

THE COURIER

Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table



Date: February 10th 2009 Meeting # 97

Place: Dino's Restaurant I90 & Rte. 306 exit Mentor, Ohio

Canteen: 6PM Rations: 7PM

Speaker: George Grim

Topic: The Retreat of the Confederate Government

Reservations required

Please call Steve Abbey

Phone 440 255 8375

e-Mail: abbeysr@yahoo.com

George Grim will be our speaker on Tuesday February 10th 2009 and he will be presenting a program entitled: **The Retreat of the Confederate Government**. George is a 1998 charter member of the Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table and an active supporter of all our activities. Mr. Grim was born in Green County, Pennsylvania not far from the Gettysburg National Battlefield site. He fondly remembers touring the battlefield with his father when he was just six years old. There were fewer visitors to the battlefield back then and the town of Gettysburg was not the "tourist mecca" that it is today. George Grim has 2 great, great grandfathers that served in the Civil War. George is a 1955 graduate of West Liberty College (soon to be West Liberty University) of West Liberty, West Virginia, with a degree in Business. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1955 -1957 aboard the LSD19 Comstock and was a Yeoman 2nd class. George married his sweetheart Dolly in 1955 and they raised two sons: Jim and John before she died in 1999. Mr. Grim worked as a data processing manager at Wheeling Steel Corp.; a systems engineer at IBM; a data project manager at Telxon and a data systems manager at Vocolect. George owns and trains thoroughbred horses and still finds the time to read a book every week. He also donates many of those books for our monthly book raffle.

The Retreat of the Confederate Government

In the spring of 1861 most of the citizens of the Southern Confederacy were united in their determination to fight, and pay any price for independence from an oppressive Northern government. Liberty and independence could only be achieved by sacrifices in blood and property. Most Southern citizens believed that the war would not last long because "one Confederate soldier would easily whip ten Yankee hirelings." It soon became clear that this would be a very bloody affair. Misery and sorrow would compete with hunger and deprivation to challenge the will and resolve of the Southern people.

In May of 1864 as Sherman's army entered Georgia on its way to Atlanta, Governor Joseph Brown appealed to all Georgia citizens to "arise and repel the invaders." "Burn the bridges and block the roads in his route. Assail the invader by day and night-let him have no rest." The Richmond Dispatch reported on the response to these appeals. The paper reported that "the planters stayed home awaiting the invaders approach. Nor did they destroy any property or drive their cattle away." The paper concluded that there was but one interpretation: "Confidence in the success of the rebellion no longer exists anywhere outside of the official class and the army."(1)

The Richmond Examiner reported on March 29, 1865 that "Bacchus was on the rampage yesterday. It later stated that hardly a day passed without the ears being saluted by obscene language, either from drunken men or boys, both white and black, men and women." A correspondent described a scene in a street car in which a man and a woman were intoxicated and swearing in a most offensive way. Riots occurred in several places in the South. In Salisbury, North Carolina, the women rioted against food extortionists. In Atlanta, Mobile, Richmond and other places, provision shops were pillaged. Carrying banners marked "bread or blood," and "bread and peace," they broke into stores and seized clothing and food. "Prostitution and miscegenation were common practices and showed that Southern Society was breaking down."(2)



During the closing months of the Civil War entire Confederate units vanished as a result of desertion from low morale. The Southern troops had not been paid in months and Confederate army units ran out of food and supplies. John A. Campbell, the Assistant Secretary of War of the CSA, described the conditions in some Southern states as insurrectionary. The anger and dissatisfaction against the government was so severe in North Carolina that it bordered on anarchy. Opposition to the Confederate government was so intense in Georgia in January 1865, that a resolution was introduced in the state legislature calling for independent negotiations with the U.S. government. (3)

On April 11, 1865 President Jefferson Davis supported by Secretary of State Judah Benjamin insisted that the Confederacy would go on and continue its fight for independence. The newly appointed Secretary of War John C. Breckinridge along with generals Joseph E. Johnston and Pierre G. T. Beauregard tried to convince Davis of the hopelessness of continuing the war. General Robert E. Lee had surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia to Grant on April 9, 1865. (4) However, President Davis believed that he could rally his Southern legions and continue the fight. The Confederate government had evacuated Richmond before it fell to Grants forces and moved to Danville, Virginia. Davis ordered the Confederate cabinet to head south and meet up in Texas.

Jefferson Davis's hopes for a Confederate government in exile were dashed in the early morning hours of May 10, 1865 near Irwinville, Georgia where he was captured by troopers of the 4th Michigan Cavalry. Davis was wearing his wife's rain coat. Davis was held without a trial for nearly two years at Fortress Monroe. The Federal government attempted to link Davis to the conspirators in the Lincoln assassination but the government's principle witness was charged and

convicted of perjury. The Federal government concluded that any trial of Jefferson Davis would have to be held by a military tribunal. Salmon P. Chase, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court refused to hear the case. John C. Underwood a federal circuit court judge for the district of Virginia stated that he "would pack the jury," to insure the conviction of Jefferson Davis. Chief Justice Chase concluded that the 14th amendment to the U.S. Constitution stripped Davis and the other ranking Confederate officials of citizenship and the right to vote. Since they were no longer citizens of the United States then they could not be tried for treason. The Federal Court ordered the case against Davis to be dismissed in February, 1869.

CIVIL WAR MINUTES 2/10/09: Franco M. Sperrazzo, Special Events Coordinator

J. Mike Sears warmed up 24 loyal members and 1 guest at our cold and snowy January 13th meeting. Thank you to those who braved what is officially now the 2nd snowiest January on record. **Mike** presented a power point talk on **Civil War Reconstruction** focusing on the period following the war to 1877. His chronological outline covered the Ten Per Cent plan reinstating government in the South. **Mike** discussed the Ghosts of the Confederacy. Also how the South was still rich in cotton, tobacco and sugar. There was a series of Civil Rights Acts; 14th and 15th Amendments; Sherman's Field Order No. 15; Johnson and Grant elected as presidents; impeachment of Johnson; Grant re-elected; Ku Klux Klan established; U. S. Supreme court decisions on Slaughter-house cases and U. S. vs. Cruikshank; moderate and radical Republicans clash; Democrats win off-year elections among a reign of terror in early 1870's southern states; Contested election of 1877 between Republican R. B. Hayes and Democrat S. J. Tilden ending what we call reconstruction. The failure of reconstruction along with what is referred to as sharecropping, economic entities and racial segregation kept blacks inferior in political, mainstream and social positions. Mike Sear did a great job presenting his talk on a difficult period of our history.

The revised NEOCWRT 2009 Speakers Program.

February	George Grim will shed light on the Retreat of the Confederate Government April-May 1865
March	Bob Baucher investigates Blood, Tears & Glory, How Ohio Won the Civil War
April	Marc Leepson (shared with Mahoning Valley Group) Desperate Engagement
May	Bill Meissner profiles General George B. McClellan: A Paradox in Command
July announced)	5th Annual Picnic festivities featuring special guest OHIO 51 st OVI encampment (the date will be announced)
September	Norty London is working on a speaker based on our FALL FIELD TRIP
October	Robert Stabile examines the Southern Cause for Independence
November	Open at this time, any suggestions for a speaker?
December	Dale Craig entertains us on Ladies Night with the Interurban Story: A History of Early Public Transportation JET Revised 1/27/09

This should be the final mention of 2009 membership dues for the 9 monthly meetings and special 5th Annual Picnic at the colonial plantation of **President Arlan** and **First Lady Pat Byrne** in July. Dues are \$55.00, a modest increase after 11 years. Bring your check to the February 10th meeting or send it made out to **NEOCWRT** and mail to **Treasurer Bill Wilson**, 9772 Willow Lane, Concord OHIO, 44060.

The executive committee has discussed various sites for our SPRING ONE DAY TRIP. A museum and Fort Meigs is being considered. We encourage members' ideas and participation for this endeavor. If you have something in mind contact **President Byrne, Ted Karle or Captain Franco**.

Would you have guessed that our original founding father **President George Washington** will turn 277 years old in 2009? Past **President Dick Fetzer** of the **Western Reserve Society Sons of the American Revolution**, will celebrate at their annual program. This special event takes place 1 day early on Saturday February 21, at Shaker Heights Country Club, 3300 Courtland Boulevard, and Shaker Hts. OH. Cost is \$31.00. The fellowship begins at 11:30am. Luncheon at noon. Key speaker is **Mrs. Mary Regula**, Founding Chair and Vice President of the **National First Ladies Library** in Canton, OH. Checks should be sent to : Mr. Charles Bingham, 4967 North Sedgewick Road, Lyndhurst, OH 44124. Make sure you mention **Dick Fetzer** in a memo with your check and you would like to be seated with the **NEOCWRT** table that can hold up to 8 people. Besides **Richard**, some of our members also in the **SAR**, include comrades: **Ron Morgan, Hudson Fowler, Pat Norris**, transplants **Rob Bayless, Brent Morgan** and the late **Robert Battisti**. I apologize if I left anyone out, please make me aware.

It is good to her that some of our soldiers who have had health issues this winter and past holiday season are all on the road to recovery. We hope and pray you continue to do so. See you on February 10th, stay safe and warm.

The Battle of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson by Arlan Byrne

“The Beginning of the End?”

The battle of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson was far from the most famous battle of the war. There weren't huge amounts of men involved, or a large number of casualties. It hasn't had thousands of books written about it or thousands of battlefield tours conducted by famous historians and authors. In fact, part of the battle field doesn't exist anymore. It's at the bottom of a lake. Many people do not even know when, where, or why it was fought. The Fort Donelson National Battlefield Park only had 30,000 visitors last year. But there are Civil War historians who feel that the Fort Henry – Fort Donelson battle was where it all started to come apart for the Confederacy. When the editorial writer for the Harper's Weekly March 1st, 1862 edition called the capture of the forts “The beginning of the end,” was he right? Was this the battle that lost the war for the South? It might have been, and here's why.

When the Civil War started the South did not want to capture the North. All they wanted was to be left alone to govern themselves. To defend themselves they adopted a defensive plan based upon interior lines of communication provided by railroads and rivers. This would enable them to rapidly shift men and materials to any threatened part of the Confederacy; thereby negating the overwhelming superiority of men and materials the Union had. The North, on the other hand, adopted General Winfield Scott's plan to end the war; called by the newspapers “The Anaconda Plan.” Part of that plan included capturing control of the Western rivers, starting with the Mississippi and including the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers. The latter two rivers, the Tennessee and the Cumberland, were like two broad arrows pointed straight into the heart of the Western Confederacy. And when the forts guarding these three rivers were captured by the North, it started a succession of great splitting movements, cutting the Confederacy into smaller and smaller pieces, ending in April three years later with the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia and then of the Army of Tennessee.

In the summer of 1861 things looked pretty good for the South. In the East the Union army was stymied in Northern Virginia; and west of the Allegheny Mountains Confederate General Albert Sidney Johnston, the Confederacy's overall Western Commander, had established a defensive line. It extended from the town of Columbus Kentucky on the Mississippi River, called the “Gibraltar of the West” by the newspapers; to Cumberland Rivers just south of the Kentucky border in the center; to Bowling Green Kentucky. Bowling Green was a little town of no importance, except that three railroads connect there.



General Albert Sidney Johnston

General Henry Halleck, the overall Union commander in the west, decided the tactical thing to do was to attack the center of Johnston's defensive line at the Tennessee and Cumberland river forts, but not yet. He wasn't ready. “Too much haste will ruin everything,” he said, and he was right; because the navy was building new ironclad gunboats for the river fighting and they were not ready. The rivers weren't ready either because there wasn't enough water in them to float the ironclads. Only General U.S. Grant, commanding the army forces was ready; but he would have to wait.

General Johnston assigned Brigadier General Lloyd Tilghman to defend the Tennessee River and Fort Henry and the Cumberland River and Fort Donelson in November 1861. As soon as Tilghman arrived in the area he could see that Fort Henry was a disaster. It was a star-shaped partially constructed dirt fort on the floodplain next to the Tennessee River. To make matters worse, it was surrounded by higher ground within musket range. Construction of the fort had begun during the dry season in June 1861, and locals shook their heads when they saw it being built, because it would almost certainly be flooded out when the winter rains and high water came. Another problem with both forts was that there were no natural defenses on the landward side of either. However the energetic Tilghman immediately went to work. He built roads connecting the two forts, which were twelve miles apart, and strung a telegraph line between them.

He also started building a line of rifle pits and other defenses at both forts. He finished the dirt walls of Fort Henry and started mounting guns on them. When it was finally completed Fort Henry was a 10 acre fort with dirt walls 20 feet high and mounting 17 guns on solid platforms. Eleven of the guns covered the river and the others pointed inland. A 10 inch Columbiad and a 24 pounder rifled cannon were the most impressive weapons pointing toward the river.

Fort Donelson consisted of two water batteries built into a bluff overlooking the Cumberland River. The lower battery, about 30 feet above the river, had eight 32 pound guns and a 10 inch Columbiad. The upper battery, approximately 100 feet above the river, had eight 32 pound guns and a 6.5 inch rifled gun. The Columbiad and the 6.5 inch gun were the two primary heavy guns at Fort Donelson. A three mile series of rifle pits and trenches behind a barricade of logs and dirt were built to protect the fort and Dover, the nearby river town and landing, from an attack on the landward side. Ground was also cleared in front of the trenches to provide an open field of fire; and trees with sharpen branches called an abattis, a kind of a civil war version of barbed wire, were placed in front of the whole thing.

Then, in mid-January the rains came. In the week between the 15th and 22nd of January 1862, the Tennessee River rose fourteen feet. Now the rivers were ready, the new ironclad gunboats were ready, Commodore Andrew H. Foote, commanding the navy on the Western waters was ready, and Brigadier General U.S. Grant, commanding the Union land forces was ready. Only General Halleck still hesitated. But finally, by the beginning of February, he decided to permit his eager subordinates to go ahead. On the night of Wednesday February 5th, Foote landed Grant's army about 3 miles downstream of Fort Henry and the next day Foote lined up 4 ironclads side by side and at noon started off to capture Fort Henry. General Tilghman saw him coming and in order to save his infantry, that couldn't get to the fort anyway because of all the water running into it; sent them to Fort Donelson. He and about 90 or so artillery men stayed behind to make a fight of it. They called themselves "a forlorn hope." As Tilghman watched the gunboats approach the fort and the water level rise in the fort, he didn't know if the fort would be battered into submission first or drowned in water first. By 2:00 p.m. it was all over. Only two of his guns were still above water and most of his artillerymen were dead or wounded. So he surrendered. Foote had to lower a rowboat to row into the middle of the fort so Tilghman could sign the surrender papers. The navy had captured a fort all by itself without any army help, and they were really excited. That didn't happen often. By that evening the Union gunboats had steamed twenty miles up the Tennessee River to Danville and had broken the railroad which held the long line of Confederate defenses together. Any by Saturday the ironclads had cleared the entire river of Confederate forces all the way up into Alabama and Mississippi.



Commodore Andrew Foote

The morning after the battle, February 7th, General A.S. Johnston held a meeting in Bowling Green with his two top commanders, General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard, the hero of Fort Sumter and First Manassas; and Major General William T. Hardee. It was decided that the "Gibraltar of the West" on the Mississippi, and Bowling Green, the railroad center, had been outflanked and both would have to be evacuated. The question was, "what to do about Donelson"? It was finally decided to defend Nashville at Donelson. Besides being an important manufacturing center, Nashville, located on the Cumberland River, was a key storehouse and depot for the Southern armies. It needed to be defended. The orders went out, and troops started for the fort.

In the next week, enough soldiers were assigned to defend Fort Donelson to bring the total number of Confederates there to 17,500. General Gideon

Pillow was the ranking officer present and assigned General Simon Bolivar

Buckner and his troops on the right end of the defense line, General Bushrod Johnson's troops in the center of the line, and his troops on the left end of the line. Colonel Nathan Bedford Forest's cavalry was held in reserve.

When General Grant finally arrived in front of Fort Donelson on Wednesday February 12th, he placed General John McClernand's division on the right side of the line opposite General Pillow's men. He placed General Lew Wallace's division in the center and General C.F. Smith's division on the left opposite Buckner's troops. Fort Donelson was now under siege.

The next morning before dawn Brigadier General John B. Floyd, who had been appointed commander of Fort Donelson by General Johnston, arrived and checked into the Dover Hotel. Evidently General Johnston had changed his mind about "defending Nashville at Donelson" because Floyd had been assigned two tasks by Johnston. One was to keep Commodore Foote from sailing up the Cumberland River long enough for General Hardee's army to retreat from Bowling Green safely

across the river to Nashville. The second was to save the army at Fort Donelson from capture and march south to help defend Nashville.

That same afternoon, February 13th, Commodore Foote decided to capture his second fort in a row. He lined the 4 ironclads up side by side as he had done at Fort Henry, and at about 2:00 p.m. he sailed straight ahead firing as he came. But Fort Donelson was no Fort Henry. At Henry, the southern guns were at water level and their cannonballs bounced off the sloped sides of the ironclads and ricochet into the heavens doing little damage. But at Donelson the guns were 30 to 100 feet above the river and the plunging shot hit the sloped sides of the gunboats head on. By the time the ironclads had gotten to within 200 yards of the fort they were so badly shot up they could go no farther. Out of control, they drifted slowly back down the river to safety. In fact, one of them had to be tied to trees along the river bank to keep from sinking. And among their 45 casualties was Commodore Foote, who was wounded in the foot. He later died of the wound.

The first task of General Floyd had been successfully completed. At a council of war that night it was decided to complete the second task. The Confederates would attack General McClellan's men the next morning, drive them off the road south of Dover that led to Nashville 70 miles away, and evacuate the fort. General Floyd left the details up to General Pillow. In the darkness before dawn, the Confederates massed their troops opposite the Union right, and at dawn General Pillow sent his regiments forward right on schedule; Forrest's cavalry riding and slashing on the flank. However, they met stiff resistance, not because the Federals were expecting them, but because the Federals were alert and well disciplined. For three hours the issue was in doubt, but finally McClellan's men were driven back onto Wallace's division in the center and the road south to Nashville and freedom was open. Then a strange thing happened. Instead of continuing on to Nashville, General Pillow ordered the troops back to their original trenches. Immediately this order caused a heated argument between General Pillow and General Buckner whose dislike for each other bordered on hatred. Finally, after much discussion, General Floyd settled the whole thing by backing Pillow. When the southern troops returned to their original entrenchments, McClellan's men returned to theirs. Except for 2,000 casualties, it was as if the whole thing had never happened. Fort Donelson was back under siege again.



That night at the Dover Hotel, one of the most bizarre councils of war in the entire Civil War took place. Generals Floyd, Pillow and Buckner decided to surrender Fort Donelson. However, Floyd and Pillow did not want to surrender themselves. General Floyd, because he thought he might be tried and hung as a traitor because of events that had happened before secession; and General Pillow, who had chosen the motto "Liberty or Death," decided to choose liberty over imprisonment and fled also. So Floyd turned to Pillow and said, "I turn the command over, sir." "I pass it," said Pillow, "I assume it," said Buckner. "Give me pen, ink and paper and send for a bugler," The amazed Forrest, who had arrived late, couldn't believe what he had just heard and shouted "I didn't come here for the

purpose of surrendering my command. What should I do?" "Cut your way out" said Pillow. So he did. Using a river road Forrest took his entire brigade to Nashville in two days without losing a man. General Bushrod Johnson didn't surrender either. He and many others simply walked away.

The next morning when Grant received Buckner's surrender proposal asking for terms, he replied with a statement that would make any modern public relations expert envious. It said: "Sir, your note of this date proposing Armistice and the appointment of Commissioners to settle the terms of capitulation is just received. No terms except an Unconditional and immediate surrender can be accepted. I propose to move immediately upon your works." When the newspapers got this message they changed Grant's first name from Ulysses Simpson to Unconditional Surrender. It made Grant famous and assured him a place in history. Unfortunately for the Confederacy the surrender meant the loss of an army, control of the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers and all the land around them, including Nashville. It also opened the heart of the Western Confederacy to invasion by the Union Army under Grant and Sherman.

In conclusion: if Floyd had withdrawn the Donelson army and added it to the army Albert Sidney Johnston had at Shiloh six weeks later; would those extra men have made a difference? Would Johnston's attack have destroyed Grant's army before Buell's troops arrived. When Johnston withdrew Hardee's army from Bowling Green and Polk's army from Columbus, had he redeployed them to Fort Donelson, he would have had 43,000 Confederate forces against Grant's 27,000.

Given General Halleck's animosity toward Grant; would a Grant defeat there have ended his career in high command and all that followed?

In the Federal mid-term elections in the fall of 1862, the Peace Democrats gained 28 seats in the House of Representatives while the Republicans lost 22 seats. If Johnston had defeated Grant and the Confederacy controlled the two rivers along the original defensive lines, would that along with General Lee's victories in the East have made the peace movement even stronger and resulted in bigger gains for the Peace Democrats in the fall elections? How much public pressure would Lincoln be able to endure before seeking an agreement with the South? Would a popular saying in the North "Let the erring sisters go in peace" come true? Or was Harper's Weekly right? Was the battle of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson really "the beginning of the end" for the Confederacy?

Sources for the Battle of Fort Henry and Fort Donelson:

Beringer, Hathaway, Jones & Still – "Where the South Lost the Civil War, University of Georgia Press 1986

Brooks, Victor – "Civil War Forts" Chelsea House Publishers, 2000

Gott, Kendall G. – "Where the South lost the War" Stackpole Books, 2003

Hamilton, James J. – "The Battle of Fort Donelson" A.S. Barnes, 1968

Henry, Robert Selph – "First with the Most – Forrest" McCowat – Mercer Press 1969

Jobe, James Historian, Fort Donelson National Battlefield, 931 232 5706

Niven, David – "The Road to Shiloh – early battles in the West" Time - Life Books 1983

Footnotes for the Retreat of the Confederate Government:

1. Richmond Dispatch, May 22, 1864
 2. Richmond Examiner, March 29, 1865
 3. The Collapse of the Confederacy by Charles Wesley p.63
 4. An Honorable Defeat, The Last Days of the Confederate Government by William Davis
-

The Courier is the monthly newsletter of the Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table
John Sandy Editor

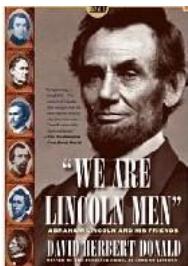
Staff writers: Ted Karle Franco Sperrazzo Joe Tirpak Norton London Bob Baucher Tom Horvath

Richmond Virginia Correspondent: Brent Morgan

Feature writers: Carl Dodaro John Krouse Arlan Byrne

Please submit all articles by e-mail to: jschez47@yahoo.com

We Are Lincoln Men by David Herbert Donald Book Review by Tom Horvath



We Are Lincoln Men is a study of Lincoln's friendships and the men who were closest to him. The author begins by defining several types of friendship, using Aristotle as his source, then travels Lincoln's life, examining his friends and mentors to find those who were closest to him. He tells us something about the lives of these people and suggests how they fit into the several types of friendship Aristotle defined. In Mr. Donald's opinion, the men closest to Lincoln were Joshua Speed, William Herndon, Orville H. Browning, William Seward, John Nicolay, and John Hay.

The book is less than 300 pages, including notes and an index, so one can easily see that these are not extensive biographies of Lincoln's friends. Some information is included about their lives prior to interacting with Lincoln, but only where it significantly impacts their personalities or their relationship with Lincoln. In two or three instances, it shed new light on these well-known personages. As to their lives after Lincoln's assassination, there is next to nothing. Mr. Donald is interested only in their friendship with Lincoln. In this volume, their stories end once they no longer interact closely with him.

In discussing Lincoln's early years, Mr. Donald looks at the psychological impact of living in relative isolation, losing his mother, and being second to a step-brother in his father's favor. In Mr. Donald's view, these factors made it very difficult for Lincoln to form intimate personal relationships in later years, and, of the men mentioned above, Mr. Donald feels that only his first, Joshua Speed, was the closest kind of friend.

A large number of other people could be considered friends of Lincoln, and Mr. Donald discusses them at shorter length. Among these are the women in Lincoln's life. The author gives his opinion of Lincoln's relationship with Anne Rutledge, and the effect her death had upon him. There were several other women involved with Lincoln, a few romantically, some as mother figures, others as friends. He also addresses the theory that Lincoln suffered from syphilis and the question of homosexual relationships.

Surprisingly, Mr. Donald spends very little time with the relationship between Lincoln and his wife. Mary Todd is often described as more deeply interested in politics than most women of her time. She was also very ambitious for her husband. In the early years, before he became president, and certainly before she lost Willie, she might have been a close personal friend and confidante, as well as his wife. Mr. Donald doesn't explore this possibility at all.

The book provides a different perspective on Lincoln and his relationships, as well as providing some additional information about his closest friends. Yet, it felt like a college survey course – as if there is additional interesting material about these people that is not presented.

From a reader's perspective, Mr. Donald writes well. Even though the timeframes of the various chapters sometime overlap, the story flows and the writing is smooth. In addition to the index and notes section mentioned earlier, there is also a small section of photographs of the main personages. The hardcover volume retails for \$25.00, but a paperback edition can be purchased new on Amazon for \$11.90. Mentor Library has one copy. The Clevonet system has 20.