

Sumter to Appomattox

The Official Newsletter of the New South Wales Chapter of
The American Civil War Round Table of Australia

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Please visit our website www.americancivilwar.asn.au

Our Next Meeting

A Message from the Chairman –

I have been greatly heartened by the attendances at our meetings this year, particularly by the numbers of new members who have come to the meetings after an initial contact through our website. To Bruce McLennan, our Program Director and Webmaster, special thanks for his work in maintaining the website that has been the catalyst for attracting our new participants.

Also, Bruce's initiatives in formulating the conduct of our meetings this year, particularly the introduction of the informal "show and tell" presentations, are greatly appreciated and play an integral part in the success of our current program. Thanks again Bruce!

As you will see from the meeting notice in the adjoining column, our July meeting is going to be a very special one with

I would urge all members to make an effort to be at this meeting on July 23 to hear Dr Daniel Stowell give a presentation titled "*The Papers of Abraham Lincoln*". You may be assured that this presentation will be both interesting and challenging, as we will be given a rare insight into the latest research of recently found documents both written, signed or received by Lincoln during the antebellum period and during the War years when Lincoln was President. This presentation will be of interest to both professional historians and amateur enthusiasts alike.

Finally, the invoice for your subscription for the coming year is enclosed with this Newsletter (\$40 for Sydney Metropolitan members, \$30 for all others). The quantum of this subscription remains unchanged (despite the introduction of the carbon tax) and I ask you to please give it your early attention to payment, as this will provide a reliable indicator of the continuing interest in our activities

I look forward to seeing you at our coming meeting on July 19. It would be great if not only you were to come but you bring a friend.

The next regular meeting for this year is to be held at the **Roseville Memorial RSL Club, 64 Pacific Highway, Roseville** on **Monday, July 23**. As is our custom, the meeting will commence with a bistro-style meal from 6pm with the meeting proper to start at around 7:15 – 7:30pm.

We are privileged to have as our speaker for this meeting **Dr Daniel T Stowell**, Director of the Abraham Lincoln Papers project. This is a most ambitious project which seeks to identify, image, transcribe, annotate and publish all documents written or signed by Lincoln and documents sent to him. Dr Stowell joined the staff of the *Lincoln Legal Papers* project in 1996 and became the Director/Editor in 2000, managing the project when its parameters expanded to its current form. More about Dr Stowell's academic background is presented in a later section of this Newsletter.

Predictably, Dr Stowell's presentation be:

The Papers of Abraham Lincoln

It is envisaged that in his presentation Dr Stowell will discuss the project he has directed for the past decade and share the stories of some of the new documents he and his colleagues have discovered in their research.

Thanks to the generosity of the United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney, we have been able to obtain Dr Stowell's services to speak to us whilst he is in Australia where he is to present a paper in Adelaide to the Australian Historical Association on the Australian views of Lincoln. Over the following two weeks, he will speak to Civil War Round Tables throughout the country.

It is not often that we have the privilege of hearing a Civil War scholar of Dr Stowell's calibre and members are urged to take the opportunity of being present for what will be a most fascinating presentation from some one directly and intimately involved in researching the history of America's 16th President.

Do try to make it to the meeting and bring a friend.

John Cook

It Happened in July

HATCHES AND DESPATCHES

July 5, 1801 – David Glasgow Farragut, the first person in US history to hold the rank of Admiral is born in Knoxville, Tennessee;

July 13, 1821 – Nathan Bedford Forrest is born in Chapel Hill, Tennessee;

July 31, 1839 – William Clarke Quantrill the Confederate guerrilla and outlaw is born in Canal Dover, Tennessee;

COMMAND CHANGES

July 17, 1864 – Jefferson Davis relieves Joseph E Johnston of the Confederate Army and Department of Tennessee and replaces him with John Bell Hood;

July 18, 1863 – Major General John G Foster assumes command of the Department of Virginia and North Carolina;

July 23, 1862 – Major General Henry Halleck assumes command of the armies of the United States;

July 27, 1861 – Major General George B McClellan assumes command of the Federal Division of the Potomac.

BATTLES / MILITARY ACTIONS

July 1 – 3, 1863 – The Battle of Gettysburg ending in a significant Confederate defeat;

July 4, 1863 – Vicksburg surrenders to Union forces under Grant, thus giving the Union control of the Mississippi River;

July 8, 1863 – Confederate forces unconditionally surrender Port Hudson, La., the last Confederate garrison on the Mississippi River;

July 9, 1864 – The Battle of Monocacy, Maryland, where 7000 Federals under General Lew Wallace delay Jubal Early's 15000 Confederates approaching Washington;

July 10, 1863 – Federal Forces land on Morris Island near Charleston, S. C., and begin the siege of Fort Wagner that will last until September;

July 11, 1864 – Confederates under Jubal Early reach the suburbs of Washington;

July 12, 1864 – Federal reinforcements arrive in Washington and Early begins to withdraw;

July 21, 1861 – Union General Irvin McDowell is defeated at the First Battle of Bull Run, Manassas;

July 24, 1864 – Confederate forces under Jubal Early inflict heavy casualties at the Second Battle of Kernstown, Virginia;

OTHER SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

July 11, 1864 – Fellow prisoners hang eleven "Raiders" at Andersonville Prison;

July 11, 1864 – Jubal Early's Confederates fire on Lincoln whilst he is standing on the fortifications of Fort Stephens;

July 13, 1863 – Three days of draft riots begin in New York.

Some Quotable Civil War Quotes

"See what a lot of land these fellows hold, of which Vicksburg is the key... Let us get Vicksburg and all the country is ours. The War can never be brought to a close until that key is in our pocket"

- Abraham Lincoln

"Never in any battle I had witnessed was there such a discharge of musketry ... the first thing I saw was General Rosecrans crossing himself – he was a very devout Catholic. "Hello!" I said to myself, "if the general is crossing himself, we are in a desperate situation."

- Charles H Dana, U.S. Assistant Secretary of War, Chickamauga, 1862

"I need not tell the brave survivors of so many hard-fought battles who have remained steadfast to the last that I have consented to this result from no distrust from them; but feeling that valor (sic) and devotion could accomplish nothing that would compensate for the loss that attended the continuance of the contest, I determined to avoid the useless sacrifice of those whose past services have endeared them to their countrymen."

- From Lee's final letter to his men (1865)

"I yield to no man in sympathy for the gallant men under my command; but I am obliged to sweat them tonight, that I might save their blood tomorrow."

- Stonewall Jackson, (1862)

"There is no sacrifice I am not ready to make for the preservation of the Union save that of honor (sic)"

- Lee to his wife, (January 1861)

This publication is the official newsletter of the New South Wales Chapter of the American Civil War Round Table of Australia. All inquiries regarding the Newsletter should be addressed to the Secretary/Treasurer of the Chapter by telephone on 9449 3720 or at PO Box 200, St Ives, 2075 or e-mail secretary@americancivilwar.asn.au

Daniel W Stowell

Our speaker for the July meeting of our Round Table group, Dr Daniel W Stowell, is a distinguished Civil War scholar whose *Curriculum Vitae* is both extensive and auspicious.

He is the principal author or editor of some eight published books and has contributed numerous papers to refereed journals and electronic publications.

Dr Stowell is a regular keynote speaker at conferences within the United States and overseas countries, where he provides a scholarly and research-based perspective of the life and work of America's 16th President.

His direct involvement with the Lincoln project began in 1996 when he was appointed as Assistant Editor of *Lincoln Legal Papers* project. Subsequently, he was appointed Associate Editor of this project (1999) and then its Director/ Editor (2000).

When the scope of the project was expanded in 2000 to become *The Papers of Abraham Lincoln* project, Dr Stowell became its inaugural Director/Editor, the position that he has held to the present time.

Dr Stowell holds a Ph.D. in History from the University of Florida where his doctoral dissertation was titled *Rebuilding Zion: The Religious Reconstruction of the South, 1863 – 1877*.

His earlier studies were at the University of Georgia, where his Masters thesis was *The Failure of Religious Reconstruction, The Methodist Episcopalian Church in Georgia*. Prior to completing these studies where he was awarded a M.A. in History, Dr Stowell graduated *Summa Cum Laude* with a B.A. Degree in History and Politics with Highest Honours.

It is truly a privilege to have Dr Stowell to share his professional experiences in his work on the Papers of Abraham Lincoln project with our Round Table members and guests.

In a most generous gesture, Dr Stowell has provided our Round Table with a number of high quality charts/posters developed by the project he directs. These charts provide in considerable detail the composition of Lincoln's Cabinet during the period of his presidency from 1861 to 1865.

It is proposed to make a number of these posters available to our members, possibly though the conduct of raffles at our meeting. Further details of the availability of these posters will be given at the meeting on July 23.

Our special thanks go to Dr Stowell for this gesture in providing this material for our members.

Researcher Discovers Doctor's Report of Lincoln Assassination...

Researchers at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library are marvelling over the historical equivalent of buried treasure: an up-to-now undiscovered account of the night Lincoln was assassinated, written by the first doctor to treat him.

Dr. Charles Leale (pictured below) was a 23-year-old army surgeon who was in attendance at Ford's Theatre when John Wilkes Booth entered the presidential box and shot Lincoln days after the conclusion of the Civil War.



Lincoln researcher, Helena Iles Papaioannou discovered Leale's account whilst searching the records of the surgeon general in the National Archives in Washington, DC. The 21-page report is Leale's own retelling of the tragedy, written just hours after the president died the following morning.

Daniel Stowell, director of the Papers of Abraham Lincoln project said that what was remarkable about this newly discovered report was its immediacy and poignancy:

"You can sense the helplessness Leale and the other doctors felt that night, but it does not have the sentimentality or added layers of later accounts."

The young doctor was sitting just 25 feet away from the Lincoln box, giving him a front-row seat to the tragedy. He then became the first doctor to treat Lincoln, supervising his care until the president's own doctor arrived.

"The theatre was well filled, and the play '*Our American Cousin*' progressed very pleasantly until about half past ten," Leale wrote, "when the report of a pistol was distinctly heard."

"About a minute after, a man of low stature with black hair and eyes was seen leaping to the stage beneath, holding in his hand a drawn dagger

Continued overleaf...

The Doctor's Report cont'd

Leale described how Booth became entangled in the flag draping Lincoln's box in his leap to the stage. Booth broke his leg in the fall.

"I immediately ran to the to the President's box and as soon as the door was opened was admitted and introduced to Mrs Lincoln, when she exclaimed several times, 'O doctor, do what you can for him, do what you can!'"

Leale said that Lincoln's breathing was "intermittent" and he could find no pulse. Using a finger, he removed a clot of blood from the bullet wound and said Lincoln's breathing became "more regular."

The doctor described in great detail how he and others carried Lincoln from the box, down the stairs of the theatre and across the street to the Peterson house opposite.

"We placed the President in bed in a diagonal position, as the bed was too short. As soon as we placed him in bed we removed his clothes and covered him with blankets. While covering him I found his lower extremities very cold from his feet to a distance several inches above his knees. I then sent for bottles of hot water and hot blankets, which were then applied to his lower extremities and abdomen.

Leale said that Mary Todd Lincoln entered the room "three or four times" during the evening and that the president's son, Robert Todd Lincoln, remained at his bedside throughout the night. Unmentioned in his report, but well known to history, is the fact that the First Lady was eventually expelled and kept from the room, her grief being so intense.

After hours of futile efforts to save the president, Leale described Lincoln's final moments – "At 7:20am he breathed his last and the spirit fled to God who gave it." Leale had received his medical license only six weeks earlier. At the time of the assassination, he was in charge of a wounded officers' ward at the United States Army Hospital in Armory Square in Washington. He had been present on the lawn at the White House a few evenings earlier, when Lincoln had delivered his final speech to the crowd celebrating Lee's surrender at Appomattox. Booth was present on the lawn that night as well and many historians believe he solidified his decision to kill the President that evening.

Researchers at the Lincoln Library say that in the ensuing years, Leale rarely discussed his role in the drama. Indeed, it was not until 1909, 44 years after the assassination that he spoke publicly about the events at Ford's Theatre.

(Source: U.S. News on msnbc.com, June 6,2012)

The Continuing Story of Thomas Lowry...

In a number of issues of this Newsletter over the past year, (see Nos. 54 and 55), we have followed the sad story of psychiatrist and amateur Civil War historian and author, Thomas P Lowry, who had been accused of changing the date on one of Lincoln's Presidential pardons held as part of the permanent records of the U.S. National Archives.

Initially, Lowry admitted making the change to National Archives investigators, but subsequently recanted his "confession" claiming it was made under severe duress. Lowry was given a lifetime ban from using the National Archives facilities and research rooms, although the Department of Justice has ruled that he cannot be prosecuted because the statute of limitations has expired.

Jenny Holder, one of our South Australian members, has been following the case closely as a personal friend of Tom Lowry. Recently, she has obtained some correspondence sent to Dr Lowry supporting his position and she has kindly forwarded it for our information. The letter reads:

"Subject: I Believe You
Dear Dr. Lowry,

My name is Michael Schaffner. I'm a retired Federal employee, an amateur historian, and a civil war reenactor who runs a Yahoo Group dealing with documents and administrative aspects of the war ("The Scrivener's Mess").

As a former Fed I find it perfectly believable that the IG's office would force a confession just to successfully close a case without having to deal with questions from their own attorneys, much less DOJ. I also believe any culprit very likely was an employee, not a researcher.

As an amateur historian and reenactor, I have found your books immensely helpful as well as entertaining.

I can't see why you would alter a document -- you had nothing to gain and everything to lose.

As someone who plays around with period writing tools, I don't believe that the alteration is even necessarily a forgery -- I've seen wrong dates on documents (the transcript for the court martial of Lt. Col. Kise includes a contemporary map of the battle of Mill Springs with the date "1861"), as well as corrections made with steel erasers and over-writing.

Taking all of this together, I feel it most likely that a great injustice has been done. It may be too late to do anything about it, but after thinking about this for a long time I realized that it is never too late to share my thoughts and to offer at least some moral support.

Yours sincerely,
Michael S."

Whilst this correspondence is only a letter of support and, as such, does not prove Lowry's innocence, it certainly "muddies the water" somewhat. It does provide evidence, albeit anecdotal, however, to suggest that Dr Lowry has been denied natural justice in the consideration of the case against him.

Again, you be the Judge!