



Circular Memorandum #552

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Announcing Our 578th Meeting

January 2024

The 28th Annual Frank Rankin Lecture
"Thoughts on Robert E. Lee"
Will be Presented by Kent Masterson Brown

DATE: Sunday, January 14

Location: Big Spring Country Club

COCKTAILS: 6:00 P.M.

DINNER (\$35.00): 7:00 P.M.

PROGRAM: 8:00 P.M.

Meet Our Speaker - Kent Masterson Brown

We welcome back Kent Masterson Brown who will deliver the **28th Annual Frank Rankin Lecture**. Kent was born in Lexington, Kentucky on February 5, 1949. He is a 1971 graduate - and in 2014 named a distinguished graduate - of Centre College and received his juris doctor degree in 1974 from Washington and Lee University School of Law. Kent has practiced law for forty-four years with offices in Lexington and Washington, DC. Kent has published six books, all on the Civil War, including *Cushing of Gettysburg: The Story of a Union Artillery Commander*, *Retreat from Gettysburg: Lee, Logistics and the Pennsylvania Campaign*, and *One of Morgan's Men: The Memoirs of Lieutenant John M. Porter of the Ninth Kentucky Cavalry*; they have been selections of the History Book Club and Military Book Club. All of them have received rave reviews and numerous national awards. His most recent book is about George Gordon Meade and the Gettysburg Campaign, which we will have for sale at the meeting.



Kent has also written, hosted, and produced eight award-winning documentary films for public and cable television, including: *Bourbon and Kentucky: A History Distilled*, *Henry Clay and the Struggle for the Union*, *Unsung Hero: The Horse in the Civil War*, *Daniel Boone and the Opening of the American West*, and "I Remember The Old Home Very Well:" *The Lincolns in Kentucky*. All Kent's films have been widely broadcast throughout the United States, Canada, and overseas. Two of his films, *Daniel Boone* and *The Lincolns in Kentucky*, won the regional television ratings when they were premiered on Kentucky Educational Television. All have won Telly Awards; *Unsung Hero* was nominated for an Emmy Award.

A nationally known speaker and Civil War battlefield guide, Kent was the first chairman of the Gettysburg National Military Park Advisory Commission and the first chairman of the Perryville (Kentucky) Battlefield Commission, a seat he held for eleven years overseeing the expansion of the Perryville Battlefield. He served on the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission and is now a member of the Kentucky Film Commission. He has also been a director of the Gettysburg Foundation. Kent is now the President and Content Developer for the Witnessing History Education Foundation, Inc. Kent lives in Lexington with his wife, Genevieve, and their three children, Annie Louise, Philip, and Thomas.

"Thoughts on Robert E. Lee"

In recent years not only have statues of Robert E. Lee come down across the country, but Lee's historical legacy as a great general and as a man of impeccable moral character have also come under new scrutiny. Was Lee's reputation simply the product of lost cause myth makers or was he a great military leader who justly won the admiration and devotion of his soldiers and of the people of the South? In the 28th Annual Frank Rankin Lecture, Kent Masterson Brown will share his "Thoughts on Robert E. Lee".

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Please Note the Price of the Buffet is now \$35!

RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED!

If you do not make a reservation, you may not get fed!

The Round Table must give Big Spring an accurate count of reservations no later than the Wednesday before a Saturday Meeting, or the Thursday before a Sunday Meeting. Reservations can be made by emailing Bryan Winslow at bryanw@macconstruction.com or by calling Doug Krawczyk at 502-592-6864.

PLEASE NOTE: If you do not receive a return email from Bryan Winslow confirming your reservation, **YOU DO NOT HAVE A RESERVATION! You must call Doug to make your reservation.**

When making a reservation for more than yourself, please list the names of everyone for which you are making a reservation. If you are calling Doug, and get his voicemail, please spell your name so he can properly identify the reservation.

If you wish to join us for just the program, you must still make a reservation so we can assure you have space and a seat. If you are attending just the program, you can call Doug anytime up to 4:00PM the day of the Meeting.

Reminder for Table Reservations: Tables for parties of eight (8) can be reserved. When making a Table Reservation, please list the names of everyone in your party. That will ensure everyone in your party will be at the same table and enable us to manage our meeting space in a more efficient manner.

Online Options Are Here!

Reservations, Payments, and Membership Renewals

Members of the Round Table now have new options for making dinner reservations, Bourbon & BBQ reservations, field trip reservations, and membership renewals. To use these new options, first go to our website,

<https://louisvillecwrt.yolasite.com> by clicking on this link or by googling "Louisville Civil War Round Table" which will bring up a link to our website.

1. To make dinner reservations and pay for your meal, on the home page of the website, click on "**Meetings**" on the left-hand side of the page and then scroll down to the current meeting. Click on "**Dinner and Program Reservations**" and enter the required fields to make your reservation and pay with a credit card. You will receive a confirmation email. You can still make your reservations by calling Doug Krawczyk or emailing Bryan Winslow.
2. To make membership renewals. On the home page under "**Membership**", then click on the appropriate level of membership and follow the instructions. Again, you can still pay your membership renewals by mail or by paying at the meetings.
3. **Coming Soon!** You will be able to make reservations for the Spring field trip to the Wilderness and Spotsylvania, click on the "**Field Trip**" option and follow the instructions. You can also sign up for the field trip at the meetings.
4. You will now have the capability to pay for your meals at the meetings with a **credit card**. Of course, you will still be able to pay with a check or cash at the meetings as before.

Please note that **you can still make reservations and payments as you have always done** before using emails, phone calls, checks and cash. We are implementing these new options to give you another way and hopefully an easier way to do these things.

We want to thank our Webmaster, Brian Taylor and our Treasurer Patrick Wilbourn for working hard to make this a reality. Please be aware that there will be enhancements and tweaks to make the new options more streamlined in the future. We will keep you apprised of any changes.

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2023 - 2024 Schedule

Sunday January 14	Kent Masterson Brown	"Thoughts on Robert E. Lee"
Saturday February 10	Brad Gottfried	"The Wilderness and Spotsylvania"
Saturday March 9	Jim Hessler	"Pickett's Charge"
Saturday April 13	Tim Smith	"TBA"
Saturday May 11	Scott Hartwig	"Antietam"

Suggested Reading List for the Wilderness - Spotsylvania

There is no better place to start than the books by our guide, Gordon Rhea. These are easily the best studies of these two battles ever written. "The Battle of the Wilderness May 5-6, 1864" and "The Battles for Spotsylvania Court House and the Road to Yellow Tavern May 7-12, 1864" cannot be topped. Bradley Gottfried has written two detailed map studies of the battles that give a map-by-map detailed explanation of these battles. "The Maps of the Wilderness" and "The Maps of Spotsylvania Through Cold Harbor" are highly recommended. For briefer and more recent books, I recommend Chris Mackowski's "Hell Itself: The Battle of the Wilderness" and his book "A Season of Slaughter: The Battle of Spotsylvania Court House". Both of these books are from the Emerging Civil War Series.

April 17-21, 2024, Field Trip to the Wilderness and Spotsylvania
Battle of Giants: Lee vs Grant with Gordon Rhea
\$200 Non-refundable Deposit is Due!

We are going to Virginia to cover the beginning of the Overland Campaign, the battles of the Wilderness and Spotsylvania. The dates are April 17-21, 2024. **The signup sheet will be at the January meeting.** We are



also collecting the **\$200 non-refundable deposits**. You can sign-up by emailing John Davis at johnd.davis@twc.com and mailing your \$200 non-refundable deposit check made out to LCWRT directly to Louisville Civil War Round Table, 9462 Brownsboro Road - #142, Louisville, Ky., 40241. The \$200 non-refundable deposit is now due which will guarantee your reservation for the trip. We anticipate the cost of this year's trip will be between \$450 and \$475. Our guide will be renowned Civil War historian and author Gordon Rhea. He has written seven award-winning books about the American Civil War, including *The Battle of the Wilderness*, *The Battles at Spotsylvania Court House* and *the Road to Yellow Tavern*, *To the North Anna River*, *Cold Harbor*, *On To Petersburg*, *Carrying the Flag*, and *In the Footsteps of Grant and Lee*. He has

conducted numerous tours of these battlefields and has been involved in their preservation. These two battles which occurred over May 5 - May 12, 1864 marked the beginning of the titantic confrontation of the war's two greatest generals, Robert E. Lee and U.S. Grant and would to a large extent determine the outcome of the Civil War. When the Army of the Potomac numbering some 120,000 men crossed the Rapidan River on May 4 and entered the tangled undergrowth of the Wilderness, Robert E. Lee responded by having his 55,000 Army of Northern Virginia break camp and march directly towards Grant's army. What followed was some of the war's most savage and dramatic fighting resulting in enormous casualties on each side. We will walk this hollowed ground and cover in detail what unfolded. You can **sign up** now by emailing John Davis at johnd.davis@twc.com or you can **sign up** at the meeting.

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The \$200 Non-refundable Deposit Explained

To guarantee your reservation for the April 2024 Field Trip, you will need to make a \$200 non-refundable deposit. We expect this trip to be a sellout. Please understand that once you make this payment it is **non-refundable** for any reason after the February 10th meeting. If you need to cancel after February 10, only the amount of the trip fee above \$200 will be refunded. This policy is necessary because we must make several payments in February and March for the bus, and other items in advance of the trip. We also need a guaranteed count on the number of people going so we can keep the price of the trip as low as possible.

Things to Know About the Wilderness - Spotsylvania Field Trip

We will leave the Free Enterprise parking lot at 6:30 A. M. for the 555-mile trip to Fredericksburg.

You can park your vehicle in the secure parking lot at Free Enterprise.

We will stop at McDonald's for breakfast and make another stop for lunch before arriving at the Comfort Inn Suites in Fredericksburg, 4615 Southpoint Parkway, at approximately 5:00.

There are several restaurants within easy walking distance of the hotel including a very nice Mexican restaurant next door to our hotel for those who want to partake of the traditional Wednesday night Mexican experience.

We will spend the first one and a half days on the Wilderness battlefield. Much of the core battlefield is preserved in the National Park system. There will be quite a bit of walking as we traverse Saunders field and the surrounding woods before breaking for lunch and then spending the afternoon on the Orange Plank Road section of the battlefield including all the important actions that occurred around the Widow Tapp house and farm. Friday morning, we will cover the transition to Spotsylvania Court House as both armies raced to this important crossroads.

Friday afternoon and Saturday will be spent on the Spotsylvania battlefield, the scene of two weeks of dramatic fighting. The famous Mule Shoe and Bloody Angle are well preserved and there are lots of trails to canvas as we cover the fighting at Laurel Hill, Emory Upton's dramatic dawn attack, the Union break through at the apex of the Mule Shoe and the Confederate attempt to counterattack and restore their line culminating in the 24-hour struggle at the Bloody Angle. We will also see Lee's new line after he abandoned the Mule Shoe and visit the battlefield at Harris Farm.

We will conclude Saturday with dinner at the Stevenson's Ridge event center hosted by Chris Mackowski and his wife Jennifer. This will be a fantastic buffet dinner and a great way to wind up our trip before heading home on Sunday morning.

The **cost of the trip** is estimated currently to be \$450 per person. The final cost is determined by the number of people who will be on the trip. We have a maximum number of 40 for this trip. We will begin collecting the \$200 non-refundable deposit in January that will guarantee your reservation.

What does the cost of the trip cover? In addition to the cost of the bus, the fee includes the fees charged by our guide, Godon Rhea, any fees for admission to the National Military Parks, three lunches, the Friday night pizza party at the hotel, the grand finale dinner on Saturday night, and all gratuities paid to our guide and bus driver.

What is not covered? You will be responsible for your hotel which you will get at the reduced group rate of \$120 per night plus Virginia state taxes. You will also be responsible for any meals not covered by the trip fee.

I hope you will make plans to join us on what promises to be a great experience with a great guide and great fellowship! Mark your calendars for April 17-21. You can sign up at the meetings or by emailing John Davis at john.davis@twc.com. If you have any questions, please send your email to John or talk to him at the meetings.

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Frank G. Rankin, Our Founder

The Louisville Civil War Round Table owes its existence and success to one great individual and leader, Frank G. Rankin, the person we honor at each January meeting with the annual Frank Rankin Lecture. All those who knew



Frank and worked with him agree that Frank was a great leader and the driving force that inspired others until he passed away on January 20, 1994. He was born on August 13, 1906 in Louisville and grew up hearing firsthand Civil War Veterans tell their stories of the war. He knew Basil Duke and met and shook hands with John Mosby and walked the battlefields of Virginia with Douglas Southall Freeman. He was a collector of Civil War books and memorabilia before it became popular and amassed a rare and voluminous library of books and artifacts. After graduation from duPont Manual Training High School in 1922, He entered the grain business with S. Zorn & Company becoming sales manager in 1938. In 1942, he joined Gold Proof Grain Elevator Co., the second largest grain marketing

cooperative in the United States. Here he rose to the position of general manager. In this position he helped supply grain to many of Kentucky's major distilleries. Frank was a person who "knew everyone" from famous historians and scholars to governors, politicians, and business leaders of Kentucky whom he would call on to attend and to speak at the Round Table.

Frank dedicated a significant part of his life to preserving and promoting Kentucky's regional heritage. In 1975 Governor Julian Carroll appointed him to the Kentucky Historic Preservation Review Board. Later he was chosen to head the Louisville Historic Landmarks and Kentucky Heritage commissions. In 1967, Frank was chairman of the Governor's Commission to commemorate Kentucky's 175th statehood anniversary. In 1958, Frank was elected president of the Kentucky Derby Festival Committee. He was a member of the Board of Directors of Lincoln Memorial University, the Bank of Louisville, and a member of the Harry Kendall Masonic Lodge,

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DECEMBER 2023 QUIZ:

1. Who was the Confederate Secretary of War in April 1865?
He was John C. Breckinridge.
2. Who was the United States Secretary of War in April 1865?
He was Edwin M. Stanton.
3. After Virginia, which Southern state had the largest enslaved population in 1860?
That was Georgia, followed by Alabama and then South Carolina.
4. Why were Union Generals James Ledlie and Edward Ferrera censured after the Battle of the Crater at Petersburg, Virginia?
During the Union attack they hid in a bombproof area instead of being with and commanding their troops.
5. What famous message did Union General William T. Sherman send to President Lincoln on December 22, 1864?
The message was "I beg to present to you, as a Christmas gift, the City of Savannah".

JANUARY 2024 QUIZ:

1. How many times was Stonewall Jackson buried?
2. What percentage of white men of military age in the Confederacy lost their lives during the Civil War?
3. According to historian James McPherson, the 120 killed during the New York City draft riots of 1863 were mostly who?
4. What was the connection between the New York City riots and the Fifty-fourth Massachusetts?
5. Who were the six Union officers (five generals and one major) who became President of the United States?

(The Quiz is prepared by Harriette Weatherbee)

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Attest:

John Davis
Adjutant

By Order of:

Julie Bartlett
President