



The Signal Flag

BRANDYWINE VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE



Campaign # 21

Skirmish # 8

April 2008

From the Rear Ranks:

“Your minnie bullets have made us what we are. . . .” It was a tough line for a man of Lincoln’s tenderness to read. His “little sister” (Emilie Todd) held him personally responsible for the war. Was he? He almost didn’t know anymore. It had all gone on too long; he was too tired. He did not answer the letter. There was no point. Another Todd was slipping away. Surveying the damage to his in-laws, Lincoln must have noticed: here in one family, his family, was the nation and the war writ small. “Crazed with misfortune,” shrill with hate, collapsed in self-interest and grief, the Todds were difficult to look upon. But Lincoln would not have missed the symbolism, the ironies. He had always been attentive to what might have been called the familial nature of the conflict both literally and figuratively, he was accustomed to think of the war in familial terms. If the Todds did not help shape his interpretation of the war, they certainly resonated with it.

Excerpted from [*House of Abraham – Lincoln and The Todds, A Family Divided by War*](#). By Stephen Berry.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Mike Liddy, President
Brandywine Valley Civil War Roundtable*



~ Officers ~

President: Mike Liddy
Vice President: John Walls
Secretary: Ted Pawlik
Treasurer: Dave Walter

~ Committee Members ~

Preservation: John Walls, Bob Sprague
Nominating / Speakers Committee:
Vince Carosella, John Whiteside
Speakers: Roger Arthur, Joe Lehman
Trips: Susan Mahoney
Credentials: Bill Sitman
Greeter: Loretta Thomas
Publicity: Harriett Mueller
Historians: Bill Sitman
Social Dir: Flo Williams

~Members at Large ~

David Hoffritz, James Lawler

~ Official Sutler ~

Bob Sprague: Books / Periodicals
610-644-0353

~ Annual Membership ~

Individual \$25.00; Family \$40.00; Student \$15.00
(Full time student up to age 23)

? Questions ? Contact:

Mike Liddy
135 Runnymede Ave. Apt 6
Wayne, PA 19087
609-408-3782
liddy41@aol.com

BVCWRT Web Site:

<http://bvcwrt.home.comcast.net>

Webmaster: Jim Lawler

dtownjim@comcast.net

Signal Flag Editor:

Lynne Fulton
610-647-1039
fultonlm1949@aol.com

Unsolicited articles from our members are welcome.
Please contact Lynne!

* Our meetings are handicap accessible *



What is the BVCWRT all about???

We were founded in 1987. According to our by-laws, "the purpose of the Brandywine Valley Civil War Round Table shall be to provide a congenial medium through which persons having a common interest in the events of the American Civil War - its causes and effects, engagements, personages, units, armaments and other things pertaining thereto - may satisfy their interest and broaden individual knowledge through discussion, lectures, field trips and the exchange of books, paper and other data. The purposed is also to consider the preservation and protection of the battlefields, sites, landmarks, relics and collection of the period."

In plain English, we are an organization of diverse people brought together by our common interest in the American Civil War. This interest can range from the casual to the obsessive. We intend to tailor our activities and presentations to appeal to all our members, novice or expert.

Welcome New Members & Reenlistments

The Round Table welcomes our new members since our last meeting. Please welcome them and share your Civil War enthusiasm.

New Members:

Eric Hawkins
Greg Buss





Brandywine Valley Civil War Round Table
Come to our next meeting
2 April 2008

Speaker: Jean H. Baker, Professor of History, PH. D.
Topic: "Mary Todd Lincoln"
Time: 7:00 PM
Place: West Chester Borough Hall, Gay Street

Dr. Baker is a Professor of History at Goucher College in Towson, Maryland. Dr. Baker has written numerous books, articles and essays. Her latest book *Sisters: The Lives of America's Suffragists* was released in 2005. Dr. Baker is currently working on her next book about birth control activist, Margaret Sanger. Professor Baker has also recently written an introduction to C.A. Tripp's *Intimate Lincoln*. Two other books of interest are; "Civil War and Reconstruction" 2001 co-author with David Donald and Michael Holt and James Buchanan 2004.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE 1972 - 76 Assistant Professor of History, Goucher College, 1976 - 81 Associate Professor of History, Goucher College, 1981- present Professor of History, Goucher College

EDUCATION 1961 B.A. Goucher College, magna cum laude, 1965 M.A. Johns Hopkins University, 1971 Ph.D. Johns Hopkins University

Book Reviews from Amazon

From Publishers Weekly

A revisionist's view of the maligned Mary Todd Lincoln, usually portrayed as a shrew of doubtful sanity, is offered by Goucher College history professor Baker (*Affairs of Party*, etc.) in this richly documented and sympathetic study. Mary, an orphaned, well-educated, but socially unpopular, Lexington, Ky., aristocrat, was vulnerable to the suit of the outwardly uncouth Lincoln. During their Springfield years she bore him four sons and, despite their opposite natures, appears to have provided a comfortable home life and support for his political ambitions. As first lady, she was much criticized for her alleged extravagances on clothes, entertaining and redecoration of the shabby White House. A dedicated spiritualist, Mary made mourning for her dead husband and two sons a permanent condition, causing some to conclude that excessive grief had deranged her mind. Several months of her last tormented years were spent in an asylum to which her son Robert had her committed, unjustly, according to the author, followed by four years of voluntary exile abroad, from which she returned shortly before her death in 1882 in Springfield. Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc. –

From Library Journal

In the thriving cottage industry of Lincoln studies Baker's readable and sympathetic biography is easily the definitive account of the troubled former First Lady. Baker's principal contribution is in recognizing Mary Todd Lincoln on her own terms. Although we can never separate her from Abraham Lincoln, Mary Todd Lincoln's importance derives less from her marriage than from her personal suffering as a woman. Politics, tragedy, and poverty denied her the family comfort and identity she craved. Baker's chapters on her last years of alleged insanity and real loneliness reveal a jealous and proud 19th-century American woman trapped by the conventions of Victorian domesticity. Recommended for major libraries and universities. Randall M. Miller, History Dept., St. Joseph's Univ., Philadelphia
Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc. --*This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.*

**Minutes of the March 5, 2008 Meeting
BVCWRT
Submitted by Ted Pawlik**

The President's Report/Announcements (Mike Liddy)

- Dates to remember: **May 13, 2008** – Annual Banquet to be held at the Elks Lodge in West Chester. The guest speaker will be Jean Edward Smith. He is the John Marshall Professor of Political Science at Marshall University and has written a book on Grant: **Deadline to sign up for the banquet is April 30, 2008.**
- Harriett Mueller is stepping down as head of the Public Relations Committee. Appreciation was expressed to Harriett for all of her efforts in this respect. **Anyone interested in heading up the Public Relations Committee is asked to see Mike Liddy or any member of the Executive Committee.**

Treasurer's Report (Dave Walter)

- Financial Report: Balance as of 01/31/08 = \$3629.86. Total Receipts for February = \$395.00. Expenditures for February = \$336.65. Net Revenue for the month = \$58.35. Balance as of 03/04/08 = \$3688.21

Other Announcements and Items of Interest

- Mike Kochan is organizing a weekend trip to the Mariner's Museum, the Museum of the Confederacy and the Confederate White House for March 8 and 9, 2008. There will be room for 10 people with an overnight stay at a motel.

Show and Tell Presenters for the evening were:

Dan Cashin – Fortification Guns
Robert Terry – Lincoln Related Artwork
Florence Williams – Civil War Sanitary Fair
Bruce Grant – Grant's Memoirs (1st edition)
Mike Kochan – Aviation

Following the Show and Tell, the Spring Social was held.

"I felt like anything rather than rejoicing at the downfall of a foe who had fought so long and valiantly, and had suffered so much for a cause that was, I believe, one of the worst for which a people ever fought, and one for which there was the least excuse."

*Union General Ulysses S. Grant
about General Robert E. Lee's
surrender at Appomattox*

HISTORY UNDER SIEGE, 2008 Edition of the Civil War Preservation Trust's Annual Report on Endangered Civil War Battlefields

In analyzing each site, CWPT consulted a 1993 study by the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission (CWSAC) that prioritized sites according to their historical significance and state of preservation. Battlefields are ranked from Priority I (sites considered the most threatened) to Priority IV (sites considered all but lost). CWSAC also ranks battlefields from A (the most historically significant sites) to D (sites of local importance).

The TEN most endangered battlefields in the nation, listed alphabetically:

Antietam or Sharpsburg, MD - Priority I, Class A battlefield.

Cedar Creek, VA – Priority I, Class A battlefield.

Cold Harbor, VA – Priority I, Class A battlefield.

Hunterstown, PA – Priority I, Class A battlefield.

Monacacy, MD – Priority I, Class B battlefield.

Natural Bridge, FL – Priority III, Class C battlefield.

Perryville, KY – Priority I, Class A battlefield.

Prairie Grove, AR – Priority I, Class B battlefield.

Savannah, GA – Priority III, Class B battlefield.

Spring Hill, TN – Priority I, Class B battlefield.

READ THE ENTIRE REPORT AT THE CIVIL WAR
PRESERVATION TRUST'S WEBSITE

www.civilwar.org

*This summary brought to you by the
Preservation Committee of the
Brandywine Valley Civil War Round Table
West Chester, Pennsylvania*

NINE WAYS YOU CAN HELP BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION

Suggestions by the Civil War Preservation Trust

1. Write or call your local, state and national representatives and respectfully urge them to support Civil War battlefield preservation.
2. Give a tax-deductible gift to save battlefields – call CWPT at 1-888-606-1400, donate on-line at www.civilwar.org, or mail a contribution to CWPT Membership Center, 11 Public Square, Suite 200, Hagerstown, MD 21740.
3. Find out if your employer offers a matching gift program and double the size of your donation.
4. Buy memberships for your family and friends – the perfect gift!
5. Write a “Letter to the Editor” that expresses your concern about how America’s Civil War battlefields are being destroyed.
6. Stay informed! Visit our website at www.civilwar.org to find out how you are helping to save America’s threatened Civil War heritage.
7. Please consider remembering CWPT in your will.
8. Encourage friends to join your Civil War Round Table.
9. MOST IMPORTANT: Take a child to a battlefield! Buy them a book, a game, a hat - whatever sparks their interest in American history. They will thank you for the rest of their lives!

Provided by the Preservation Committee of the
Brandywine Valley Civil War Round Table
West Chester, Pennsylvania



Civil War Song

*No more the bugle calls the weary one.
Rest, noble spirit, in thy grave unknown.
I'll find you and know you among the good and true
When a robe of white is given for the faded coat of blue.*

*Chorus of J.H. Mc Naughton's
Ode to the Union soldier*

First Lady Biography: Mary Lincoln



MARY ANNE TODD LINCOLN

Born:

Place: Lexington, Kentucky

Date: 1818, December 13

Father:

Robert Smith Todd, merchant, lawyer, officer in the War of 1812, member, Kentucky legislature, born 1791, February 25 in Lexington, Kentucky, and died 1849, July 16 in Lexington, Kentucky.

According to one source, Robert Todd died in Springfield, Illinois but in light of the facts that he died of cholera, which required immediate burial, and is buried in Lexington, Kentucky this claim is highly dubious.

Mother:

Eliza Ann Parker, born 1794 or 1795; She married Robert Todd 1812, November 26. She died 1825, July 6 in Lexington, Kentucky. *Stepmother:* After the death of Mary Lincoln's mother, her father married secondly on 1826, November 1 to Elizabeth Humphreys (1800 or earlier-1874).

Ancestry:

Irish, Scottish, English; Mary Lincoln's paternal great-grandfather, David Levi Todd, was born 17..., February 8, in Longford County, Ireland and immigrated through Pennsylvania to Kentucky. Through her mother's family, her great-great grandfather Samuel McDowell was born in Scotland (county and date unknown), immigrated to and died in Pennsylvania. Other Todd ancestors came from England.

Birth Order and Siblings:

Fourth of seven children; Three brothers, three sisters, Elizabeth Todd Edwards (1813-1888), Frances "Fanny" Todd Wallace (1815-1899), Levi O. Todd (1817-1865), Robert P. Todd (1820-1822), Ann Todd Smith (1824-1891), George Rogers Clark Todd (1825-1902)

Half-siblings: Four half-brothers, five half-sisters, Robert S. Todd (1827-died in infancy), Margaret Todd Kellogg (1828-1904), Samuel Briggs Todd (1830-1862), David H. Todd (1832-1871), Martha Todd White (1833-1868), Emilie Todd Helm (1836-1930), Alexander "Aleck" Todd (1839-1863), Elodie "Dedee" Todd Dawson (1840-death date unknown), Katherine "Kitty" Todd Herr (1841-1875)

Mary Lincoln's brother George R.C. Todd and her half-brothers Alexander Todd, David Todd, and Samuel Todd all fought in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. Alexander Todd was killed at Baton Rouge. Samuel Todd was killed in the Battle of Shiloh. David Todd was wounded at Vicksburg. Her half-sister Emilie Helm's husband was a Confederate general killed at Chickamauga. The husbands of her half-sisters, Martha White and Elodie Dawson were ardent supporters of the Confederacy.

Physical Appearance: 5'2", blue eyes, reddish-brown hair, blue eyes

Religious Affiliation: Presbyterian; Mrs. Lincoln was also an adherent of spiritualism, believing the living could be in contact with the dead.

Education: *Shelby Female Academy*, 1826-1832, later known as *Dr. Ward's Academy* where she studied grammar, geography, arithmetic, poetry, literature; *Madame Mentelle's Boarding School*, 1832-1837, learned to speak and write French, penmanship, dancing, singing; *Dr. Ward's Academy*, 1837-1839, advanced studies, likely in cultural subjects, details of course study unknown

Occupation before Marriage: Daughter of a wealthy and prosperous family, Mary Todd did not have any need for employment. With her father's close friendship to Kentucky political leader Henry Clay of the Whig Party, Mary Todd developed a voracious interest in politics and political issues. As evidenced by one of her earliest letters, she supported the

presidential candidacy of Whig William Henry Harrison. While she was trained in the social graces common to her class and time, the level of education she received was unusual. She studied widely and deeply a variety of subjects including the works of Victor Hugo, Shakespeare, astronomy. According to legend, her maternal grandmother aided slaves seeking freedom through the "Underground Railroad" and Mary Todd's later support of abolition is believed to have originated with the influence of this grandmother.

Marriage:

23 years old, married 1842, November 4 to Abraham Lincoln, lawyer (1809-1865), in the front parlor of the home of Mary Todd's sister Elizabeth and her husband Ninian Edwards, Springfield, Illinois. On 1841, January 1, Abraham Lincoln broke his initial engagement to Mary Todd several months after she had accepted. For the first two years of their marriage, they lived at the Globe Tavern in Springfield. In 1844, they purchased their first and only home at Eight and Jackson Streets in Springfield.

Children:

Four sons; Robert Todd Lincoln (1843-1926), Edward Baker Lincoln (1846-1850), William "Willie" Wallace Lincoln (1850-1862), Thomas "Tad" Lincoln (1853-1871)

Occupation after Marriage:

Until her husband's election to the presidency, Mary Lincoln spent her years confined to either Illinois or Kentucky, save for a two-year period when he served as a U.S. Congressman in Washington and she made the unusual move to relocate there for a time, living with him and their first child in a boardinghouse. Her primary focus was raising her family and often did the cooking and cleaning of their home. She nevertheless took an active role in promoting his political career. When he began seeking an appointive position, it was Mary Lincoln who handwrote his solicitation letters to Whig leaders. When he was offered the governorship of the faraway Oregon territory, she successfully advised against his accepting the post since it would remove him from a potential national position. She took in sessions of the state legislature at the capital and filled a notebook with the names of partisan allegiance of each member. Mrs. Lincoln was in attendance at the last of the famous debates. In Alton, Illinois, between her husband and Democratic opponent Stephen Douglas as Lincoln made a second attempt to win a U.S. Senate seat. She took an especial interest in the transition of the Whig Party into the new Republican one and often wrote to influential friends in Kentucky regarding Lincoln's views on slavery.

Presidential Campaign and Inauguration:

Legend claims that as a young woman Mary Todd had announced to friends that the man she married would someday become President of the United States. Her vigorous defense and support of Lincoln's presidential candidacy in 1860, willingness to speak with reporters who came to Springfield to cover Lincoln's campaign, as well as her "speeches," (as a *New York Times* article termed her overt discussion of political issues), during the transition period between election and inauguration days prove her eagerness to assume a prominent public role in her husband's presidency. Due to the sectional strife and imminent secession of South Carolina, however, Lincoln's 1861 inaugural was overshadowed by threats on his life. Many of the wealthy southern families who had dominated the social-political life of the capital were leaving and those remaining social leaders, including the outgoing First Lady Harriet Lane had pre-judged the "western" Mrs. Lincoln with a regional bias as unsuited to assume a social leadership role. In the 1865 campaign there was a threat that Democratic operatives were planning to make Mrs. Lincoln and her "crockery," meaning the expensive state china she had purchased, an issue; it never materialized. After the 1865 inaugural ceremony at the Capitol, Mrs. Lincoln hosted a large reception in the White House.

First Lady: 1861, March 4 - 1865, April 14 42 years old

With the difficulty of making medical conclusions about Mrs. Lincoln long after she lived, precise assessment of what mental and physical problems she may have suffered is impossible. She did manifest behavior that suggests severe depression, anxiety and paranoia, migraine headaches, even possibly diabetes. Certainly all of her ills were exacerbated by a series of tragic circumstances during her White House tenure: the trauma of Civil War, including the allegiance of much of her family to the Confederacy and their death or injury in battle; an 1863 accident which threw her from a carriage and knocked her unconscious; the accusations by northerners that she was sympathetic to the Confederacy and the ostracizing of her as a "traitor" by southerners; the sudden death of her son Willie in 1862; and, of course, the worst incident of all, the assassination of her husband as she sat beside him in the Ford's Theater.

Mary Lincoln viewed her expensive 1861 White House redecoration and her extravagant clothing purchases (the former over-running a federal appropriation of \$20,000 by \$6,000, and the latter driving her family into great debt) as a necessary

effort to create an image of the stability that would command respect not only for the President but the Union. She felt this most keenly in light of the uncertain neutrality of France and England. Public and press reaction, however, was ridicule and anger. She instead conveyed the image of a selfish and indulgent woman inconsiderate of the suffering that most of the nation's families were enduring as a result of the war her husband was managing. In time, she would even press Republican appointees to pay her debts, since they owed their positions to her husband.

By April, 1861, Union soldiers were decamped at the White House and would remain for the endurance of the Administration. The war overshadowed all of Mary Lincoln's activities. She worked as a volunteer nurse in the Union hospitals, offered intelligence she had learned as well as her own advice to the President on military personnel, recommended minor military appointments to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, toured Union Army camps and reviewed troops with her husband. She was largely successful in her objective of using entertaining as a means of raising Union morale. It is difficult to assess the influence she had on the President, if any, but there is no record of his asking her to stop her flow of advice, recommendations and observations to him. She was not successful in her efforts to oust Treasury Secretary Salmon Chase, Secretary of State William Seward, General George McClellan and General Ulysses Grant. Numerous abolitionists, however, attested to her core value of full emancipation of African-American slaves and her influence on the President to see this not only in political but human terms as well. She considered the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 to be a personal victory. Two public causes in which Mary Lincoln became involved attested to her genuine support of the Union Army and the freedom of slaves: the Sanitary Commission fairs, which raised private donations to supplement the federal funds for soldier supplies, like blankets and the Contraband Relief Association, which also raised private donations, for the housing, employment, clothing and medical care of recently freed slaves, an organization in which she became involved as a result of her friendship with her dressmaker, former slave Elizabeth Keckley.

Mary Lincoln was the first presidential wife to be called "First Lady" in the press, as documented in both the **London Times and **Sacramento Union** newspapers.*

Post-Presidential Life:

Deeply traumatized by her husband's murder, Mary Lincoln did not move out of the White House until May 23, 1865. She relocated to Chicago and there began her effort to settle her husband's estate. In 1868, she moved with her two sons, Robert and Tad, to Germany and from there commenced her battle with Congress for award of a presidential widow's pension. In 1871, a year after receiving the annual pension of \$3,000, she returned to the United States. The sudden death that year of her son Tad left her spirit broken; she soon began behaving in what her son Robert considered to be signs of mental instability and he successfully had her tried for insanity.

In 1875, she was committed to the Bellevue Insane Asylum, in Batavia, Illinois. Later in the day after the verdict was made, she twice attempted suicide by taking what she believed to be the drugs laudanum and camphor - which the suspicious druggist had replaced with a sugar substance. One of the nation's first women lawyers, Myra Bradwell believed Mrs. Lincoln was not insane and being held against her will. She filed an appeal on Mrs. Lincoln's behalf and after four months of confinement, the former First Lady was released to the care of her sister Elizabeth Edwards in Springfield. Once a second trial on June 19, 1876 declared her sane, she moved to France. After four years abroad she returned to live again in the Edwards home, in October 1880. Her pension was increased to \$5,000 in 1882.

Death: Home of her sister Elizabeth Edwards, Springfield, Illinois - 1882, July 16 - 63 years old

Burial: The Lincoln Tomb, Oak Ridge Cemetery, Springfield, Illinois

Source: [www. Firstladies.org/biographies/firstladies](http://www.Firstladies.org/biographies/firstladies)

On April 20, 1861 – Robert E. Lee resigns his commission in the United States Army. “I cannot raise my hand against my birthplace, my home, my children,” he says. Lee then goes to Richmond, is offered command of the military and naval forces of Virginia, and accepts.

Man aims to restore Civil War Monument

By ANNE PICKERING, staff writer

Thursday, March 27, 2008



Staff photo by Amy Drago

WEST CHESTER — A businessman with a passion for the Civil War is spearheading a drive to restore the Civil War monument in Marshall Square Park, which over the years has been vandalized and stained by air pollution. “I think many people don’t even know it’s there and what it’s for,” said Gregory Walters, of The Walters Company, a West Chester-based real estate development company. Walters appeared before Borough Council on March 10 to ask permission for the undertaking. It won’t cost the borough anything, he said. He has formed a committee of fellow preservationists who hope to raise the estimated \$115,000 price tag for the restoration through grants and private donations. The monument was erected in 1887 by veterans of the 97th Regiment of the Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry in honor of their fallen comrades.

The way it looked in 1887 is different from the way it looks today. A drawing from the Chester County Historical Society shows manicured grounds with a series of decorative walkways in all four directions leading away from the structure. “Today the site has lost all definition,” said Walters. “The sidewalks are gone.” But Walters thinks the sidewalks could be under the grass. Trees have grown up. The monument itself is covered in a gray grime. The joints between the stone slabs of the steps are open and exposed. Eight decorative cannon barrels that used to be on the top step have disappeared over the years. The eight replica Civil War cannon barrels, carved out of stone, that ringed the base of the monument on the top step started to disappear between 1935 and 1950, said Walters. By 1949, there were only two left and the borough removed them for safekeeping. Now those are also lost. The restoration committee wants to replicate them but no drawings exist of the monument or the barrels. Walters speculated that someone in the area might know where one of the barrels is. He would like to borrow it, just to take the measurements and then return it. “If someone has one, we want to borrow it to measure it. No questions asked,” Walters said.

The plan is to have the restoration finished in time for the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War, which will be in April 2011. The group also wants to create an educational piece with signage at the park and possibly a walking tour that would illustrate the contribution of West Chester and Chester County to the Civil War. The grounds on what is now West Chester University were where the soldiers were trained and bivouacked. Two other people on the restoration committee are Dale Frens, a historical preservationist, and Jane Dorchester, a local historian.

To contact staff writer Anne Pickering, send an e-mail to apickering@dailylocal.com.

Civil War books win award for fresh insights on era and its icons

By LINDA WHEELER • The Washington Post • March 18, 2008

The annual Lincoln Prize went this year to two authors of books on Robert E. Lee, Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. An honorable mention was given to an author for her exhaustive study of what the common soldier thought about slavery.

The three books represent new contributions to the study of the 16th president and the Civil War at a time when there would seem to be little new to say. The winners are Elizabeth Brown Pryor for "Reading the Man: A Portrait of Robert E. Lee Through His Private Letters," and James Oakes for "The Radical and the Republican: Frederick Douglass, Abraham Lincoln, and the Triumph of Antislavery Politics." Chandra Manning got an honorable mention for "What This Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War." Pryor, a historian and diplomat, and Oakes, a history professor in the graduate school of the City University of New York, will receive \$20,000 each. Manning, an assistant professor of history at Georgetown University, will receive \$10,000. All three will be honored at a banquet in New York on April 1.

The Lincoln Prize, awarded since 1990 for the year's best books on Lincoln and the Civil War, was co-founded and endowed by business leaders and philanthropists Richard Gilder and Lewis Lehrman, the principals of the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History in New York. The Lincoln and Soldiers Institute of Gettysburg College administers the awards. Writing on the life and times of Lee before and after the war, Pryor says she read about 10,000 documents in her quest to understand Lee beyond the battlefield. In his personal letters, of which hundreds survived, Lee is not the stone-faced general of photographs and paintings but rather a likable guy who had a large family, worried about money and loved his job in the military -- and beautiful women.

Interspersed with the letters and other documents, many unpublished until this book, Pryor takes "historical excursions," using the material as a jumping-off point to discuss the customs and politics of the period. This allows her to place Lee in the context of his time and not to judge him by modern standards. Among her discoveries were Lee's extravagant flirtations in letters to women, done mostly with the knowledge of his wife, Mary, who often added brief notes at the end of the letters. He addressed women as "my beautiful" and teasingly inquired about a wedding night or said he was all alone and missed them.

He was considered handsome, pictures taken in the 1850s show a man with dark hair and a mustache who dressed in the fashion of the day. Pryor, notes that Lee was conscious of his good looks and that when his hair receded at a young age, he carefully combed it over to cover the bald spot, a habit he retained until his death. "From the time he was sixteen he was his own barber, cutting his hair, moustache and beard with tiny snips each day so that he always looked the same -- that is to say, perfect," she wrote. Pryor has written a lively book, an easy read and a significant contribution to understanding Lee and the Civil War period.

"The Radical and the Republican" is equally well-researched and will appeal more to the serious student of the war. Oakes set out to tell how Lincoln and Douglass, two extraordinary and powerful personalities with strong differences, made common cause during the Civil War. Lincoln arrived in Washington with the conviction that slavery should not be spread into the new territories of the West. Although he hated slavery, he allowed it to exist where it was established, anticipating its inevitable extinction. Douglass, a former slave living in Washington, was an articulate and persuasive orator who was fiercely opposed to slavery anywhere in the country. Lincoln took the bold step of inviting Douglass to the White House. When Lincoln was criticized for that, he invited Douglass a second time. One influenced the other. Lincoln listened carefully to Douglass's argument for the immediate emancipation of slaves and later for the recruitment of black soldiers. Two years before Douglass's death in 1895, he said he had met no man "possessing a more godlike nature than Abraham Lincoln."

"What This Cruel War Was Over" is an impressive and exhaustive examination of the opinions held on slavery by ordinary soldiers fighting on each side of the war and how they evolved. Much of what Manning reports counters a common belief that for the Confederates, the war was not about slavery until Lincoln made it so with his Emancipation Proclamation. She says slavery was always the issue for Southern soldiers, irrespective of whether they owned slaves, because of the social structure of Southern life. She says black slaves made all Southern white men, rich or poor, equal in their un-enslaved status. It was the soldiers' "gut-level conviction that survival -- of themselves, their families and the social order -- depended on slavery's continued existence."

On the Union side, she finds soldiers joining the army to end slavery and others supporting that position after exposure to slavery during the war. Some, she writes, came to that conclusion only after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued. She says those who supported emancipation "knew that emancipation was necessary to save the Union but also because they now recognized that it was necessary to make the Union worth saving."



**ANNUAL BANQUET
BRANDYWINE VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE**

WHEN: **Tuesday, May 13, 2008**
 6:00 pm: Cash Bar and Hors D'oeuvres
 7:00 pm: Dinner
 8:00 pm: Guest Speaker

WHERE: **The Elks Lodge**
335 West Washington Street
West Chester, PA 19381

MENU: Fresh Fruit Cup, Tossed Garden Salad
 Choice of:
 - Virginia Baked Ham
 - Boneless Breast of Chicken Marsala, with sliced mushrooms and herbs in a Marsala wine sauce
 - Roasted Prime Rib of Beef (12 oz.), au jus
 Includes: Oven roasted potato, vegetables, rolls and butter, coffee and tea
 Dessert: Cheesecake with strawberry topping

SPEAKER: **Jean Edward Smith – “U. S. Grant”**

COST: **\$38.00 PER PERSON - (SAME AS LAST YEAR!)**

**RESERVATION DEADLINE: WEDNESDAY, April 30, 2008 at NOON!
 NO EXCEPTIONS!**

Order Form: Detach, complete reservation, and send with payment to:

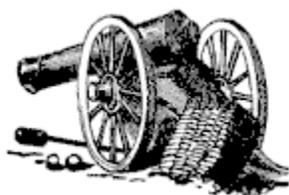
Dave Walter, Treasurer, 937 Thorne Drive, West Chester, PA 19382 (61-363-8900)

Name _____ Ham ___ Chicken ___ Beef ___

Address _____

_____ X \$38.00 = Total Amount Due _____ (DEADLINE – April 30, 2008 at NOON!)

**Checks made payable to: Brandywine Valley Civil War Round Table
 (Checks are your receipt)**



Scheduled Speakers for 2007 - 2008:

- Sep 05, 2007:** Dan Cashin - "Ben Butler"
Oct 03, 2007: Ed Bonekemper - "McClellan: The Failed General"
Nov 07, 2007: Dave Kohler - "Whatever Happened to our Favorite Civil War Heroes"
Dec 05, 2007: Elizabeth Brown Pryor - "Reading the Man: A Portrait of Robert E. Lee Through His Private Letters", plus our Christmas Social
Jan 02, 2008: Dennis Kelly - Topic is to be announced
Feb 06, 2008: Chip Crowe - "General George Thomas"
Mar 05, 2008: BVCWRT Members - "Show and Tell", plus our Spring Social
Apr 02, 2008: Jean Baker - "Mary Todd Lincoln"
May 07, 2008: Roger Arthur - "The Importance of John Brown"
May 13, 2008: (Annual Banquet): Jean Edward Smith - "U. S. Grant"

Brandywine Valley Civil War Round Table Membership Application

Application Type: New Renewal

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Note: Monthly newsletters are distributed by E-mail only.

Membership Type: Individual (\$25) Family (\$40): Student (\$15):

If family membership, please list other names: _____

Bring the completed form and a check payable to BVCWRT to a meeting or mail it to:

Dave Walter, Treasurer, 937 Thorne Drive, West Chester, PA 19382