

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
MONDAY OCTOBER 14, 2019
 at the GAR Building for the
 ALCWRT 65th Anniversary Celebration!



ABOUT the ALCWRT

- The Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table is the oldest Civil War Round Table in Michigan, founded in 1952. Our JUBILEE (65th) anniversary was September, 2017.
- Meetings are each 3rd 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
- Our web site is ALCWRT.org
- Like us on FACEBOOK...!
 "Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table"

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

NOVEMBER PRESENTATION:

The Red River Campaign ... p.1

MARY TODD LINCOLN'S

SUGAR COOKIES ... p.1

THE POLITICS of THANKSGIVING:

WHICH THURSDAY..? ... p.2

UPCOMING EVENTS in 2019 ... p.4

FUTURE SPEAKERS LIST ... p.4

THIS and THAT ... p.4

Dr. DAVID STODDARD

will be the featured speaker for the **NOVEMBER 15th** meeting of the Abraham Lincoln Civil War Round Table. His topic:

THE RED RIVER CAMPAIGN of the Civil War was a series of battles fought along the Red River in Louisiana from March 10 to May 22, 1864. The campaign was a Union initiative, fought between approximately 30,000 Union troops under the command of Major General Nathaniel P. Banks and up to 15,000 Confederate troops under the command of Lieutenant General Richard Taylor. The campaign was considered a Union failure characterized by poor planning and mismanagement.

Dr. David Stoddard is a graduate of the University of Michigan business school, who worked for ten years as an accountant before entering the Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine and fulfilling his lifetime goal of becoming a physician upon his graduation in 2001. He has always been interested in history. His passion for Civil War history was ignited by a visit to Gettysburg in 2011 after reading McPherson's *Battle Cry of Freedom* and Shaara's *The Killer Angels*. His special interest in the Red River Campaign is due to the discovery that his Great Great Grandfather Stoddard was a participant in the campaign as a member of the 30th Maine Volunteer Infantry. David is married and has three children.

MARY TODD LINCOLN'S SUGAR COOKIES - Just in time for the holidays, here's another recipe from the A.Lincoln Cookbook from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield.

- * Combine 1 c. butter, 1 c. vegetable oil, 1 c. sugar, 1 c. powdered sugar. Beat until creamy. Then add 2 eggs and 2 tsp. vanilla extract.
- * In a separate bowl, combine 4 1/2 c. flour, 1 tsp baking soda, 1 tsp. cream of tartar, 1 tsp. salt. Mix into the butter mixture.
- * Roll dough into 1 inch balls, then roll each one in additional granulated sugar.
- * Using an everyday kitchen glass, dip the base into sugar and press each ball onto a lightly greased cookie sheet.
- * Bake at 350 for 12 minutes. Cool and store.

THE POLITICS of THANKSGIVING: WHICH THURSDAY...?

If someone at the Thanksgiving dinner table this year wants to talk politics, here's some non-partisan food for thought.

WHERE IT ALL STARTED

In school, we learned about our country's early Thanksgiving celebration in 1621 by the Pilgrims at the Plimoth Plantation [*original spelling*] in Massachusetts. But the practice of holding feasts to celebrate harvests or to give thanks for special events was an established practice predating Plymouth in the territory that is now the U.S. -- from the 1541 thanksgiving mass after the expedition of Francisco Vasquez de Coronado safely crossing the high plains of Texas and finding game, to Jamestown in 1610. And the charter for the Berkeley Hundred settlement in Charles City County, Virginia in 1619 specifically required that *"the day of our ships arrival at the place assigned... in the land of Virginia shall be yearly and perpetually kept holy as a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God..."*. (Celebrations at the Berkeley Hundred settlement and other areas shifted to the more secure location of Jamestown after Indian massacres in those outlying settlements).

As the years went by, harvest festivals in autumn or early winter and thanksgiving feasts at various times of the year continued sporadically, either as impromptu religious observances or as a civil tradition.

FROM WASHINGTON'S TIME to LINCOLN's

From 1774 to 1789, the Continental Congress proclaimed one or more thanksgiving days each year: *"national days of prayer, humiliation, and thanksgiving"*.

These were issued to the states as recommendations, and were not binding.

The first such national proclamation of a Thanksgiving by the Continental Congress was issued in 1777 from their temporary location in York, PA, as the British were at that time occupying the capital in Philadelphia.

General George Washington proclaimed a Thanksgiving in December, 1777, as a victory celebration after the defeat of the British at Saratoga.

In September, 1789, after the first House of Representatives voted to recommend the First Amendment of the newly drafted Constitution to the states for ratification, Congressman Elias Boudinot (N.J.) proposed that the House and Senate jointly request President Washington proclaim a day of thanksgiving for "the many signal favors of Almighty God". On October 3rd, President Washington did so, thus creating the first Thanksgiving Day designated by the national government of the United States of America.

In 1795, President Washington proclaimed a Thanksgiving Day to be observed on Thursday, February 19.

In 1798 and 1799, President John Adams declared Thanksgivings. Thomas Jefferson did not issue any Thanksgiving proclamations.

In 1814 James Madison renewed the practice in response to resolutions by Congress at the close of the War of 1812. He also declared thanksgivings twice in 1815; neither of these was in the autumn.

By 1813, individual states were beginning to declare their own Thanksgiving days. Those held in the states of Massachusetts and New York did occur in November.

By 1858, governors of 25 states and two territories routinely issued proclamation appointing a day of thanksgiving.

...continued...

WHY NOVEMBER: EVACUATION DAY

November 25th was celebrated unofficially as a national holiday each year prior to the Civil War. Known as **Evacuation Day**, it commemorated the British withdrawal from New York and the end of the Revolutionary War. The last shot of the war was reportedly fired on November 25th, 1783 by a British gunner who fired his cannon at jeering crowds on the shore of Staten Island as his ship passed through the Narrows in retreat. By some accounts, the national holiday of Thanksgiving superseded Evacuation Day.

THE START of the NATIONAL TRADITION

From 1846 until 1863, one persistent advocate for an official national holiday of Thanksgiving was Sarah Josepha Hale, an American writer and influential editor. She wrote letters to five presidents: Zachary Taylor, Millard Fillmore, Franklin Pierce, James Buchanan, and finally Abe Lincoln. In 1863 Lincoln proclaimed a national day of Thanksgiving to be celebrated on the last Thursday of November, 1863. That marked the start of the tradition of celebrating a national Thanksgiving Day across the country.

WHICH THURSDAY..?

Now sometimes November has four Thursdays and sometimes it has five. So of course it takes an act of Congress to sort it all out.

In 1939, FDR declared that Thanksgiving would be on the fourth, not the fifth or last Thursday that year. Since the country was in the middle of the Depression, the thinking was that an earlier Thanksgiving would give merchants more time to sell their goods before Christmas. Why did it matter if Thanksgiving was the fourth or the fifth Thursday? Because back then it was considered inappropriate to advertise Christmas before Thanksgiving day.

Not everyone agreed with FDR's move. Calling the shift an affront to Lincoln, some began calling the fifth Thursday the "Republican Thanksgiving" and the fourth Thursday the "Democratic Thanksgiving" or "Franksgiving".

Independent of politics, Roosevelt's presidential declaration that year was widely disregarded. First of all, his declaration was not legally binding, so 23 states went along with it, 22 did not, and Texas took both Thursdays as government holidays. Plus a new tradition had sprung up over the recent decades -- the tradition of holding the final football game of the season around Thanksgiving Day. So many localities ignored the change that year because their team's final game schedule had been set well in advance of FDR's declaration.

FDR tried again in 1940 and 1941. Even though November in those years only had four Thursdays, he tried to declare the third Thursday (and not the last, or fourth) as Thanksgiving. As in 1939, some states went along with him, other states did not.

In October 1941, Congress stepped in and passed a joint resolution to set Thanksgiving, beginning in 1942, as the last Thursday of November, siding with Lincoln. But a mere two months later the Senate issued an amendment to set Thanksgiving as the fourth Thursday, period. On December 26, 1941, FDR signed the bill making the fourth Thursday as Thanksgiving Day a matter of law. Even then, some states continued to observe the last Thursday (not always the fourth one) as Thanksgiving. Texas did so up until 1956!

MANY THANKS to MICHAEL GILLETT

Many thanks to **Michael Gillett** for sharing with us his experiences as a Civil War chaplain re-enactor -- and as an actual chaplain -- at our October meeting.

UPCOMING EVENTS in 2019

Watch for announcements from ALCWRT.NEWS@gmail.com when dates & details are firmed up *

65th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION: OCTOBER 14, 2019

Now confirmed for Monday, October 14, 2019 is the celebration of the ALCWRT's 65th year with a dinner-and-speaker event at the beautifully renovated and restored **GAR Building** in Detroit. Our speaker will be **A. Wilson Greene**, whose recently published book on the Petersburg campaign -- "**A Campaign of Giants**" -- got a very favorable review in the Wall Street Journal in August.

SPRING TRIP - 2019

Liz is now targeting [spring 2019](#) for the next round table trip. She's thinking Kentucky.

Are you interested? Let Liz or Worley know.

FUTURE SPEAKERS

Here's a look ahead at some of the upcoming programs that Brian Mayer has arranged for us:

JAN. 17:	John Gibney	"The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down"
FEB. 21:	William Cottrell	"Lincoln and the Declaration of Independence"
MAR. 21:	Steven Ramold	"The Controversy Over the Sherman/Johnston Surrender"
APR. 18:	Dr. E. Lawrence Abel	"John Wilkes Booth and the Women Who Loved Him"
MAY 16:	Curt Fields	"General Ulysses S. Grant: The Man Behind the Uniform"

THIS and THAT ...

* VISITOR's WELCOME ...

~ The ALCWRT welcomes friends, relatives, acquaintances...

~ We're always looking for new members, and visitors are **always welcome..!**

* ANNUAL DUES –

~ Worley is always happy to collect your dues

~ \$20 for a single ~~ \$35 for a couple

~ Dues are payable by the calendar year (January through December)

* WEBSITES for other nearby roundtables are posted on ALCWRT.org.

* STATION 885 – Yes, the group still meets for dinner prior to the monthly meetings... All are welcome!

* REFRESHMENTS for FUTURE MEETINGS –

~ Let Liz know if you're interested in bringing refreshments to a future meeting.