

8th Annual Civil War Symposium
The Coming Fury
Dissolution of the American Union (1859-1861)

Sat., March 27, 2021 9 am – 3 pm

Virtual Event

Featured Presentations and Speakers

The Cost of War

Presented by Ken Foss

Many historians of the American Civil War have written and spoken of the tremendous human cost of the conflict: it is estimated that between 1861-1865, there were 629,000-750,000 casualties, in the nation's costliest military confrontation. But what is often overlooked is the material cost of the war. In a period of history when the production of goods and services, as well as war materials was still done largely by hand, (the war greatly accelerated the growth of industrialization, particularly in the North) the number of items required to equip both Union and Confederate armies for battle was staggering.

**First Blood: The Conspiracy Plot to Assassinate Abraham Lincoln in Baltimore
February 1861**

Presented by Bryce O. Stenzel

It is a well-known fact that President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated in 1865, by actor, John Wilkes Booth, at Ford's Theatre, in Washington, D.C. Not as well-known is the fact that this wasn't the first, serious assassination attempt against Mr. Lincoln. As soon as he was elected president in November 1860, Lincoln's life was in constant danger.

In February 1861, private detective Allan Pinkerton of Chicago became aware of a plot to assassinate the president-elect as he traveled from Springfield, Illinois to Washington, D.C., by train, for his inauguration. Lincoln was forced to change trains in Baltimore--a hotbed of secessionist fervor. A group of local street thugs known as the "Plug Uglies" were intending to attack and kill the president-elect, as he made his way from one train station to another, in the heart of the city. This is the intriguing story of how Pinkerton successfully thwarted the assassination plot, with the help of several of his operatives; particularly, Kate Warne, the first female detective in U.S. History.

Following the Confederates firing on Fort Sumter and responding to President Lincoln's call for troops to "put down the rebellion," a group of Massachusetts soldiers of the Sixth Regiment were attacked on April 19, 1861, as they made their way through Baltimore, following the same route that Lincoln took two months earlier. Several soldiers and rioters were killed; several more were injured. The "first blood" spilled on the streets of Baltimore set the stage for what was to become the deadliest war in American history.

Kate Warne- Spy and America's First Woman Detective

Presented by Susan Hynes

Meet Kate Warne, Lady Pinkerton. By infiltrating Baltimore society, Warne uncovered and thwarted an 1861 Abraham Lincoln assassination attempt. Learn how she went undercover, adopting the guise of a Southern widow, and gained admission to the parlors and ballrooms of secessionist family's intent on killing the newly elected President.

The Coming Fury: The Causes of the Civil War

Presented by Arn Kind

Author Thomas R. Flavel said, "Of all unions, one is indissoluble: the bond between present and past. We hold this truth to be self-evident in the case of the United States and its Civil War." More has been written about this conflict than any other event in America's history. Debate still continues today over whether Civil War battlefields should be preserved and whether reparations should be made to descendants of slaves. In our nation's capital visitors to the Lincoln Memorial out-number those who visit the Jefferson Memorial or the Washington Monument by ten to one. At the same time protests abound over the statues and memorials commemorating key historical events and participants in the war, with many protesters demanding they be torn down. Although the war ended 155 years ago it surfaces and resurfaces in modern times and resides everlasting within the public culture.

If you ask most people what was the cause of the bloodiest war in American history, they will, more likely than not, give a one-word answer . . . SLAVERY. And that answer would be correct, but it is not the entire answer. There is no single cause of the American Civil War. The start of armed conflict between North and South was much more complicated than that and required a complex networking of physical and intangible conditions. It could be argued that the best that can be done would be to examine the underlying differences between the warring sides and to look for possible sources and substances of those differences. This presentation will go through the key circumstances contributing to the division of the United States. Some were centuries to develop, while others were relatively new phenomena. All of them gradually changed a relatively homogeneous country into two distinct and confrontational sections, where "*e pluribus unum*" deteriorated into "*us versus them*."

"A Mighty Mean Fowl Fight": The Battle of Wilson's Creek and the Fight for Missouri

Presented by James Olson

As the secession crisis of 1860-1861 developed, many Southern states had a decision to make. Would they secede from the Union or remain loyal? This decision was hotly contested in many of those states, but few would be more heavily debated or violently fought over than the State of Missouri. In the lead up to the Civil War, the population of the State of Missouri was evenly split between slaveholders and Southern sympathizers who wished to secede and slaveholders and Unionists who wished to remain loyal to the United States. This would lead to Missouri having two active governments operating within its borders as well as pro-Union and pro-Confederate militias and armies fighting for control of the State from the outset of hostilities.

July 21, 1861 saw the first major clash of the armies during the American Civil War at Manassas, Virginia which resulted in a humiliating rout for the Union Army of Northeastern Virginia. In Missouri, General Nathaniel Lyon (USA) was working to secure Union control in a state that had declared itself neutral for the time being. Southern sympathizers under the command of General Ben McCulloch and General Sterling "Pap" Price were taking up arms and making plans to seize Missouri for the newly formed Confederate States of America. These armies would eventually meet at a place called Wilson's Creek near Springfield, Missouri on August 10, 1861, just three weeks after the Battle of First Bull Run, in a battle that one soldier would later describe as a "Mighty mean fowt-fight."

Though smaller than the Battle of First Bull Run, Wilson's Creek was the second battle of the American Civil War and one that would help decide the fate of Missouri and whether the State would secede or remain with the Union.

Symposium Presenters



Ken Foss is a former member of the First Minnesota Volunteer infantry re-enactor group and a current member of the New Ulm Battery, where he recently served as the organization's president.



Susan Hynes, amateur historian and costumed historical interpreter, has presented at past Boy in Blue Civil War Symposiums on a variety of subjects, including, the lives of Confederate women, death and mourning customs during the Civil War, the women of Gettysburg, and her own relatives' experiences during the time period. She is current Regent of the Anthony Wayne Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, has served on the Blue Earth County Historical Society Board of Directors, and serves on the Betsy-Tacy Society Advisory Council. She frequently is involved in events at the historic Hubbard House in Mankato, the Betsy-Tacy Society, the Cox House in St. Peter, HistoryFest at McGowan's farm, and with the Cannon Old West Society, as well as historical presentations for various organizations and groups throughout our region.



Arn Kind has been a teacher for the past 40 years, 36 of them in the public schools in grades 4 through 12. He's been bringing his presentations to students and adults of all ages; from classroom seminars at elementary and high school levels to seminars at the university level. He has also been featured at summer camps, historical reenactments and festivals.

Arn is a member of the First Minnesota Volunteer Infantry Regiment; a reenactment group based out of Fort Snelling. Because this group is noted for its authenticity, they have appeared in many documentaries and historical feature-films such as *The Blue and the Gray*, *North & South*, *Glory*, *Gettysburg*, *Dances With Wolves*, and *Gods and Generals*. Arn brings this authenticity to his presentations. His training and experiences as a teacher enable him to adjust and adapt the subject matter to suit different age levels. A very important part of Arn's presentations are the artifacts, uniforms and equipment that he brings. Audience members will be able to observe, handle, and interact with these items as part of their hands-on experience in living the history.



James Olson grew up on a farm near Amboy, MN and graduated from Blue Earth Area High School in 2003. He has been a Civil War buff since the age of seven years old when he saw the film version of "The Red Badge of Courage." After high school, James did a hitch as a machine gunner and machine gun team leader in the United States Marine Corps, making one trip to Iraq.

Since leaving the Marines, James has been involved with Veterans Groups in the Mankato area including serving four years as the Commander of Lorentz Post 11, American Legion in Mankato and currently serves as the Commandant of the Forrest G. James Detachment #589, Marine Corps League. He is also member of Walter H. Strand Post 950 (VFW), Voiture Locale #281 (40&8), Lyle C. Pearson, Sr. Chapter 10 (DAV) and Prairie Land Defenders Chapter, Military Order of the Purple Heart. In his spare time he is a board member for the Winnebago Area Museum, and The Daniel Boone Motor Trail Association. He is also a Boy in Blue Memorial Project committee member.



Bryce Stenzel is a native of Mankato, Minnesota. He holds Bachelor of Science (Social Studies Teaching) and Master of Arts (History) degrees from Minnesota State University-Mankato, where he graduated Summa Cum Laude. Mr. Stenzel has portrayed President Lincoln as a Costumed Historical Interpreter for over 30 years and is the author of numerous books and articles on local history as well as Lincoln-related topics. He is founder, playwright and director of Lincoln's Traveling Troupe, a talented group of area youth, who portray Lincoln's life and legacy through a series of dramatic plays. Mr. Stenzel chairs Mankato's Boy in Blue Civil War Memorial Committee, serves as president of/plays trombone in the Mankato Area Community Band, is the Secretary of the New Ulm Battery, and a Director in the Minnesota Boys of '61 Civil War Veterans' Memorial organization.