



### **ABOUT the ALCWRT**

- *The Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table is the oldest Civil War Round Table in Michigan, founded in 1952. Our JUBILEE (65<sup>th</sup>) anniversary was September, 2017.*
- *Meetings are each 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, September through May (except December), 7:30 pm, at the Charter Township of Plymouth City Offices, 9955 N. Haggerty, in the Chamber Council Room.*
- *For more information, contact ALCWRT President Liz Stringer at [stringerL@aol.com](mailto:stringerL@aol.com)*
- *Our web site is [ALCWRT.org](http://ALCWRT.org)*
- *Like us on **FACEBOOK**...!*  
"Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table"

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*including "Where's Worley?"*

**E. LAWRENCE ABEL** will be the featured speaker for the **APRIL 18th** meeting of the Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table.

His topic:

### **JOHN WILKES BOOTH and the WOMEN WHO LOVED HIM**

When John Wilkes Booth died, twelve days after shooting Lincoln, his pockets were searched and inside were a diary and photos of five different women. Four of them were among the most beautiful actresses of the day. The fifth was his fiancée, the daughter of a U.S. Senator.

This talk begins with the question: Why would a man about to be married carry photos of other women in his packet? And this talk ends with a new explanation of why Booth shot Lincoln.

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**E. LAWRENCE ABEL** is a distinguished emeritus professor at Wayne State University School of Medicine and former director of the University's Mott Center for Human Growth and Development. He is a member of the Michigan Civil War Round Table (Farmington, MI), the Surratt Society, the Civil War Medical Museum, and the American Name Society. His books include *Singing the New Nation; Confederate Music*, about the role of music on Southern nationalism; and, *A Finger in Lincoln's Brain*, about the medical treatment Lincoln received after he was shot.

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**THANKS to STEVEN RAMOLD** for his deeply engaging presentation in March: *"The Controversy over the Sherman / Johnston Surrender."*

**Don't forget to include his books** on your summer reading list:

\* *Slaves, Sailors, Citizens: African Americans in the Union Navy*

\* *Baring the Iron Hand: Discipline in the Union Army*

\* *Across the Divide: Union Soldiers View the Northern Home Front*

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**MAY's SPEAKER** will be **Curt Fields**:

*"Ulysses S. Grant: The Man Behind the Uniform"*

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## CLARISSA “Clara” HARLOWE BARTON

*April 12 marks the 107th anniversary of the death of Clara Barton in 1912 at age 90.*

*Barton’s contributions in the U.S. Civil War and her role in founding the American Red Cross are most of what we learned about her in school. Here’s a bit more of her remarkable story.*

### THE ANGEL of the BATTLEFIELD

Clara Barton’s Civil War nursing career began when soldiers of the 6<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Militia who had been wounded in the Baltimore Riots of 1861 were brought to Washington, DC. Barton, who had grown up in Massachusetts, went to the railroad station and helped to nurse the wounded and to organize supplies for their care. She had known some of these men when they were growing up in Massachusetts; others had been her students when she was a teacher there.

Barton’s initial work was to solicit donations of supplies, store and organize them, and get them to the front. Her living quarters were her first storeroom. War Department officials and field surgeons opposed her efforts, but she received support from Ladies’ Aid societies and from Massachusetts Senator Henry Wilson. In August 1862 she gained permission from Quartermaster Daniel Rucker to work on the front lines.

Barton went on to organize and/or provide battlefield nursing support in several battles, including First Bull Run, Cedar Mountain, Second Bull Run, Antietam, and Fredericksburg. Fairfax Station, Chantilly, Harper’s Ferry, South Mountain, Charleston, Petersburg and Cold Harbor. Barton helped both Union and Confederate soldiers. In 1864, she was appointed by Union General Benjamin Butler as the “lady in charge” of the hospitals at the front of the Army of the James. It was through all of these efforts that she earned her nicknames *Florence Nightingale of America* and *The Angel of the Battlefield*.

Barton had no nursing training; she was self-taught. What early experiences prepared her for her life of service?

### EARLY LIFE

Clarissa “Clara” Harlowe Barton was born on Christmas Day, 1821 in North Oxford, Massachusetts. Her father, Captain Stephen Barton, had served under General Anthony Wayne in wars against the Indians in what was then known as the Northwest Territories (land west of the Appalachians and which included current-day Michigan, and parts of Ohio, Illinois, and Wisconsin).

Clara was sent to school at age three with one of her brothers, where it’s said she excelled at reading and spelling. She was extremely timid, and it’s thought that she made just one friend at school. .

At age 10, she nursed another brother back to health after he had sustained a severe head injury from a fall. She learned to distribute the prescribed medicine and to bleed him with leeches (a standard treatment of the day).

Later, to try to cure her timidity, her parents enrolled her in the Colonel Stones High School, but instead she became more timid and depressed, refusing to eat. They brought her back home to regain her health.

Her family soon moved to help a cousin’s widow and four children run their family farm. The house on the farm for the Bartons needed repairs and paint. Clara was a big help to the family in completing the work. When it was done, she said she felt at a loss with no work to keep her from feeling like a burden to the family.

**... continued ...**

Acclimating to life on the farm, she proved to be good at horseback riding and other activities she participated in with her male cousins. After an injury, her mother questioned her continuing boys' activities and arranged for a female cousin to help teach her the domestic and social skills more suitable to young girls of the time.

Again to help her overcome her shyness, her parents persuaded her to become a teacher. Beginning in 1838, she taught for twelve years in Canada and West Georgia. In 1851 she moved to New York to further her education at the Clinton Liberal Institute, a coed preparatory school run by the Universalist Church. It appears she'd overcome her timidity after her years of teaching, as she made lifelong friendships while at Clinton.

In 1852, she was contracted to open the first free school in New Jersey, at Bordentown. (A free school is one funded by taxes or charities rather than through tuition). The endeavor was very successful: within a year over 600 people were being educated there, and the town proceeded to raise the funds to build a new school building. The school board then hired a man as principal, demoting Barton to "female assistant", as running a large institution was deemed unfitting for a woman. The work environment became harsh; she suffered a nervous breakdown and eventually quit the post.

In 1855, she moved to Washington D.C. where she worked as a clerk in the U.S. Patent Office. Again she was a pioneer, as this was the first time a woman had received a substantial clerkship in a federal job with a salary equal to a man's. After three years at the job enduring slander and abuse from her male colleagues, and after political opposition, her job was reduced to copyist. She was fired during the Buchanan administration because of her "Black Republicanism" (a 19<sup>th</sup> century slur targeting the new Republican party). Three years later, after Lincoln's election in 1861, Barton returned to the patent office as a temporary copyist. This is how she came to be in Washington D.C. after the Baltimore Riots, the event that started her nursing career.

## **AFTER the CIVIL WAR**

### **Office of the Missing Soldiers -**

Immediately after the war, Barton learned that the War Department had thousands of letters from distraught relatives looking for missing soldiers. She contacted President Lincoln, and was given permission to respond officially to the unanswered mail. This led to the project to search for the missing and the Office of Missing Soldiers. She and her assistants wrote close to 42,000 replies to families and located more than 22,000 missing men. In the summer of 1865 she helped find, identify and properly bury 13,000 of the dead at Andersonville, and over the next four years helped to identify and bury 20,000 more Union dead in marked graves. Congress eventually appropriated \$15,000 towards this effort.

*To learn more about Barton's Missing Soldiers Office, check out the link at the end of this article.*

### **Red Cross Work in Europe -**

Concurrent with her work at the Office of Missing Soldiers, Barton gave lectures around the country about her wartime experiences. On doctor's orders to rest, due to mental and physical exhaustion from the work, she went to Geneva, Switzerland. It was here that she met some of the key figures who had started the Red Cross in Europe in 1859. Characteristically, she became engaged in their efforts: she assisted the Grand Duchess of Baden in 1870 in the preparation of military hospitals for the Franco-Prussian War; she superintended supplying work to the poor of Strasboug after the Siege of Paris in 1871; and she was in charge of the public distribution of supplies to the destitute of Paris, also in 1871. She was honored for her work with the Golden Cross of Baden and the Prussian Iron Cross.

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**The American Red Cross** - Back in the U.S. in 1873, she began the long effort to establish a chapter of the Red Cross in the U.S. President Hayes, in 1878, echoed the sentiment of many Americans that the U.S. would never again face another Civil War, and that the country, unlike in Europe, was also isolated from warring neighbors, and so the Red Cross did not receive his support. Barton ultimately convinced President Arthur, arguing that the Red Cross could assist in the response to natural disasters.

Barton became the first President of the American branch of the Red Cross in 1881. The first official meeting was held at her apartment in Washington D.C. and the first local chapter was founded a year later in Dansville, NY where she had a country home.

#### **More Field Work -**

Just as in the U.S. Civil War, Barton's Red Cross work took her into the field of operations. In the U.S., she helped with relief work after the Ohio river floods in 1884; provided Texans with food and supplies during the famine of 1887; took workers to Illinois after a tornado and to Florida for the yellow fever epidemic in 1888; led a delegation of fifty doctors and nurses after the Johnstown Flood in 1889; and established an orphanage in Galveston after the hurricane in 1890.

In between these domestic projects, she participated in relief efforts overseas. In 1896 she traveled with five other Red Cross expeditions to the Armenian provinces providing relief and humanitarian aid. In 1897, she sailed to Constantinople, negotiated with Abdul Hamil II, and opened the first American International Red Cross office in Turkey after the Hamidian Massacres. In 1898 she worked in hospitals in Cuba.

#### **After the Red Cross -**

By 1904, the Progressive Era was well underway, and with it came a new generation of "experts" pushing for efficiencies and improvements through the application of scientific methods. Barton was forced out of the Red Cross and replaced by a group of men who ascribed to these new methods. Barton by this time was 83 years old, but she went on to found the National First Aid Society, which was later absorbed into the Red Cross.

In 1907, Barton published her autobiography, *The Story of My Childhood*. She died on pneumonia at her home in Maryland on April 12, 1912.

#### **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SITES**

*If you're looking for something to do the next time you're in the DC area, check out these two National Park Service sites.*

**Clara Barton's home in Maryland** is now a part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway unit of the National Park Service, and is open for tours.

**Clara Barton's Missing Soldiers Office** was almost lost to history, "misplaced" for some years after a change to street addresses. It was rediscovered in 1997 when the building was slated for demolition. The National Park Service saved the building and preserved a treasure trove of Civil War-era artifacts. After restoration, the Missing Soldiers Office opened for tours in 2015.

In February of this year, the Director of Interpretation of the Missing Soldiers Office gave a talk about the site and how it came to be un-lost to history. Here's the link to his hour-long lecture:

<https://www.c-span.org/video/?457702-7/clara-barton-missing-soldiers-office>

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**WHAT DID WE LEARN..?** Here's a **QUICK QUIZ** based on Steven Ramold's March presentation to us: *"The Controversy over the Sherman / Johnston Surrender."* \* **Answers below** \*

1. In preparing for Confederate surrender, Lincoln met with several people on March 27, 1865 near Durham, NC. The attendees included military men. What politicians were present?
2. Who was the second Confederate general (after Lee) to surrender?
3. In Washington DC at the Grand Review of the Union armies, whose hand did Sherman refuse to shake?

## UPCOMING EVENTS in 2019

**65<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION:** **OCTOBER 14, 2019** The celebration of the ALCWRT's 65th year will be held Monday, October 14, 2019, with a dinner-and-speaker event at the beautifully renovated and restored GAR Building in Detroit. Our speaker will be **A. Wilson Greene** whose book on the Petersburg campaign – *"A Campaign of Giants"* – was published in 2018.

**SPRING TRIP – JUNE 2019:** Liz is working out details for a JUNE 2019 for a group trip to Kentucky . Stay tuned for exact dates and details.

## QUICK QUIZ answers

1. There were no politicians in Lincoln's meeting with his generals on March 27<sup>th</sup>. Per Steven Ramold's presentation, Lincoln wanted generous terms and to allow soldiers to return to their farms, but he left the details to his generals.
2. Johnston was the next Confederate general to surrender after Lee. After Lee surrendered and before Johnston surrendered, Abraham Lincoln was assassinated by Booth at Ford's Theatre.
3. In Washington DC at the Grand Review of the Union armies, Sherman refused to shake hands with Stanton. Amid the confusion in the government after Lincoln's death, Stanton had misrepresented in the press Sherman's intentions in granting lenient terms to Johnston. Stanton thought Sherman had gone beyond his brief in discussing with Johnston more than just the military surrender.

## THIS and THAT ...

- \* **ANNUAL DUES** – Worley's always happy to collect dues: ~ \$20/single ~ \$30/couple ~ Payable by calendar year
- \* **WEBSITES for other nearby roundtables** are posted on ALCWRT.org.
- \* **STELLA in Plymouth** – Yes, the group meets for **dinner at 5:30pm** prior to the monthly meetings... All are welcome!
- \* **WHERE's WORLEY...?**
  - ~ Worley forwarded this picture to ALCWRT.news from his recent "vacation" (\* How does a retiree take a "vacation"??)
  - ~ Where in the world was he...? (Grand Prize for correct answers is a high five)

