



# Banner of the Blue and Gray

Newsletter of the Frederick County Civil War Roundtable Frederick, Maryland  
Founded January 30, 1989

252nd Meeting

September 2016

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## September 2016 National Museum of Civil War Medicine 48 E. Patrick St, Frederick, Maryland



**Speaker:** Mark Tooley

**Topic:** The Peace That  
Never Was

*A narrative history of the 1861 Washington Peace Conference, the bipartisan, last-ditch effort to prevent the Civil War, an effort that nearly averted the carnage that followed.*

In February 1861, most of America's great statesmen including a former president, dozens of current and former senators, Supreme Court justices, governors, and congressmen came together at the historic Willard Hotel in a desperate attempt to stave off Civil War.

Seven southern states had already seceded, and the conferees battled against time to craft a compromise to protect slavery and thus preserve the union and prevent war. Participants included former President John Tyler, General William Sherman's Catholic step-father, General Winfield Scott, and Lincoln's future Treasury Secretary, Salmon Chase and from a room upstairs at the hotel, Lincoln himself. Revelatory and definitive, *The Peace That Almost Was* demonstrates that slavery was the main issue of the conference and thus of the war itself and that no matter the shared faith, family, and friendships of the participants, ultimately no compromise could be reached.

# NEARBY SEPTEMBER EVENTS

September 3- Walking tour, "The March to Antietam," retraces the steps of Confederate and Union soldiers through Frederick near the 154<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the event. Begins at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine. 3 pm. "Pay as you please" fee. Registration: [35754.blackbaudhosting.com/35754/MM-Walking-Tour-Antietam](https://35754.blackbaudhosting.com/35754/MM-Walking-Tour-Antietam)

September 3-4- Living history camp and demonstrations at the Gettysburg NMP (Pitzer Woods/Pennsylvania Memorial). Free. [nps.gov/gett](https://nps.gov/gett)

September 10- Bus tour, "John Wilkes Booth Escape Route," all-day tour begins at the Surratt House Museum in Clinton. \$85. Details, reservations: [surrattmuseum.org/booth-escape-tour](https://surrattmuseum.org/booth-escape-tour)

September 10-11- Anniversary activities at the South Mountain Battlefield State Park near Middletown. Guided tours and living history. 10 am-4 pm both days. Call 301-432-8065 for details.

September 17-18- Anniversary living history and battlefield hikes at the Antietam National Battlefield near Sharpsburg. Free with park admission. [nps.gov/anti](https://nps.gov/anti)

September 17-18- Living history, "Lives in Limbo: Contraband Camp in the Shadow of John Brown's Fort," at the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. 11 am-4 pm. Free with park admission. [nps.gov/hafe](https://nps.gov/hafe)

September 24-25- Living history, "Aftermath of Battle," U.S. Sanitary Commission at the Antietam National Battlefield near Sharpsburg. Free with park admission. [nps.gov/anti](https://nps.gov/anti)

This list is by no means all inclusive. Some of these events will repeat during the month. You can always use our Facebook page to connect with members taking their own tours during the month. What better way to explore local battlefields and historic sites than to go with your fellow members!

## *PREZ SEZ*

Welcome back to the Roundtable for our fall series beginning Sept. 15th here at NMCWM. We have lined up varied and interesting speakers for your enjoyment and entertainment. When you come to the meetings try and bring a friend or neighbor to share the discussions with.

I look forward to seeing everyone in Sept.

Jack

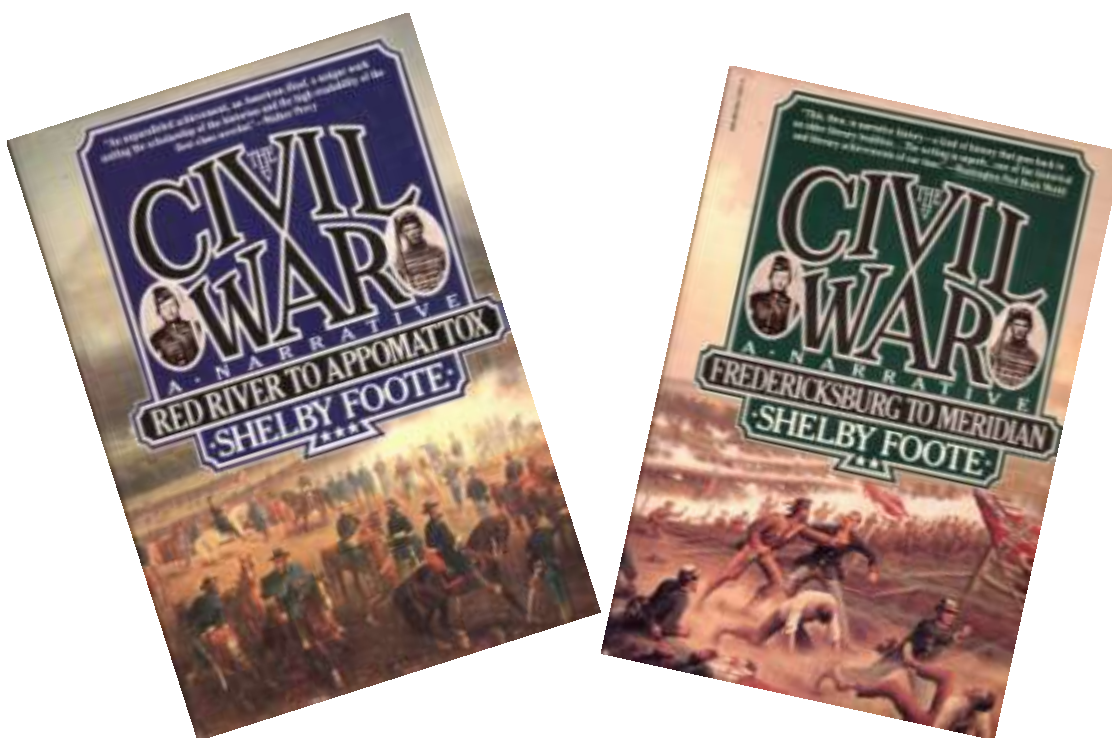


## Ramblings from the Raffle Table

Where has the summer gone? Remember the intense cold snap we had in February? Well, if you can figure out how to bottle some of that to release in “the hottest Summer on record”, I’ll buy stock! No wonder Miss Scarlett carried a fan in her reticule. (I bet you gentlemen are wondering what part of her undergarments that is. Shame on you!) Hopefully September will bring us cooler weather. But remember the National Museum of Civil War Medicine is air conditioned for your comfort so come on down to help us get our Roundtable season off on the right foot:

**Shelby Foote** that is.

None who watched Ken Burns’ series on the Civil War will ever forget that soft, slightly raspy voice leading us gently into a thoroughly reasonable comprehension of the Confederate Cause. To celebrate his centennial year, I have not one but two of his endeavors for your perusal. (I think he’s rubbing off on me with his ol’ southern way of speakin’ as they did in the 1860s – I may have to dust off my hoop petticoat.)



Lookin’ forward to seein’ y’all at the September Meeting! *Kathi*

## BOOK REVIEW by Matt Borders

**A review of The War That Forged A Nation: Why the Civil War Still Matters by James McPherson, Published 2015 by Oxford University Press, 211pgs. Retailing at \$27.95.**

The American Civil War was the single most trying event in our nation's history. The ramifications of that tragic period have remained with us and continue to shape this country to the present day. Looking at this big picture approach to the war has been a personal interest of mine, so I was excited to read The War That Forged A Nation, an essay compilation by James McPherson, the Professor Emeritus of United States History at Princeton, a Pulitzer Prize winning author, and one of the most renowned historians of the Civil War era.

Dr. McPherson's opening essay, "Why the Civil War Still Matters", sets the stage for the rest of the book. This essay, which starts off both introspective and slightly autobiographical, begins by laying out some of the many reasons why we as citizens are still fascinated by the Civil War and touching briefly on how the author came to the study of the subject. The essay then lays out the central themes to the American Civil War, slavery, state sovereignty, the power of the Federal Government and individual liberties, through the prism of the Centennial Commemoration of the War and the Civil Rights Movement, the two events coinciding, but never truly linked as they should have been. Looking at the political and social upheavals of the 1960's seems to parallel the upheavals of a hundred years before, and McPherson connects these times brilliantly, following the line of history another fifty years forward to the present day to our own social and political upheavals, which are themselves ripples of a past that is not so distant after all.

Following this deep opening, the majority of the essays in The War That Forged A Nation deal with different aspects of the war that have often been overlooked or downplayed. The study of California and the political battles to keep it within the Union was fascinating, as was the cast of famous and infamous characters that took part in it. McPherson also takes on two topics that have been increasingly popular subjects of study in the last decade, whether the Civil War can or should be categorized as a "just" war and the tragic cost of that war. It should be noted that on page 54 in his essay, "Death and Destruction in the Civil War", McPherson uses the most recent research to discuss casualties and percentages of population loss. The author then gives us two separate essays dealing with the United States Navy and its importance, but often overlooked role in the shortening and ending of the war.

The final chapter dealing with Reconstruction was of particular interest now that we are beyond the 150<sup>th</sup> cycle of the war and into the period that would have been Reconstruction, 150 years ago, approximately 1866 to 1877. This chapter not only laid out the initial triumphs of the Reconstruction movement, but also how it ultimately failed and how the Southern aristocracy was able to reassert itself in the decade after the war. The only aspect of this book that I felt was not up to the author's usual brilliance was the chapter of Lincoln and McClellan. This chapter laid out most of the best known examples of tension between the Commander in Chief and the young commander of the Army of the Potomac, but did not seem to shed any new light on the subject of political and military contentions during the war or even between these two men.

Beyond this, The War That Forged A Nation: Why the Civil War Still Matters was an excellent work that allowed the reader to pick up any chapter as an individual essay, making it an easy read. I would recommend this for any scholar of the war or anyone interested to learn more about the vast array of information beyond the battlefields themselves.

**We are on Facebook! Please check out our page for timely updates, local events, or comments.**



<https://m.facebook.com/fccwrt>

Gary Dyson is our “face” for Facebook.

Help us spread the word about OUR FCCWRT!! We have 111 “likes” to date.

Join Facebook. Share posts with friends! You'll get more timely notice of events when you check us out on Facebook.

### **Our MISSION**

**TO** cultivate and preserve

Frederick County’s Civil War heritage and broaden the understanding of the Civil War Era and its impact on our nation.

**TO** explore the many facets of the Civil War from the battlefield to first-person narratives, including guest lectures by writers and historians.

**TO** support historical projects and activities aimed at increasing public interest and appreciation of our Civil War history, both locally and nationally.

### **Looking Ahead**

While our speaker list for this season is set, please let us know of any topics or speakers that you’d like to hear about. We hope to see you at our next meeting, October 20th!

### **2016-2017 Board of Directors**

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**As our 2016-17 begins we have begin our membership drive anew. We can't continue this Roundtable without your support. We're always looking for new members to join our ranks too. Recruit your friends!**

For those who remembered to renew your FCCWRT membership, thank you! Your dues make it possible for us to continue to fulfill our mission. We can't continue without your support! Please ask your friends to join so we can do even more!

As a member of our group, you'll enjoy these benefits:

- receive the current newsletter
- receive email updates of local events related to Civil War history
- always have a place to be on the third Thursday of the month

Our yearly dues are:

- \$30.00 for an individual
- \$50.00 for a family up to four
- \$5.00 for out of state members and members under 16 years of age