “hil” means hill and “dene” means valley with stream. Lincoln



wanted no part of politics and became a lawyer in Chicago. He later was asked to serve on the Board

for the Pullman Company. Shortly thereafter George Pullman died, and Lincoln was asked to become President of the company. At Hildene you can tour the expansive home and private Pullman car Lincoln used for travel. On the second floor is a mini museum that has a stovepipe hat that belonged to his father and a mirror that hung in the White House, possibly the last mirror that Lincoln looked in on his way to Ford’s Theatre.

Back into New York to Mt. McGregor and Grant’s Cottage, where U.S. Grant spent the last two months of his life. The house has been left exactly the way it was the moment Grant passed away, including the clock that Grant’s son stopped at 8:08 a.m., the time of his death. A time capsule worth seeing.



The last two stops are both in Auburn, New York, about a mile apart. When Lincoln’s future Secretary of State, William Seward, asked for her hand in marriage, Frances Miller’s father would say yes only if they came to live in his house. They lived in the house for the rest of their lives. The house was expanded and contains many



family artifacts. It also claims to have been a stop on the Underground Railroad.

One of the many trips that Harriet Tubman made was to help her parents escape safely to Canada. Well and good, but the mother found the climate too

cold for her liking, so Harriet moved them to Auburn, where they all spent the rest of their lives. There are two houses at the Harriet Tubman site: one she lived in and is currently being renovated; and the second is a smaller house that was used for people who needed somewhere to live for a short time. This is the house she had moved into and where she passed away in 1913. While the first house can’t be toured and the second is a 5-minute walkthrough, the first hour of the tour is spent in the museum with an excellent presentation of the life of Harriet Tubman. Tubman and Seward are buried a short distance apart in Fort Hill Cemetery.

I began my Revolutionary War search in Providence, RI. By using an app on my phone, I found buildings that housed many French soldiers during the war. The Governor Stephen Hopkins House had two historical connections. He signed the Declaration of Independence and, of course, Washington slept there. In Newport the next day I found six houses, with the most impressive being the William Veron House on Clarke Street, which was the headquarters for Rochambeau when he arrived in America in July 1780. There is also a statue of him at his landing point in the harbor.

Next stop was the Minuteman NHP around Concord. It was helpful to view a great film in the visitors’ center, hear a talk by a ranger, and visit the Hartwell Tavern that was the witness to so much history. It was amazing to see the North Bridge, one important place where our country got its beginning.

Fort Ticonderoga was at the top of my list of places to visit for a long time. Overlooking Lake Champlain, the fort has too much history for this article, but here we are introduced to someone who plays a large part in American history, Benedict Arnold. While the fort is beautiful looking up at it from the lake, I was surprised at how small it felt, like the fort was much smaller compared to the coastal forts from the Civil War. All in all, a great way to spend a day in a beautiful location.

Located in the town of Ticonderoga is the Hancock House Museum. I know, you are as confused as I was because Hancock was from Massachusetts. This house is built to the original plans of Hancock's for the sole purpose of serving as a local museum. No one has ever lived in it. The only Hancock thing is John's dining room set and, in my humble opinion, about the only thing worth seeing in the museum.

Saratoga NHP is another place worth touring. I knew nothing of the battle when I arrived and fully understood it from the film and excellent driving tour when I left. And be sure to drive the short distance to Schuylerville to visit the surrender site and see the Saratoga Monument.

My last stop was Ft. Stanwix National Monument in Rome, NY. Guardian of the Mohawk Valley, this wooden fort (reconstructed) played a vital part in keeping additional troops from reaching the Battle of Saratoga and played a part in the American victory. A great place to visit, yet only part of the long history of this fort.

*Danny Witt,
August 2023*

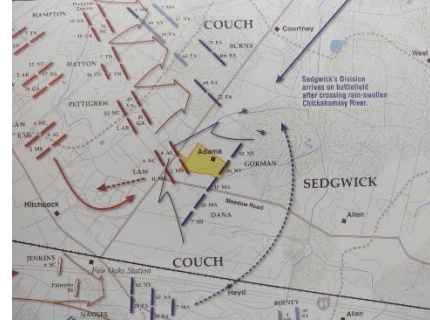
PRESERVATION NEWS

By Bert Dunkerly

Two great pieces of news this month! The American Battlefield Trust has announced its third and final phase of the Cold Harbor/Gaines' Mill project, which will link two previously unconnected pieces of National Park property. As before, this is an easement, and there won't be any public access for quite a while. But the land is saved.

Secondly, the very first preservation of any land at Seven Pines! I am very excited about this. Again, no public access right away, but this is very good news. Most of this battlefield is lost to

development, so saving a small piece of open ground is tremendous!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR AN EASTERN HENRICO BATTLEFIELD TOUR

Henrico County has announced an ambitious plan to connect multiple Eastern Henrico battlefields with a trail similar to that of the Capitol Trail, which could either be biked or hiked. The architect of this project, Albert Azzerone, has offered to give us a special tour of some of these battlefields that would not normally be open to the public. The board agreed to schedule this for Saturday morning, December 9. We will meet at the Dairy Queen parking lot so we would not have to cross Rt. 5 on foot. This is the location of the New Market Heights Battlefield, which was discussed in one of our recent zoom programs. Additional details will be available in the November newsletter.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

- November 14:** Annual Dinner Meeting, Garry Adelman, "Preservation Accomplishments in the Richmond Area & Future Plans." **Please note different time and place:: 6 p.m., Willow Oaks Country Club, 6228 Forest Hill Avenue, Richmond**
- December 12:** Jake Wynn, "Civil War Medicine"

Attendance at September Meeting: 37