

HARDTACK

A Publication of the Indianapolis Civil War Round Table – February 2004

President – Steven Hill

Vice President – Anthony Roscetti

Hardtack Editor – Debby Chestnut

Secretary – Dr. Betty Enloe

Treasurer – Doug Wagner

Distribution Managers – Dorothy Jones & Peg Bertelli

Quiz Master – Tony Trimble

February 9, 2004

Monday – 7:30 p.m. at the Indiana Historical Society

450 W. Ohio St.

(Parking in lot north of the Society off New York St. – Please enter via Northeast Door)

Napoleon Collins and the Capture Of the CSS Florida

Presented by Ken Knouf

Throughout the war, Confederate cruisers wreaked havoc upon the Union merchant fleet. Second only to the CSS Alabama in terms of damage inflicted, the CSS Florida was also highly feared, and the Federal government took extraordinary steps in trying to apprehend it. Continually avoiding capture and sinking throughout its three-year existence, the vessel seemed to lead a charmed life—that is until she sailed into a Brazilian harbor where a certain Hoosier naval commander was waiting.

Napoleon Collins was born in Pennsylvania but grew up in Madison, Indiana, on the banks of the Ohio River. During the Civil War, he participated in the Navy's first action at Aquia Creek and later commanded a ship in the bombardment and capture of Port Royal Sound in South Carolina. But he is really known for just one decision—the capture of the CSS Florida and gross violation of the laws of neutrality. His decision, however, begs the question, "Was he a maverick as thought by many or were his actions justified?"

About the Speaker: To acquaint members with this controversial man and this remarkable story is Ken Knouf, from Madison. Ken helped form the Jefferson County Civil War Round Table in 1985, and, although its president for two years, mostly enjoys serving as its long-term treasurer. One of his favorite quotes is "I have studied the war for over 41 years and can only tell you how much I still don't know." Ken's favorite topics include battlefield preservation, weapons, and the people involved in the conflict.

For the last 21 years, Ken has been employed at Jefferson Proving Ground, a large Army testing facility that closed in 1995. He now directs a three-member Army oversight staff, but while JPG was active, he worked as the installation's natural and cultural resource manager. As he puts it, "I had a dream job working in the outdoors when it was nice and doing history when it wasn't." Ken received both a BS degree and masters degree in parks and recreation from Clemson University in South Carolina, back in the days when Clemson was known primarily for its football team that got coach Woody Hayes fired!

Please bring a friend to hear our speaker.

DINNER AT SHAPIRO'S

**ALL MEMBERS AND GUESTS ARE INVITED TO SHAPIRO'S DELI AT 5:30 P.M.
TO ENJOY DINNER AND FELLOWSHIP PRIOR TO THE MEETING.**

From the Board

President

Election of Officers for the 2004-2005 Campaign

Election of officers and committees for the 2004-2005 Campaign was held at the January 12th meeting. They are:

President - Anthony Roscetti

Vice President - Ray Shortridge

Secretary - Betty Enlow

Treasurer - Doug Wagner

Preservation Committee: Andy O'Donnell

Publicity Committee: Norris Darrall

50th Anniversary History Committee: Alan Nolan, Chairman, Vernon Earle as Co-Chairman, Jim Bishop, Tom Krasean, Dan Mitchell and Nikki Schofield.

Web Master: Brock Adams

Hardtack Editor - (need volunteer)

Hardtack Distribution - Dorothy Jones and Peg Bertelli

Quiz Master - Tony Trimble

Many thanks to this year's Nominating Committee for a job well done!!

Hardtack Editor

Please send book reviews, interesting articles, etc. to place in the Hardtack to me at the following: **Debby Chestnut, 441 S. Catherwood Ave., Indianapolis, 46219; E-Mail: dchad@indy.net or chestnud@mail.ips.k12.in.us. Phone: 356-5117 (home) or 226-4101 (work):Fax: 226-3444.** Deadline for March Hardtack: **February 20th.**

Treasurer

We still plan to deliver the Hardtack via e-mail for as many members as possible. Please make your e-mail address available to Dorothy Jones joejones@iquest.net and Doug Wagner dougwag@msn.com.

ICWRT's New Publicity Committee

This committee was formed to help get the "**word out**" to the public regarding our round table meetings and speakers, as well as civil war related events taking place in or around Indiana. Norris Darrall will be chairman of this committee. The Mission Statement of the Publicity Committee is:

"Share The Passion."

Some of the objectives of this committee to help the ICWRT increase membership are:

Need handouts distributed by members to various locations and events such as schools and colleges, libraries, festivals, civil war events, book signings, collector shows, ect. Any place the public might gather. Most effective is word of mouth. Our website will be added to handouts. Handouts will be available at round table meetings.

Our programs may be of major interest to specific groups. A visit to their meetings a month before our program might generate attendance. For major speakers, announcements could be posted in bookstores or put into local community newspapers.

Making members and public aware of events taking place in Indiana as well as surrounding states that would be of interest to civil war buffs. Members will be able to view programs from other round tables around Indiana. A form will be available at round table meetings for members to submit any upcoming events they are aware of to the committee to be announced. This form will name the event, when it will take place, where, and the point of contact.

The activities and size of the committee will modify as the requirements grow. Publicity is the business of all members. Let's get the "**word out**".

Civil War Quiz

By Tony Trimble

1. Name the Union general who was Herman Haupt's counterpart in the West.
2. For what were Jennison's 7th and 17th Kansas Calvary best known?
3. What nickname was given to Walker's Texas Division in recognition of its reputation for executing long, forced marches?
4. Name the World War II hero who starred in a "classic" Civil War movie. What was the name of the movie?
5. What nickname was given to the 1st Indiana Heavy Artillery because their guns were drawn by mules?

Answers to January Quiz: 1) Francis Marion Drake; 2) 1st Commissioned Medical Officer; 3) Robert C. Buchanan; Colonel because Senate refused confirmation of brevet; 4) Gen. Don Carlos Buell; 5) John Pope.

Upcoming Events

- ❖ **February 4** – Indiana Historical Society - at 12:00 - Historian and author Brian Dirck of Anderson University will speak about his book, ***Lincoln and Davis: Imagining America, 1809-1865***, and how these two leaders imagined what America was supposed to be, or what it could be.
- ❖ **February 6** – World War Memorial – 10:00 a.m. – "**Lincoln Letters**" - A one act stage play about letters exchanged between Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd Lincoln beginning with their courting years thru the civil war years. Actual letters will be read.
- ❖ **February 19** – Plainfield-Guilford Township Public Library – 1120 Stafford Road. – 7:00 p.m. Registration required. Call 839-6602, ext. 115 - Topic: **John V. Hadley's Seven Months a Prisoner** – presented by Historian Libbe Hughes. John Hadley was a prominent lawyer, businessman, state legislator and Indiana Supreme Court Justice. He also fought in the Civil War and was captured by Confederate troops.
- ❖ **March 18** - Plainfield-Guilford Township Public Library – 1120 Stafford Road – 7:00 p.m. Registration required. Call 839-6602, ext. 115. – Topic: **Battle Flags of the Civil War** – presented by Steve Hill of the Indiana World War Memorial. US Army regulations called for each regiment to carry two flags, the national flag, and a regimental flag. Steve will show pictures of some of central Indiana's regimental flags and discuss their history.

INDIANAPOLIS CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE CAMPAIGN 2003-2004

(Programs Co-Sponsored by the Col. Eli Lilly Civil War Museum)

<u>MEETING DATE</u>	<u>PRESENTER</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>
Sept. 8, 2003	Greg Briggs	N.B. Forrest and Napoleonic Cavalry Tactics
Oct. 13, 2003	Steve Jackson	My Boys in Blue
Nov. 10, 2003	Patrick Field	A.P. Hill, A First Person Presentation
Dec. 8, 2003	Gerald Jones	Munfordville, The Forgotten Battle
Jan. 12, 2004	Nikki Schofield	The Perils of Spying by Belle Boyd
Feb. 9, 2004	Ken Knouf	Napoleon Collins
Mar. 8, 2004	Marshall Brinkman	Civil War Telegraphy
Apr. 12, 2004	Richard McMurry	Two Great Rebel Armies
May 10, 2004	Jeff Johnston	Recovery and Restoration of the USS Monitor
Jun. 14, 2004	Lloyd Hunter	18 th Indiana Infantry Regiment

MARY TODD LINCOLN

In Honor of Her Life, Loves, and Questionable Insanity

*God gives us our beloved ones, we make them our idols, they are removed from us and
We have patiently to await the time, when He reunites us to them and the waiting is so long.*

Mary Todd Lincoln

Mary Todd Lincoln remains to be one of the most controversial First Ladies in US history. Full light had not been shed on her life until 1981, nearly a century after her death. Mary remains a most tragic character and was declared insane by the State of Illinois with the petition initiated by her eldest son, Robert Todd Lincoln. Was she really insane? Many historians support the insanity claim and yet many refute such allegations. Whatever view one takes, her life was a tragic one.

Mary Todd was born December 13, 1818 in Lexington, Ky. to Robert Todd and Eliza Parker, who were a prominent family in Kentucky. At the age of six, Mary's mother died during childbirth and her father quickly remarried to a stepmother that Mary never cared much for. Unlike most women, Mary was well educated and entered finishing school at the age of 14. Her background had provided her with expensive tastes in clothing and fashions and she loved to shop. Mary was a petite five foot two inch lady who quickly engaged people with her intelligence and charm. She was notorious for having a sharp tongue and had strong opinions, feelings about people, politics, places, religion, morals, manners and was sometimes outspoken to the point of rudeness.

After three years of courtship, on November 4, 1842, Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd were married. Abe set up a law practice and traveled between courts serving as Representative to Illinois. The first year of marriage proved to be difficult on Mary because she was use to money and not doing things for herself. Their first child, Robert Todd Lincoln was born on August 1, 1843. Lincoln soon was making enough for them to purchase a home and Mary was able to afford a servant.

By 1846, Lincoln was pressing towards a Congressional election. Mary enjoyed her new role in socializing and was in her element beside her husband, mingling with politicians and the elite class. Their second son, Edward, was born March 10, 1846. Lincoln was soon elected to Congress and Mary's ambition for her husband soared. Happiness would not last long. On July 16, 1849, Mary's father, Robert Todd, died of cholera and in January 1850, Mary's grandmother died. Mary began to feel anxiety when any of the children or Abraham was sick and often suffocated the children. Mary was a superstitious woman and believed the tale that deaths come in three's. Eddie became sick and after fifty days remaining by his side, passed away at the age of 4 on Feb. 1, 1850. Depression became deeply seeded with Mary. She had a hard time controlling her emotions. Mary then became pregnant two months after Eddie's death and William Lincoln was born December 21, 1850. The Lincoln's last child, Tad, was born April 4, 1853. Both children were sick often. Tad once suffered from lung fever and never fully recovered.

Lincoln was elected President in November 1860 and the family moved to the White House. The move sparked Mary's extravagant spending style. She redecorated with draperies, furniture, linens, pictures, china and glass, overspending her budget by \$6,700. Mary would often have extravagant state dinners and receptions and was often criticized for the amount of money she spent while the states were at war.

Death would visit the Lincoln's once again. Willie came down with an illness around February 17, 1862 and died on February 20, 1862. Mary was hysterical and full of pain and would never fully recover. She then consumed her time caring for soldiers and their families. On July 2, 1863, after visiting a Soldiers Home, Mary was involved in a carriage accident and was thrown, striking her head on a sharp rock. That same year, she would have another carriage accident. After the accidents, Mary complained of headaches and nausea.

To add to her anxiety, Mary had family fighting for the Confederacy. Between the years 1862 and 1863, she lost three half brothers and a brother-in-law. Mary was loyal to the Union and committed to her husband's efforts, therefore, she was unable to publicly grieve her losses. Lincoln was also depressed and had trouble sleeping. It was during this time that Lincoln had the dream of the President being assassinated. This dream deeply disturbed Mary, fearing for her husband's death.

By 1865, Mary had lost two sons, her mother and father and grandmother, three half-brothers and a brother-in-law. But nothing could compare to the trauma of that fateful day, April 14, 1865, when her beloved Lincoln was shot and eventually died. All the grief suffered for many years pronounced itself with great fury. It was so intense that she was forbid from attending her husband's funeral and mourning his death publicly. Many believe she was never the same after Lincoln's death.

Mary moved back to Illinois surrounded by fond memories which proved to be a struggle, so her and Tad set off to Florida. Scandal had arose when Mary moved from the White House that she had taken with her the nation's gifts to the President and First Lady. For the next couple of years, she released her pain through letters and poetry. Mrs. Lincoln had been left an estate of \$110,000 but had incurred a lot of debt during her husband's presidency and did not want anyone to know about it. If the money was taken out of her estate, she was afraid her and Tad would be penniless and financial security was a necessity. So she arranged for a New York dealer to privately sell her expensive clothes with anonymity. Unfortunately her clothes did not sell well and it soon became public knowledge and hit the headlines of the newspapers. This "old clothes scandal" humiliated her son Robert.

In 1871, Robert had been summoned to his mother's side. Tad had become ill with pneumonia and on July 15th passed away. This would be the final blow to Mary's heart. Many historians believe Tad's death was the turning point in her mental health. She became sick, nervous, had incredible fears like being poisoned, fires, dying, and losing her last son. She became obsessed with Robert's health and moved to Chicago to be near him. Robert soon realized that his mother was not emotionally stable and had been carrying \$56,000 in securities in her petticoat. She went on extravagant shopping sprees, buying clothes, draperies, jewelry, and kid's sunglasses. Robert feared she would dissolve her estate, which would ultimately affect his inheritance. The only way he could protect the estate was by declaring her mentally insane. According to Illinois law, the only way to gain control over someone's money was to have him/her declared mentally insane and committed to an institution.

Mary was shocked to find that her only living son, Robert, was trying to commit her as insane. He claimed his intentions were to preserve their estate. Seventeen people would testify in court in his behalf.

- Dr. Danford, family physician claimed Mary showed "peculiar symptoms" that were "indications of derangement" because of her many fears and obsessive behavior.
- Many testified Mary made purchases and stored them in her trunks and had unopened packages in her closets.
- Testimony stated that Mary was deranged because she carried all her money on her person.
- Salesmen witnessed expensive and reckless purchases of jewelry and another salesman stated he sold her \$300 worth of curtains, watches, soaps and perfumes.
- A servant of the hotel stated that Mary complained of hearing voices through the walls.

Mary Todd Lincoln took the stand herself and testified in opposition to the claims.

- Since childhood she had lots of possessions and they brought her a sense of security. Since the death of her husband and children, she went shopping for items she could surround herself with and they "bring her pleasure".
- Her fear of being poisoned came from the fact that two attempts had been made on her husband.
- Mary carried all her money because she did not trust many people.
- Mary found out the voices she had heard through the walls were actually in the hallways and were guards that Robert had hired to watch his mother's actions.

The main objective of Robert and the prosecuting team was to spark Mary's hot temper and emotional outbursts. Mary complied. At the age of 56, the State of Illinois declared Mary Lincoln to be insane, to be sent to a hospital and be added to the Lunatic Record. Robert would be appointed as conservator over her estate. Mary was stunned and said very little. She had already experienced such loss and now she felt desolate and could not comprehend how her son could do this. She felt she had lost all her sons. She prayed to join her husband. Mary spent less than a year in a private institution in Chicago where she sought help from people on the outside and eventually ended up back in court. On July 5, 1876, Mary was now legally sane and Robert was removed as her conservator.

After the trial, Mary lived the rest of her life in exile and solitude. Her health began to fail. She and Robert lost track of one another. On July 15, 1882, Mary Todd Lincoln passed away. Her body lay in the same parlor where

Abraham and her were married. Mary was finally free. She died with 64 full trunks and \$3,000 in gold. Her estate was worth well over \$85,000, and yet Robert couldn't find a dress to bury her in.

Mary Lincoln died over a century ago and the unanswered questions still exist. Was Mary Todd Lincoln really insane? Many historians believe she was never really restored to reason. Others believe that Mary's real tragedy was that she just didn't fit the roles that women were assigned during the Victorian era. Women were regarded as passive and didn't speak their mind. Mary was not defined by those typical roles and misunderstood in her own time. Modern psychology has suggested that she suffered from manic depression, a disorder characterized by altering mood swings. In the end, she proved she could take care of herself.

Robert wished he hadn't committed his mother. For years, Robert had the only existing insanity papers from the trial. In the early 1900's a friend of Robert's witnessed him burning papers. What papers would Robert be burning? Upon Robert's death, his belongings were eventually passed to his grandson, Robert Todd Beckwith. Beckwith is credited with the emergence of the file that was located in Robert's bedroom in a locked closet. The files were neatly bound with a pink ribbon, labeled MTL Insanity File. These papers were not released until the 1980's and these are the only accurate files released, but there are papers missing. Letters that Mary wrote during 1875-1876 were missing and these years were associated with Mary's derangement. Is it possible Robert burned these letters? Beckwith certainly believes they were.

Mary's insanity seemed to stem around her eccentric spending and her inability to handle her financial matters, but does it warrant insanity? What were Robert's motives? It is claimed Robert wanted to safeguard his future and others claim that Mary was an embarrassment to Robert's political career, of which he never entered.

During Mary's time, insanity was a legal term, not a psychological one. People assumed that she lost her mind but yet she was normal on general topics and her conversation was normal. Her insanity was related to her mania for money and extravagancy and miserliness.

Insanity as it applied to Mary constituted a "mental illness that renders the person incapable of managing his or her affairs in a competent manner," according to the [Encyclopedia of Medical History](#). Mary was quite competent in handling her affairs, even though she spent extravagantly, she did so within the means of paying. She even managed to contact people who came to her defense while committed to the hospital. This resulted in her early release.

One will never be able to fully answer whether Mary Todd Lincoln was insane. She was a woman burdened with great loss through her years and faced ridicule from those who opposed Lincoln. In today's society, Mary would be regarded as a well-rounded woman who held her independence. In her own wars, she fought for her own dignity and honor. She found peace beside her beloved Lincoln.

Laurie Klinge, a student at Vincennes University, did an extensive research paper on this subject. This is a small portion of an indepth study. Materials were taken from several sources but the main source of information was taken from "The Insanity Files: The Case of Mary Todd Lincoln" by Mark Neely, Jr. and R. Gerald McMurtry.