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# The Camp Griffin Gazette

News and Information from the Green Mountain Civil War Round Table

Vol. XVIII, No. 4– April 2010

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**KATE CLIFFORD LARSON, PhD.**

**“THE ASSASSIN’S ACCOMPLICE:  
MARY SURRETT AND THE PLOT TO  
KILL ABRAHAM LINCOLN”**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 10, 2010**

**HOTEL COOLIDGE**

**WHITE RIVER JCT., VT**

12:00-12:30 Social Hour

12:30-1:00 Buffet Luncheon

1:00 Business Meeting

1:15 Program, followed by discussion

3:00 Adjournment

Guaranteed lunch reservations **MUST BE MADE** by 12 Noon, March 12. **Cost per person for the buffet lunch is \$15.00.** There is no assurance that additional meals will be available if you have not made a reservation. **Should they be available, there will be an additional \$2.00 charge per meal.** For the meeting and program only, there is a donation of \$2.00 for members and \$4.00 for non-members. For reservations please contact Gail Blake at 802-296-2919 or e-mail her at [auntis@comcast.net](mailto:auntis@comcast.net).

**PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR APRIL MEETING HAS BEEN CHANGED TO SATURDAY, APRIL 10 AT 12 NOON AT THE HOTEL COOLIDGE!!!**

## **KATE CLIFFORD LARSON**

**Kate Clifford Larson, PhD.**, is an historian and author of The Assassin’s Accomplice: Mary Surratt and the Plot to Kill Abraham Lincoln (Basic Books, June 2008). With degrees from Simmons College and Northeastern University, and a doctorate in history from the University of New Hampshire, Larson specializes in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century U.S. Women’s and African American History. Dr. Larson is also a leading Harriet Tubman scholar and the author of Bound For the Promised Land: Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero (Ballantine/One World, 2004), one of the first non-juvenile Tubman biographies published in six decades. She has been working as a consultant and interpretive specialist for numerous museum, community, and public history initiatives related to Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad in Maryland and New York, and also served as the consulting historian for the National Park Service’s *Harriet Tubman Special Resource Study*, resulting in the introduction of the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park Act, now awaiting approval in Congress. Dr. Larson has been a guest instructor at numerous professional development workshops for teachers, including National Endowment for the Humanities and Teaching American History programs, on the topics of American Slavery, the Underground Railroad, Abolition, and Harriet Tubman. She teaches at both Simmons College and Wheelock College in Boston. The Assassin’s Accomplice is due out in paperback this spring.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT OUR SPEAKER WILL NOT BE BRINGING BOOKS, BUT WILL BE HAPPY TO AUTOGRAPH THOSE BROUGHT TO HER.**

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MENU  
ASSORTED SANDWICHES  
TOSSED SALAD/OTHER SALAD  
SOUP  
COFFEE/TEA/PUNCH  
COOKIES

**2010 Program Schedule**  
Program Chair: Peter Sinclair

- May 11**     **Andy Ward – Gettysburg Licensed Battlefield Guide – “Gettysburg National Cemetery”**
- June 8**     **Benson Bobrick – “General Thomas”**
- Sept. 14**    **Patrick Falci – Topic to be decided**
- Nov. 9**     **Joseph Collea – “The First Vermont Cavalry in the Civil War - A History.”**

**Other Round Table Meetings and Happenings**

**Sons of Union Veterans Ripley Camp would like to invite all men to any of their monthly meetings at the Rutland American Legion on Washington Street on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. They are also looking for speakers for their winter/spring programs and would love anyone with a program they'd like to present to contact Jim Proctor at [civilproctor@comcast.net](mailto:civilproctor@comcast.net) Check out The Ripley Camp #4 web site at: [www.ripleycamp.net/firms.com/](http://www.ripleycamp.net/firms.com/)**

**April 5 – 4:30 PM – Lincoln and his Legacy: Social, Political and Intellectual – Dartmouth College**

Monday, April 5 • 4:30 pm • Rockefeller 1  
A panel discussion featuring Dartmouth faculty members Robert Bonner, a Civil War historian; Leslie Butler, a historian of 19th century American thought; and J. Martin Favor, associate professor of English and African and African American Studies. *For more info, call Hop Outreach at 603.646.2010.*

**April 8– Major McKinley Camp #9 – Sons of Union Veterans Meeting – 7 p.m. – Soldiers Memorial Building, North Park Street, Lebanon, NH.** Camp Members, Junior Members, SUVCW Auxiliary Members, and guests are welcome! For more information: [http://www.geocities.com/suvcwlebanonnh/classic\\_blue.html](http://www.geocities.com/suvcwlebanonnh/classic_blue.html)

**April 9 – Capital District (Albany) CWRT - Willie Runk - the Garibaldi Guard.** 7 p.m. – Guilderland

Public Library. For more information check out their web site at: [www.cdcwrt.org](http://www.cdcwrt.org)

**April 15– Joshua L. Chamberlain CWRT Valery Josephson – “Who Would Not Be a Soldier.”** For more information check out their web site: <http://community.curtislibrary.com/chamberlaincwrt>

**April 16 – Civil War Roundtable of New Hampshire – Michael Schroeder – “Albert Meyer and the Use of Wig Wag Telegraphy.”** Check out their web site for more information: [www.cwrt-nh.org](http://www.cwrt-nh.org)

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**2010 GMCWRT  
Battlefield Journey  
UPDATE!**

**April 29-May 4, 2010**

We are pleased to announce that our own Barbara Watts will be our guide this year! Barb has been a member/friend of the RT for many years and is a Civil War Cavalry reanactor extraordinaire. She will guide us throughout our visit to Civil War Lexington VA and the surrounding area. Highlights of the trip will include visits to the Carlisle Military Barracks in Carlisle PA, VMI, all things Civil War in Lexington, Hunter's Raid, New Market, and Gettysburg, with a couple of special treats thrown in along the way. Cost for the trip will be approximately \$650 per person, double occupancy, based on a group of 40 people. Included are RT motor coach transportation from WRJct VT, 5 nights lodging, breakfast each day, driver gratuity, 4 lunches, 3 or 4 dinners, all admission and guide fees, information packet and onboard refreshments. Single rooms will be available at an additional cost. Deposits of \$75 per person are now being accepted. Deposits are 50% refundable if you cancel, 100% refundable if the trip is cancelled. Checks should be made payable to GMCWRT and sent to: Gail Blake, 55 Orizzonto Road, WRJct VT 05001 Questions, suggestions, comments? Email Gail at [auntis@comcast.net](mailto:auntis@comcast.net) or call 802-296-2919 A defined itinerary along with a reading list will be available soon. Hope you will join us!

**Notes from our March Meeting**

Shortly after our February meeting we were notified by the Black Angus Restaurant that the restaurant had been sold, and we would not be able to meet there for at least a while. Jack Anderson contacted Dave Briggs of the Hotel Coolidge who graciously agreed to take us back through June of this year.

We had 26 people attend with 21 having lunch. As we did with the Black Angus, we pay for 20 meals whether 20 people eat there or not. The price is \$15.00 till our summer break, with folks not making reservations being charged an additional \$2.00 per meal.

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Our meeting opened up with Jack Anderson introducing Dave Briggs to our group. Dave welcomed us back and spoke about the history of the paintings on the wall.

Jackie Sinclair was in the hospital at this time with pneumonia and asthma. Gail Blake brought a Get Well card in for folks to sign. We certainly missed her and Peter.

Lew Gage spoke about the event in Exeter, NH, that he attended along with your editor, Alice Evans, and of course, Steve and Sharon Wood. He commented about what a wonderful event it was, and how much he learned and enjoyed Mike Travis's talk he gave there.

Whitney Maxfield brought in a book a Dodge family descendent wrote from Block Island, RI. He then read the section in there about John Shaw Dodge who had served with Co. M, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ohio Cavalry. He fought at Missionary Ridge, Peach Tree Creek, Battle of Atlanta, etc.

Mark Travis first spoke about research he and Mike Pride had done for their book on "The Fighting Fifth." He commented that of the 89 men who had joined the 5<sup>th</sup> New Hampshire from Claremont, NH, 13 returned home. Mike Pride spoke about their next project which they're not sure yet exactly how it will turn out. It might be New Hampshire's experience in the Civil War - "100 Days" through newspaper accounts.

Gail spoke about the trip. At this point 28 people had signed up.

Jack welcomed new RT member John Mudge from Lyme, NH.

We sold 58 raffle tickets and the winners were Dave Curtain, Bob Coburn, Alice Evans, and Lew Gage.

### **FUND RAISER April 22, 2010**

(The following was e-mailed to me from Dr. Bill Minsinger.)

Had spoken to Jack Anderson several times about our efforts to raise funds for a monument to the 1st Vermont and the 5th New York (Druyre's Souaves) who participated in what many feel was the first real battle of the Civil War. As you well know the 1st Vermont were 90 day boys, and I believe that Col. Washburn was there, and then he came back and served as Adj. General from Woodstock. We are working with Dr. John Quarstein who is Director Emeritus of the Virginia War Museum - he has been instrumental in getting about 4 acres of the original Big Bethel battlefield set aside on the Langley Air Force base as a historic site - There are 4 Confederate monuments on that ground, and we would like to help in placing one Federal marker there.

With that in mind we have invited Dr. Quarstein up to talk about Big Bethel on April 22, 2010. The lecture will be held at the Elks Club - Western Ave. in St. Johnsbury with the lecture starting at 6:30PM. Coffee and refreshments will be served. The talk should run about an hour so folks should be

able to get back home at a reasonable hour. Tickets for the event are \$12 and \$10 of that is fully tax deductible.

We will also be running a raffle for the Big Bethel Monument - prizes include a pair of Red Sox tickets and the bus trip to Fenway for a September 18th game with Toronto, a \$50 gift certificate to Lenny's Shoes and Apparel, an original set of Benedict Books - "Vermont in the Civil War", "Willie goes to War" - a limited edition print, a hardcover copy of the book "Everlasting Glory" - the story of all the Vermont soldiers who were awarded the Medal of Honor during the Civil War, a reproduction set of period Civil War playing cards, a reproduction period correct Civil War dirk(knife), a copy of the book - "The 1938 Hurricane" and a copy of the "1927 Flood in Vermont and New England.

Raffle tickets are \$10 per ticket.

Tickets to the lecture as well as the for the raffle can be obtained from Dr. William E Minsinger at 802 728 5895 or e mail [minsinger@comcast.net](mailto:minsinger@comcast.net)

Thanks  
Bill Minsinger

The *Camp Griffin Gazette* is the monthly newsletter of the Green Mountain Civil War Round Table. Editor: Ginny Gage. We encourage and welcome all contributions and suggestions. Send news and information to:

Ginny Gage  
365 East Road  
Cornish, NH 03745 or  
E-mail: [lewandginny@emailmv.com](mailto:lewandginny@emailmv.com)

The deadline for the May 2010 newsletter is April 21, 2010.

### **Dave Bernard**

Just want to let everyone know Dave's new mailing address:

Dave Bernard  
Room 107  
Springfield Health & Rehabilitation  
105 Chester Road  
Springfield, VT 05156

If anyone is down that way, he would love to have you stop in for a visit.

### **TIME TO RENEW YOUR ROUND TABLE MEMBERSHIP**

**If you have not already done so, it is time to renew your membership for the year. Membership runs from March through February. When completing the membership form (included in this newsletter), please remember to include your email address. We have been striving to send as many newsletters**

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**as possible by email, as printing and mailing costs consume a large portion of our treasury. Also, email helps us to be able to get additional information that may come up between meetings to you quickly. If you have any questions about whether or not your dues are paid, please call or email Mary Davis at [mary\\_davis01@comcast.net](mailto:mary_davis01@comcast.net) or 603-448-3472.**

## **JEFFERSON DAVIS' NEMESIS: GOV. JOSEPH E. BROWN OF GEORGIA**

**By Sue Bailey, Former Editor of the Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain CWRT newsletter, *First Call*.**

Recent biographers have used the following words to describe Jefferson Davis: arrogant, petulant, obstreperous, stubborn, egotistical, and cantankerous. These same descriptive terms could also be applied to the war-time Governor of Georgia, Joseph E. Brown.

Robert Toombs, “fire-eater” and Senator from Georgia, asked in 1857, “Who the devil is Joe Brown?” upon hearing the results of the gubernatorial race in his home state. He was puzzled that an unknown, uncouth, “mountain boy” from the hills of western Georgia could gain the Governor’s position by popular vote. No doubt, he was equally puzzled when Joe Brown maintained the vaulted position throughout the entire war.

Joseph Emerson Brown was born in Pickens County, South Carolina, in 1821. His parents soon migrated across the state line into western Georgia, seeking better farmland. As a boy, Joe grew cabbages and potatoes on a hillside plot, and transported them to the farmer’s market on Saturday afternoons, earning a little money. He randomly attended the local school, spent a year at Yale studying law, and returned to the small village to earn a living as a rural lawyer. He was personable, eloquent, and became a popular leader, winning a seat in the State Senate. He was lured by the power of politics, and though he owned no slaves, he espoused the southern pro-slavery stance. He became an outspoken crusader for state rights, a “fire-eater.”

As the southern states started to secede in late 1860, Joe Brown also took his state out of the Union. Jefferson Davis was named provisional President of the Confederacy in February, 1861, and when Abraham Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers in 1861 to subdue the south, Jefferson Davis called for Southern men to join the Confederate Army. Although Jeff Davis and Joe Brown both believed in slavery and state rights, there was a philosophical difference between them...Joe Brown spent the next 4 years trying to secede from the Confederacy!!

In response to Jefferson Davis’ call for soldiers, Joe Brown raised an army of 10,000 militia...to

fight for, and defend, the state of Georgia. Brown refused to send Georgians to the Confederate army (there were no Georgians on the field at First Bull Run). When pressured to send troops to Virginia, he relented, but refused to allow the men to leave the state with Georgia-supplied arms and ammunition, and stated he would retain command of those troops so that he could order them to return to Georgia at any time. When he discovered that a Georgia official had sent the requested supply of gunpowder to Virginia, Brown wrote an angry letter to Richmond, demanding the return of HIS gunpowder.

In April, 1862, the Confederate government voted to implement conscription. Joe Brown’s immediate response was to refuse to enforce the law in Georgia. Brown claimed conscription violated constitutional rights and had disorganized the structure of the Georgia militia system. Brown urged Georgians to disregard the law, and defy conscription agents as representatives of the “Imperialist despot” in Richmond. When the Georgia legislature voted in favor of conscription, Joe Brown appealed the verdict to the Georgia Supreme Court.

The conscription law was flawed regarding exemptions, and Gov. Brown exploited the loopholes. He exempted 2,000 justices of the peace and 1,000 constables, stating they were needed to “preserve domestic peace.” He exempted state employees, then hired thousands of men as deputy sheriffs, deputy bailiffs, assistant postmasters, and government clerks. Howell Cobb declared that there were more Georgia men “of conscription age” at home in Georgia than serving in Confederate armies at any time during the war.

Brown’s tactics made him very popular with Georgia’s residents, and though he did not actively run for re-election in 1863, he won by a landslide.

In Richmond, Joe Brown was considered more dangerous to the Confederacy than Grant or Sherman.

Suddenly, in May of 1864, Sherman and his army left Chattanooga, and crossed the Georgia border. Richmond issued the “call to duty” to the 16,000 men of military age in Georgia...but only 4,000 showed up to be mustered in. Joe Johnston was saddled with 4,000 amateurs, most had whom had never fired a gun, or heard a command issued on the field. Sherman took Atlanta, and Jefferson Davis directly blamed Joe Brown and his obstructive tactics. When Sherman burned Atlanta and stepped off on the “March to the Sea,” Joe Brown decided this was an “emergency,” and notified Richmond to send all Georgia regiments in the Confederate armies back to their home state. In a final act of treachery, he “furloughed” his band of 10,000 militia in September, 1864; he told them to “drop their arms, disband their organizations, and return home” to work their farms. Davis accused him of being a “traitor.” An astonished Sherman wrote to Halleck, “Governor Brown has disbanded his militia, to gather the corn and sorghum of the



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state.”

With the surrender of Joe Johnston’s army, Joe Brown became a “carpetbagger,” joined the Republican Party, became an advocate for negro suffrage, and died a millionaire. Authors and historians today must ponder the career of Governor Joseph Brown as a contributing factor to the failure of the Confederate government.

(Thanks, Sue, for allowing me to reprint this in our newsletter.)

**Times Editorial on Lincoln’s Death**  
**New York Times**  
**April 16, 1865**  
**The Murder of President Lincoln.**

The heart of this nation was stirred yesterday as it has never been stirred before. The news of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln carried with it a sensation of horror and of agony which no other event in our history has ever excited. In this city the demonstrations of grief and consternation were without a parallel. Business was suspended. Crowds of people thronged the streets—great gatherings sprung up spontaneously everywhere seeking to give expression by speeches, resolutions, &c., &c., to the universal sense of dismay and indignation which pervaded the public mind.

Perhaps the paramount element in this public feeling was evoked by personal regard for Abraham Lincoln. That a man so gentle, so kind, so free from every particle of malice or unkindness, every act of whose life has been so marked by benevolence and good-will, should become the victim of a cold-blooded assassination, shocked the public heart beyond expression. That the very moment, too, when he was closing the rebellion which had drenched our land in blood and tears—by acts of magnanimity so signal as even to excite the reluctant distrust and apprehensions of his own friends—should be chosen for his murder, adds a new element of horror to the dreadful tragedy.

But a powerful element of the general feeling which the news aroused was a profound concern for the public welfare. The whole nation had come to lean on Abraham Lincoln in this dread crisis of its fate with a degree of confidence never accorded to any President since George Washington. His love of his country, ardent and all-pervading—swaying every act and prompting every word—his unsuspected uprightness and personal integrity—his plain, simple common sense, conspicuous in everything he did or said, commending itself irresistibly to the judgment and approval of the great body of the people, had won for him a solid and immovable hold upon the regard and confidence even of his political opponents. The whole people mourn his death with profound and sincere appreciation of his character and his worth.

Andrew Johnson of Tennessee is now the President of the United States. We have no doubts and no misgivings as to the manner in which he will discharge the duties which devolve so suddenly upon him. This country has no more patriotic citizen than he—no one among all her public men who will bring to her service a higher sense of his responsibilities, a sounder judgment in regard to her

interests, or a firmer purpose in the maintenance of her honor and the promotion of her welfare. He has suffered, in his person, his property, and his family relations, terribly from the wicked rebellion which has desolated the land; but he is not the man to allow a sense of personal wrong to sway his judgment or control his action in a great national emergency. Traitors and rebels have nothing to expect at his hands but strict justice, tempered with such mercy only as the welfare of the nation may require.

In this hour of mourning and of gloom, while the shadow of an awful and unparalleled calamity hangs over the land, it is well to remember that the stability of our Government and the welfare of our country do not depend upon the life of any individual, and that the great current of affairs is not to be changed or checked by the loss of any man, however high or however honored. In nations where all power is vested in single hands, an assassin’s knife may overthrow governments and wrap a continent in the flames of war. But here the PEOPLE rule, and events inevitably follow the course which they prescribe. Abraham Lincoln has been their agent and instrument for the four years past; Andrew Johnson is to be their agent for the four years that are now to come. If the people have faith, courage, and wisdom, the result will be the same.

YESTERDAY.—It would be presumptuous to attempt to express in words the deep sorrow with which the death of our noble President has filled all hearts. To the honor of our people be it said that, with a few unimportant exceptions, the nation’s heart throbs with the profoundest grief, and the utterances of the nation’s voice are all in accord in lamentation. The great calamity was scarcely known, and where known, was hardly believed, at the late hour of its announcement on Friday night. But early yesterday morning we were assured of the mournful truth. As one man the nation put on the habiliments of mourning, and the glad songs of triumph over the anticipated advent of peace were subdued to the wail of such grief as only a nation can feel. All day the stunned and bewildered citizens were putting for the emblems of mourning. Business was almost entirely suspended. Sorrow was visible on every face, not seldom varied with an expression that partook of revenge. The low, earnest conversation of friends, the almost tearful greetings of acquaintances, the entire absence of the ordinary hum and bustle of business, fittingly marked the people’s appreciation of their bereavement. It was a day never paralleled, and never to be forgotten.

**Vermont Already Planning Civil War**  
**Sesquicentennial**

April 12, 2011 will mark the 150th Anniversary of the start of the Civil War, and the Vermont Historical Society (VHS) has already begun leading the statewide planning effort for the Vermont Civil War Sesquicentennial Commemoration. With educational institutions, state agencies and other nonprofit organizations, VHS will be developing plans for programs that will explore and celebrate [the role of the Green Mountain State](#) in this bloody conflict.

Statewide events, such as an encampment of Civil War reenactors and a major conference, as well as activities that will explore the Civil War stories in communities throughout Vermont are under consideration. The VHS are also working with the Vermont Governor's office to create a Vermont Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission that will coordinate planning and implementation throughout the multi-year commemoration.

The second article in Vermont's 1777 constitution, abolished slavery, making it the first state to do so. As a result of Vermont's abolitionists tendencies, more than 28,100 Vermonters served in Vermont volunteer units and nearly 5,000 others served in other states' units, in the United States Army or the United States Navy. A total of 166 African American Vermonters served out of a population of just 709 in the entire state.

The first military action seen by Vermonters was at the Battle of Big Bethel on June 10, 1861, where a battalion of the 1st Vermont Infantry was engaged. The 1st Vermont Cavalry regiment participated in more than 70 engagements.

Following the Confederate raid on St. Albans on October 19, 1864, Vermont fielded two companies of Frontier Cavalry, who spent six months on the Canadian border to prevent further incursions from Confederate raiders.

Sixty-four Vermonters received the Medal of Honor, including Willie Johnston, the youngest person ever to receive this award.

From the New York History web site:

<http://www.newyorkhistoryblog.com/2009/12/vermont-already-planning-civil-war.html>

## **Green Mountain Civil War Round Table**

**P.O. Box 1245**

**White River Jct., VT 05001**

### **Green Mountain Civil War Round Table March 2010— March 2011 Membership Rates**

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

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Single \$20.00 (includes newsletter)

Student \$10.00 (includes newsletter)

Two Person \$35.00 ( includes newsletter)

Family \$50.00 (includes newsletter)

Newsletter subscription alone – ten issues \$10.00

Is this a new membership \_\_\_\_  
renewal \_\_\_\_

Dues are payable to: GMCWRT c/o Mary B. Davis, 54  
Renihan Meadows, Lebanon, NH 03766.

