

The Grapeshot

Newsletter

October 2023

This month's presenter:

Dr. Timothy Smith



**The Scottsdale Civil War
Roundtable welcomes**

Dr. Timothy Smith

as he presents:

***The Real Horse Soldiers:
Benjamin Grierson's Epic
1863 Civil War Raid
Through Mississippi***

Scottsdale Civic Center
Library Copper
Auditorium

October 17, 2023

6:00 pm

Doors open at 5:00 pm for
social hour, meet the
speaker, book sale, and
Civil War Video

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Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable, Inc.

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Also on YouTube

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About Our Speaker

Dr. Timothy Smith

The Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable will host historian Dr. Timothy Smith on October 17, 2023. A graduate of the University of Mississippi and Mississippi State University, Dr. Smith is a history lecturer in the Dept. of History and Philosophy at the University of Tennessee at Martin.



Dr. Smith's books have received numerous awards, including the prestigious Douglas Southall Freeman award for his 2016 monograph **Shiloh: Conquer or Perish**. His other books include **Champion Hill: Decisive Battle for Vicksburg**; **Corinth 1862: Siege, Battle Occupation**; and **Grant Invades Tennessee**. Dr. Smith's lecture will focus on his most recent book, **The Real Horse Soldiers: Benjamin Grierson's Epic 1863 Civil War Raid Through Mississippi**. Smith's presentation will examine Grierson's Raid which broke a vital Confederate rail line at Newton Station that supplied Vicksburg and, perhaps most importantly, attracted the attention of the Confederate high command. While Confederate Lt. Gen. John Pemberton at Vicksburg and other Southern leaders looked in the wrong directions, Grant moved his entire Army of the Tennessee across the Mississippi River below Vicksburg, spelling the doom of that city, the Confederate chances of holding the river, and perhaps the Confederacy itself. Dr. Smith's lecture will begin at 6pm in the Copper Auditorium located on the lower level of the Civic Center branch of the Scottsdale Public Library, 3839 North Drinkwater Blvd., Scottsdale. Doors open at 5pm.

Topic: Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable,
October 17, 2023 Time: 6:00 PM Arizona

Join the meeting on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g16CdyuRaPU>

Scottsdale Civil War Round Table Speakers & Programs September 2023-May 2024

October 17 Tim Smith **"The Real Horse Soldiers: Benjamin Grierson's Epic 1863 Civil War Raid through Mississippi"**

November 14 John Matteson **"The Concord Nurse and the Brooklyn Bard: Alcott and Whitman in Washington"**

December 12 Cory Pfarr **"McLaws and Longstreet at Gettysburg"**

January 16 A. Wilson Greene **"Leaders and Leadership at Petersburg" (2nd Annual Celebration of the Life of Ed Bearss)**

February 20 Peter Carmichael **"The Fate of a Confederate Deserter After Gettysburg"**

March 19 Steven Cowie **"When Hell Came to Sharpsburg: The Battle of Antietam and Its Impact on the Civilians"**

April 16 Eric Buckland **"Mosby's Rangers"**

May 21 Mark Bielski **"A Mortal Blow to the Confederacy: The Fall of New Orleans, 1862"**

Beginning September 2023, meeting times will change to 6:00 pm.

**Doors open at 5:00 pm for social hour, meet the speaker,
book sale, and Civil War Video**

Jon Meacham to Speak at ASU

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will host the historian and best-selling author for a discussion titled **An Evening with Jon Meacham: And Then There Was Light** on October 12, 2023, at 7:00 pm at Armstrong Hall on the Tempe campus. Additional information at thecollege.asu.edu/meacham

Letter from our President

Mark Stoler



We had a great start to the 2023-24 season with Brian Jordan's presentation. With about 80 attendees in the auditorium and another 26 on YouTube, we are back to our normal historical September attendance from pre-Covid times. As we get into the fall and winter and more of our members return to the area, we trust attendance will continue to increase. And for those of you who haven't heard Tim Smith, our October speaker, you are in for a treat!

It's also been encouraging that so far this season we've already added 21 new members or former members returning after a few years. We want to continue to build on that momentum.

If you become aware of any venues, groups, or meetings where you think there may be people potentially interested in the Civil War and the Roundtable, please let us know. We can provide rack cards with the Roundtable schedule, talking points if you would like to approach people, or if you see an opportunity one of our Board members to attend.

Finally, we got off to a good start in September with the first meeting of our History Discussion Group at its new time and location. You can read more about the group elsewhere in the Grapeshot but would like to urge members to attend. It's a lot of fun in a casual setting.

2023-24 Roundtable Officers, Board, & Committees

President: Mark Stoler (203)645-1387; stolerscwrt@gmail.com)
Vice President: Richard Cox
Treasurer: Bruce Washburn
Secretary: Hal Bliss

(All Officers serve until 5/31/2025)

Board Members

Until 5/31/2024

Tom Merrill, Pat Toftoy, David Ward

Until 5/31/2025

John Bamberl (President Emeritus), Jim Payne, Jo Roberts, Cheri Stegall

Committees

Program:	David Ward, Cheri Stegall
Grapeshot:	Richard Cox
Greeters:	John Bamberl, Jim Payne
History:	Richard Cox
News Media:	Jo Roberts
Social Media:	John Bamberl
Event Support & YouTube:	Tom Merrill
Book Sale:	Pat Toftoy
Membership:	Mark Stoler, Cheri Stegall

THE EMPTY CHAIR: THE STRANGE CASE OF ANNA ELLA CARROLL

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“Lincoln’s Lady Strategist,” the “Great Unrecognized Member of Lincoln’s Cabinet,” the “Originator of the Tennessee Campaign,” the “Woman Who Saved the Union” – all these epithets have been applied to Anna Ella Carroll. An enormous legend has been created around her, a legend she did much to perpetuate.

Was she really the “brains” behind the North’s political and military strategy during the war or merely a self-promoter? The evidence is inconclusive, and the controversy continues to this day.

Anna Ella Carroll was born in Somerset County, Maryland on August 29, 1815. She was the first child of Thomas King Carroll, a descendant of two prominent Maryland families, the Protestant Kings and the Roman Catholic Carrolls. Thomas Carroll had been a judge, a member of the House of Delegates and Maryland governor for one term.

Anna was the eldest of nine children and her father’s favorite. He had her tutored at home and trained her to be his aide, a very progressive step at the time. She read all the books in her father’s library, including his extensive collection of works on American and foreign law.

At fifteen, Anna was sent to Miss Margaret Mercer’s boarding school for girls to finish her education. Mercer was a governor’s daughter, too, and had also been taught by her father.

Her curriculum not only included subjects to prepare women for domestic duties but also courses in the sciences, philosophy, and religion. Mercer was also an abolitionist, but she did not agree with those Northern abolitionists who believed in eliminating slavery by force. Although Anna left the school after only one year, she had absorbed Mercer’s abolitionist views, including the idea that slavery should not be ended forcibly.



Undated portrait of Anna Ella Carroll

Thomas Carroll, like many planters, was land-rich but cash-poor. Moreover, he was a poor financial manager and his resources quickly dwindled. As judgments and creditors' lawsuits mounted, Carroll sold many of his slaves and finally lost his plantation in 1837.

Anna had tried to help with the family finances by opening her own school, but it closed in 1843. Probably because of the family's distressed financial condition, she decided to make her living in the world of public affairs. She never married.

By 1845, Anna was in Baltimore, where she used her father's political and business contacts to get work as a writer for commercial enterprises. Even though the profession of public relations consultant hadn't yet been invented, that was in effect what she had become. She maintained a fact-finding service for shipping and railroad companies and lobbied for them in Washington. She wrote promotional pamphlets and legislative reports as well as political editorials for local newspapers.

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Carroll entered the national political arena in the 1850s after she had successfully lobbied President Zachary Taylor to appoint her father as naval superintendent for the district of Baltimore. In 1854 she joined the nativist American Party (more commonly known as the Know-Nothing) and began writing campaign material and position papers for the party. The Know-Nothings were anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic and had been formed as a reaction to the flood of immigrants from Germany and Ireland in the 1840s. But the party was also anti-slavery and pro-labor, which ironically made it appear to some as the most progressive political party at the time.

During the 1856 presidential election, Carroll actively campaigned for Millard Fillmore, the American Party candidate. Maryland was the only state Fillmore carried. Carroll became the chief publicist for Thomas Holliday Hicks, who credited his 1857 election victory as Maryland's governor to her efforts.

When Lincoln was elected in 1860, Carroll freed her slaves and devoted her writing to opposing Southern secession and preventing Maryland from seceding. She advised Governor Hicks on compromise measures to ensure Maryland stayed within the Union. Maryland stayed in the Union largely due to Hicks's and Carroll's efforts.

In the spring of 1861, Senator John C. Breckenridge of Kentucky charged in a speech on the Senate floor that Lincoln had violated the Constitution by mustering state militias into federal service after the assault on Ft. Sumter, suspending habeas corpus and imposing martial law and a naval blockade of the South. (Breckenridge had been James Buchanan's vice-president, had run against Lincoln as a Southern Democrat and would later become a Confederate general and the Confederacy's last secretary of war).

Breckenridge repeated his speech to an audience in Baltimore and Carroll was incensed that he was attempting to stir up secessionist sentiment in Maryland. She wrote a detailed response to his speech which she printed at her own expense and circulated. The Lincoln administration was pleased with her response and circulated it widely. At the urging of the administration, she wrote two more “propaganda” pieces in support of Lincoln’s war measures, “The Relationship of the National Government to the Revolted Citizens” and “The War Powers of the Federal Government.”

In her “War Powers” document, Carroll’s closely reasoned arguments display the breadth and depth of the education in the law and politics she had received from her father. She marshaled an impressive list of legal authorities to argue that the president’s war powers as commander in chief had ample precedent in American and international law. Those powers included the authority to suspend habeas corpus. However, she cautioned the administration to avoid approving the confiscation acts being proposed in Congress. Confiscating Southern property (including slaves) as a war measure might be sound legally, but it was bad politics. If the administration’s theory was that the conflict was a “rebellion” and not a war against a foreign enemy, then the Constitution was still in force in the South and southerners were entitled to its protections. Moreover, she argued, confiscation would be a bad political signal to those southerners working for reconciliation with the Union and would do harm in the Northern and border states.

Carroll never received payment for her writing she said she had been promised. She claimed in a letter to Lincoln that an assistant secretary in the War Department had made her an oral promise to pay her \$50,000 for her work, but the secretary worked for Simon Cameron and left with him after he was cashiered as Secretary of War. Her claims for compensation fell on deaf ears thereafter.

The most controversial part of Carroll’s wartime career has to do with her alleged role as a military strategist. She always claimed, and many people still do, that she initiated and convinced the War Department to approve the “Tennessee Campaign” for invading the Confederacy in the western theater. Prior to the Tennessee Campaign plan, the War Department’s strategic thinking had concentrated on splitting the Confederacy by invading the South with a gunboat expedition via the Mississippi River. However, the plan had many logistical

and tactical problems, since major sections of the Mississippi running through the seceding states were heavily fortified and defended.

The story goes that in September 1861 Lincoln sent Carroll on a fact-finding mission to the West. In St. Louis, she met with General John C. Fremont, then commander of the Western Department. She also met with several pro-southern citizens whom she charmed into telling her what they knew about the defenses and navigability of the rivers running through the South. She then had conversations with Charles M. Scott, a riverboat pilot, who told her the government should abandon plans for a military campaign down the Mississippi and put gunboats down the rivers into Tennessee instead.

Armed with this information, Carroll submitted a memorandum to the War Department on November 30, 1861 that concentrated on a southern invasion using the relatively undefended Cumberland and Tennessee Rivers. Convinced of the logic and practicality of Carroll's plan, the War Department shifted strategy. The new strategy went into effect with the signing of Lincoln's War Order No. 1. Fort Henry was taken on February 6, 1862, and Fort Donelson fell on February 16. Ulysses S. Grant became an overnight hero.

Carroll also supposedly argued that the army and navy should concentrate next on Vicksburg and Mobile. She presented detailed plans and maps that demonstrated the utter futility of trying to take Vicksburg from the river and that only a land assault from the rear of the city would be successful. Grant ignored her advice and his march through the swamps and sloughs north of Vicksburg failed. It was only when Grant allegedly saw the wisdom of her plan and marched his army south and east, investing Vicksburg from the rear, that he was victorious.

Carroll continued to advise the administration and wrote Union propaganda during the rest of the war. After Lincoln's assassination and the first years of Reconstruction she was largely ignored. In 1870 she filed a claim with Congress for compensation and recognition for her war efforts but she was rebuffed. A bill to grant her recognition and a government pension was introduced in the House in 1881. Unfortunately, before the bill could be heard, President Garfield was assassinated and Carroll's bill disappeared from the congressional agenda. In 1885, Carroll filed a lawsuit against the government for compensation, but the United States Court of Claims held that there was no legal evidence to support her claim for military services.

By this time Carroll's health had deteriorated, as had her financial condition. She turned to her relations, the Catholic Carrolls, for help. But her earlier anti-Catholic writings for the Know-Nothings guaranteed she would receive a cool reception and she was turned down.

Many people believed her claims and tried to help her gain the recognition they felt she deserved. She became a cause for the suffragists – the feminists of the time – who claimed Carroll would have been successful in Congress if women had been allowed to vote. Sarah Blackwell's *A Military Genius: Anna Ella Carroll of Maryland* (1891) set the framework for a feminist campaign that continues to this day.

Much of the writing about Carroll over the years accepts without question that she would have been recognized for her efforts but for her gender. Writers claim that the mindset of the time would not permit the Lincoln administration, especially the War Department, to let it be known that much of the Union strategy in the West had originated with a woman. Field commanders would not have followed orders if they had known they were based on plans developed by a civilian, let alone a "lady."

One interesting example of Carroll's alleged status as a shadow member of Lincoln's inner circle, something like a cross between an urban legend and a conspiracy theory, is a painting on display in the U.S. Capitol. The 1864 painting, *The First Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation* by Francis Bicknell Carpenter, depicts Lincoln reading the Proclamation to his cabinet. At the extreme right of the



Carpenter painting of the first reading of the emancipation proclamation showing THE EMPTY chair

table around which Lincoln and the cabinet members are gathered is an empty chair containing some maps and papers. Legend has it that the maps and papers in the chair symbolize Carroll and her unacknowledged influence within the government.

But the “empty chair” legend had no documentary support. Carpenter’s own memories of painting the work make no mention of this type of “symbolism” intended. And Carroll’s supporters fail to mention how ironic the claim really is. Carroll had opposed the Emancipation Proclamation, believing it would injure Union support in the northern and border states. Instead, she favored colonization for African Americans and advocated a scheme to transport freed slaves to Central America.

Recent studies have looked at the evidence for her military claims and have reached mixed conclusions. One professional scholar believes the evidence does not support Carroll’s claim of being the originator of the Tennessee Campaign. First, there is no extant copy of Carroll’s alleged memo to the War Department. Second, Grant’s troops were at the mouth of the Tennessee River months before Carroll’s report was filed, suggesting that the strategic importance of that route into the South was already known. Third, a letter from a Tennessee resident to the *New York Times*, two weeks before her report, advocated the same strategy. Thus, this scholar concludes that Carroll’s claim as a military strategist is vastly overblown, at best. At worst, it is a myth. Other less scholarly works have supported Carroll’s claims but promise more than they deliver when trying to present new or reexamining old evidence.

Nevertheless, the Anna Ella Carroll legend keeps growing in the popular imagination. In 2010, a movie called *Lost River: Lincoln’s Secret Weapon* appeared, which followed the storyline of Sarah Blackwell’s 1891 biography and treated the unfounded claims about Carroll’s military strategy as being literally true.

Without doubt, Carroll was an extraordinary person and a role model for later generations of women. Her decision to pursue a career in the “man’s world” of Victorian America was courageous. Her political work and writings played a significant role in underpinning the Lincoln administration’s case to the people in both the North and South. Whether her contributions in the military sphere – the basis for much of her present fame – are valid remains an open question.

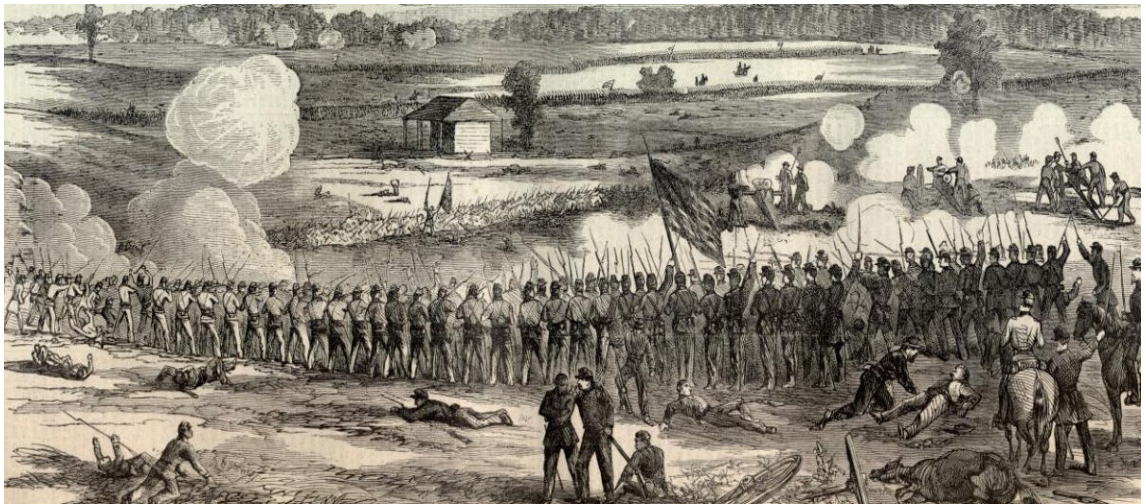
Carroll died in 1894 and is interred in the Carroll family plot at Old Trinity Church in Dorchester County, Maryland. Her epitaph reads, "A woman rarely gifted; an able and accomplished writer." The Maryland Historical Society later added the words:

"Maryland's Most Distinguished Lady. A great humanitarian and close friend of Abraham Lincoln. She conceived the successful Tennessee Campaign and guided President Lincoln on his constitutional powers."

Dick Cox is SCWRT vice president and chair of the History Committee. This article is adapted from his book *Civil War Maryland: Stories from the Old Line State* (2008).

THIS MONTH IN CIVIL WAR HISTORY

October 8, 1862. The armies of Confederate General Braxton Bragg and Union General Don Carlos Buell meet at Perryville, Kentucky. The result is a Confederate victory, but then Bragg withdraws to Tennessee leaving the Union in control of Kentucky.



Battle of Perryville, 1862

October 2023 Trivia Questions

1. What was the difference between “carpetbaggers” and “scalawags”?
2. Cadets at the Virginia Military Institute at Lexington made a name for themselves at what battle in 1864?
3. “Hell’s Half Acre” and “Franklin Road” are features of what battlefield?
4. Name the journalist who wrote what many critics claim to be the finest novel about the war; name the novel he wrote and the battle it’s thought he based his book on?

Answers on final page

SWCRT History Discussion Group

Moves To New Location

Big changes are coming for the Roundtable's History Discussion Group. After years of meeting in the Civic Center Library, we have decided to go offsite to gain more flexibility with our starting time. The goal is to make it easier for members and guests to attend. Starting in September, we will meet at the Panera Bread at 7145 E. Indian School Road, near the corner of Scottsdale Road and Indian School. There is a large room at the back of the restaurant that is suitable for our needs. It would be good if attendees could buy a beverage or light meal while attending to help thank Panera for hosting us but is not required. We will start discussions at 6:30 p.m. and end at 8:00. In addition, we will be moving from Tuesday nights back to Thursday, which was our usual day before COVID. Our discussions are relaxed and lots of fun.

Everyone is welcome. Come and join us at our new location!

2023-24 SCWRT HISTORY DISCUSSION GROUP SCHEDULE

October 26, 2023, The Role of Cavalry in the War: Which Side Used It More Effectively

November 30, 2023, The U.S. Sanitary Commission

December 2023, No Meeting

January 25, 2024, The Siege of Petersburg from the Northern and Southern Perspectives

February 29, 2024, Military Discipline During the War

March 28, 2024, Prelude to Antietam: The Battles for the South Mountain Passes

April 25, 2024, Annual Trivia Contest

May 2024, No Meeting

Scottsdale Civil War Round Table Membership Form

Please Join Us!

Your membership enables the SCWRT to donate towards civil war preservation projects and attract the best Civil War experts from around the country to speak at our meetings, from September to May! Please fill out this form and return it with your check payable to Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable. Mailing address:

Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable

7349 N. Via Paseo Del Sur, Ste 515-274

Scottsdale, AZ 85258

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Student Membership (no charge)

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Lifetime (\$500) \$ _____

Individual Annual (\$35) \$ _____

Family Annual (\$45) \$ _____

Additional donation \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

The Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable is an Arizona non-profit corporation and a U.S. 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

Website: www.scottsdalecwrt.org

All members receive our monthly publication, The Grapeshot, from Sept-May

Follow us on Facebook at Scottsdale Civil War Roundtable

WHAT'S GOING ON AT NEIGHBORING ROUNDTABLES?

TUCSON CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

November 3, 2023 – “The ABCs of the Civil War—A Personal View” Gene Bryan

December 1, 2023 – Annual Meeting. “The Reconstruction(s)” Paul Waugaman

January 5, 2024 – “Could the South Have Won the War?” Robert Presman

February 2, 2024 – “General Montgomery Meigs—Engineer, Quartermaster, Architect” Bob Consigli

March 1, 2024 – “General James Longstreet—A Magnet for Controversy” Dan Paterson (Zoom)

April 5, 2024 – “The North Carolina Campaign — 1884” Don Waugaman

May 3, 2024 – “Civil War Music” Steve Smith

The Roundtable conducts lunch meetings at 11:30am at the Hungry Fox Restaurant in Tucson.

For more information contact Elise Moore at elisemoore7@gmail.com

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

On **Nov 3-5, 2023** the San Joaquin Roundtable is holding the 2023 West Coast Civil War Roundtable Conference in Fresno, California.

<http://www.sjvcwrt2.com/events.html>

Presentations will be on the Vicksburg Campaign; speakers include Curt Fields, Jim Stanberry, and Parker Hills.

For conference program and registration contact Michael Spencer (559)304-8170.

Sun Cities and Surprise Civil War Round Table

Program Year 2023—2024

October through May on the first Tuesday each month

1:30 pm Social, 2:00 pm Program

Covenant Presbyterian Church

13601 W Aleppo Dr

Sun City West, AZ 85375

October 10, 2023	(DATE CHANGE) Alan Pitts: Slavery in the States North of the Mason Dixon Line
November 7, 2023	Steve Alexander: Battle of Shiloh or The Civil War Cinema
December 5, 2023	George Shoop: Battle of Champion Hill (Grant v Pemberton)
January 2, 2024	Hal Barber: Siege at Tubac—Apache Battle
February 6, 2024	John Cox: More Civil War Letters
March 5, 2024	James Bish: Slavery and American Colonies
April 2, 2024	Jim Terasinski: Blazing the Railroad Trails
May 7, 2024	Steve Alexander: The Laws of War and Civil War Tactics—The USA Today Verses 1861—1865

Other Online Opportunities

A series of free lectures on **Wednesdays hosted by the Civil War Round Table Congress** (CWRTC). Check out their website for topics and to register.

<https://www.cwrtcongress.org/speaker.html>

CWRT Congress Fridays With U.S. Grant for a special series with Dr. Curt Fields.

To register (free)

<https://www.cwrtcongress.org/grant.html>

YouTube Channel for CWRT Congress includes 40+ recorded past talks:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=cwrt+congress

From Chambersburg Civil War Seminars and Tours

Zoom presentations 15th and 30th of every month. Nationally known speakers.

\$5 per registration

For schedule and registration

<https://www.civilwarseminars.org/lectures>

And See Your Round Table Online

Follow the Scottsdale Civil War Round Table on Facebook

Watch past speakers on our YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfxW2cvzCbGoKebHKPZsq5A>

Visit our website <https://www.scottsdalecwrt.org/>

October 2023 Trivia Answers

1. “Carpetbaggers” were Northerners who swarmed into the South after the war and took control of local governments and businesses mostly for personal gain. “Scalawags” were southern politicians who cooperated with the carpetbaggers for their own gain.
2. Battle of New Market, Virginia
3. Stones River
4. Stephen Crane; “The Red Badge of Courage;” the battle of Chancellorsville