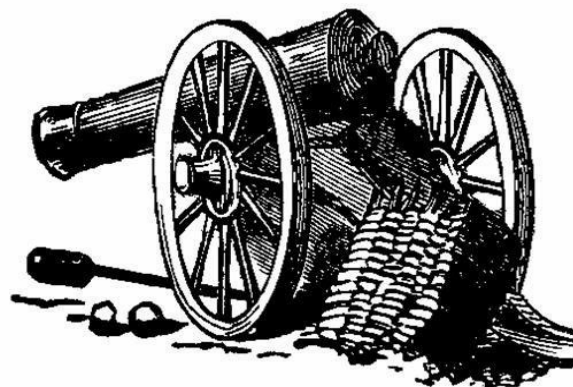


# The Grapeshot



September  
18th

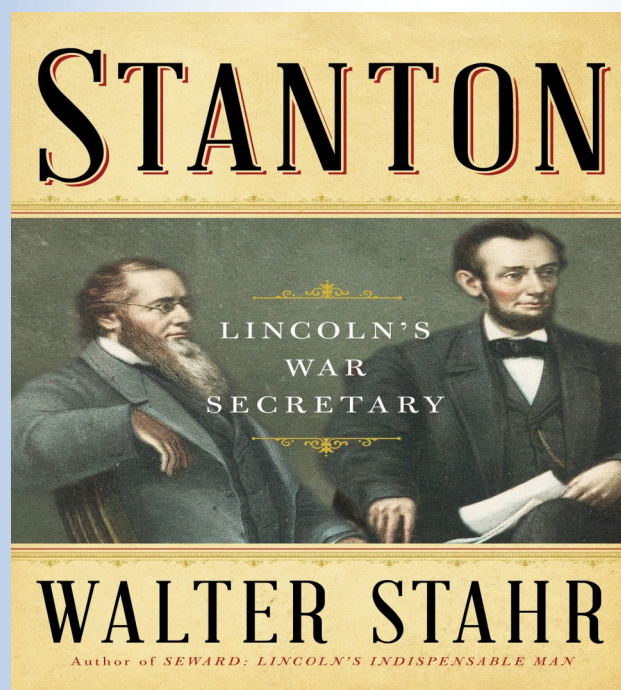
Walter Stahr



Please join us.  
Walter will present: Lincoln's  
Controversial Secretary of  
War.

Scottsdale Civic Library  
(Auditorium)

Walter Stahr is the author of *Stanton: Lincoln's War Secretary* for which he has been awarded the 2018 Seward prize for best Civil War biography by the Civil War Forum of Metropolitan New York. He is also the author of the New York Times bestseller *Seward: Lincoln's Indispensable Man* as well as *John Jay: Founding Father*, a biography of America's first Supreme Court Chief Justice. A graduate of Stanford University and Harvard Law School, he practiced international law for twenty-five years, including seven years in Hong Kong and five years with the Securities & Exchange Commission in Washington. He lives in Newport Beach, California. Walter has spoken to many Civil War Roundtables and to the Lincoln Forum in Gettysburg, Pa.



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**3839 N Drinkwater Blvd**

**Scottsdale AZ**

**3rd Tuesday of the month**

**September thru May**

**6:40 PM - 8:45 PM \$35 Annual Dues (individual)**

**\$45 Annual Dues (family)**

**EVERYONE WELCOME**

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**UPCOMING**

**MEETINGS**

**Sept. 18** Walter Stahr, *Mr. Stanton: Lincoln's Controversial Secretary of War*

**Oct. 16** Matthew Borowick, *The Court Martial of Fitz-John Porter*

**Nov. 13** Wayne Motts and James Hessler, *Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg: A Guide to the Most Famous Attack in American History*

**Dec. 11** James Hayney, *Lincoln: Lies, Legends and Myths*

**Jan. 15** Ed Bearss, *Answering Your Civil War Questions on the Civil War*

**Feb. 19** James Conroy, *The Hampton Roads Conference*

**March 19** Howard Strouse, *Civil War Atrocities*

**April 16** Frank O'Reilly, *Battle in the Balance: The Union Breakthrough at Fredericksburg*

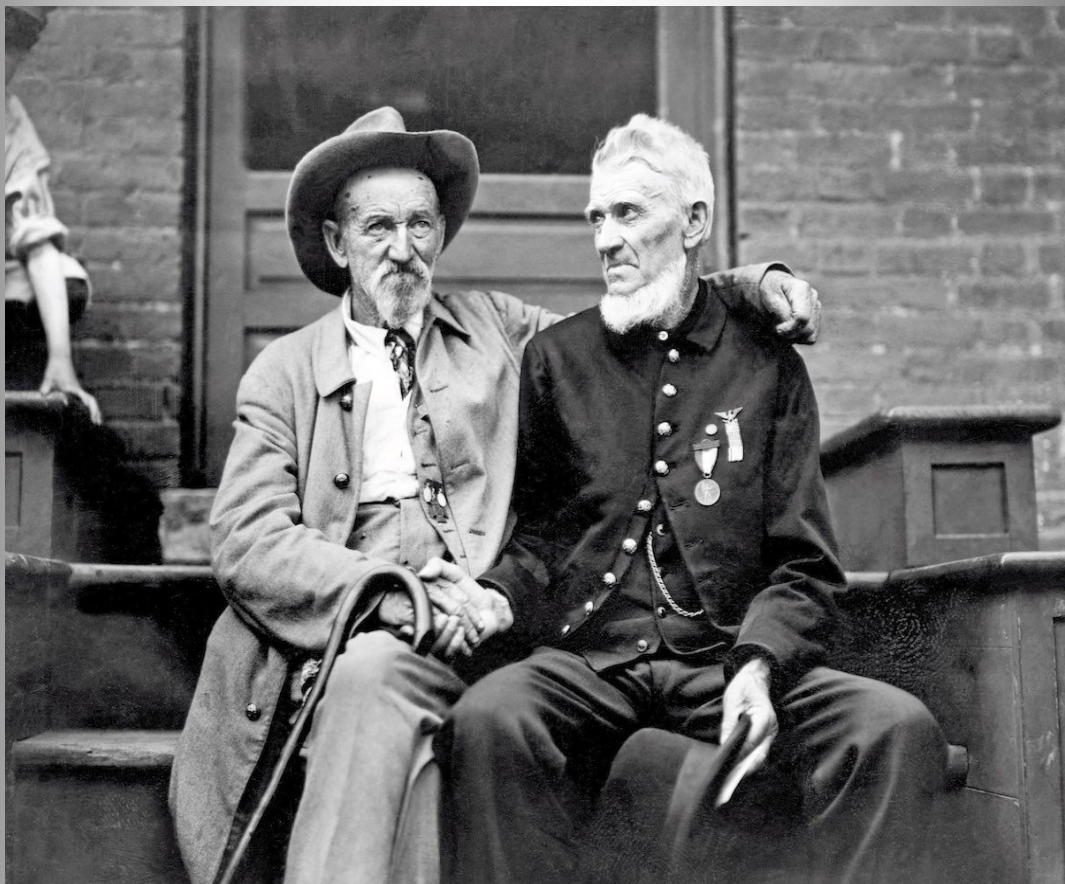
**May 21** Greg Biggs, *How Johnny Got His Gun: The Confederate Supply System*

# History Discussion Group

Please join us as we discuss:

*Secretary of War Simon Cameron*

Facilitated and presented by Gary Dorris,  
Sept. 27, 2018. Meetings are held from  
6:p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Gold Room, Civic  
Center Library, Scottsdale.



As a reminder, here is the schedule for our History Discussion Group for this new 2018/19. season. We encourage you to join us, it is very engaging with a lot of information. Not to mention it's a blast of fun.

***The discussion group meets in the Gold room at the Scottsdale Civic library from 6 P.M. to 7:30 P.M.***

**September 27th:** Simon Cameron, Lincoln's first Secretary of War. Facilitated by Gary Dorris.

**October 25th:** Military Courts of Justice during the Civil War. Facilitated by Dick Cox .

**November 15th:** Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg. Facilitated by Joey Tickle.

**No meeting in December**

**January 24th:** Civil War Trivia. Facilitated by Dick Cox.

**February 28th:** The Civil War name game: Are the various terms given to describe the war really accurate. Facilitated by Dick Cox

**March 28th:** Civil War Atrocities. Facilitated Howard Strouse.

**April 25th:** The battle of Fredericksburg. Facilitated by John Bamberl.

## **The Good Swap (for SCWRT – Article 34)**

By Gary Alan Dorris

In the Spring of 1864, on a small farm in central Arkansas, about 100 miles west of the Mississippi River and 50 miles south of Little Rock, Elam Waddell was preparing for planting season. The Civil War was raging across most Southern states and along the Mississippi River in a few key locations, but Arkansas, which had joined the Confederate States of America three years earlier, had remained relatively quiet. While there was a large Union garrison headquartered near the town of Little Rock, Elam's farm was not in a strategic military area.

The sixty-year-old farmer had moved his family to Arkansas five years earlier from Mississippi. While there is no record in Elam's own words of his position on slavery, there is a letter which reveals that a man who owned two slaves had objected to his daughter marrying into the Waddell family because Elam did not own slaves. Further, the fact that Elam's son, A.J. (Alex) was given furlough by the Confederate army to help with planting season, reinforces the supposition that the Waddell family farmed their land without reliance on the labor of slaves. The family did utilize two old matched mules which were used to pull wagons, plows, and other implements.

But, slave-holder or not, Elam Waddell was a Southerner who supported the Confederacy.

In April, 1864, Union Generals pulled nearly 30,000 soldiers from units in several states with a plan to attack the city of Shreveport, Louisiana. 10,000 men, led by General Frederick Steele, was sent from the Little Rock garrison, with over 500 wagons, hitched to several thousand army mules; a major over-land logistical trek. Elam may have heard that the Union troops from Little Rock were on the move, but their initial path toward Shreveport took them about 40 miles west of the Waddell farm; so, Elam may have thought his family's home would still not directly be in harm's way.

The Union Generals knew that Confederate scouts would learn of their destination, and believed that the Confederates would amass forces near Shreveport to defend the city. That proved to be a fatal mistake.

Instead, Confederate General Edmund Smith assembled a force of over 20,000 Confederates from Texas, Alabama, and southern Louisiana and attacked General Steele's army before they could join the other Union forces. With the original plan in disarray, the Union commander ordered a retreat back to the relative safety of Little Rock; but the Confederate army stayed in hot pursuit. At several points along the way, fierce battles erupted, often in the rain and deep mud. The Union army continued to pull back after each engagement, and, on April 29, gathered around a defensive position near Jenkins' Ferry on the Saline River.

Only a few miles from Elam Waddell's farm!

The battle of Jenkins' Ferry would be brutal. One soldier recalled that, "War is miserable enough, but with mud it is Devil's ground. Your feet are stuck. Your eyes are blinded by rain and the smoke from many weapons. You slash without seeing who you are striking. You are struck by a man you do not see. Who survives is just chance."

Early one morning, the family realized that the noise from cannons was closer than before and Alex, Elam's son who was home on leave from his Confederate unit, later recalled that it sounded like thunder. "The noise was constant and it went on all day. We had no way of knowing how it was going with our boys, so we were terribly frightened. We got no work done that day. We prayed a lot."

As the day wore on, they saw a long line of mule drawn wagons coming up the muddy road carrying wounded Union soldiers back to Little Rock where they could receive better care.

The Waddells noticed one wagon, in particular, being pulled by two mules which were obviously worn out, weak from hunger, and near death. Alex continued the story: "The driver whipped them and yelled at them but they finally just lay down in their harness. They could not get up."

The family had moved into the woods from their house to keep out of sight, probably to make sure Alex, who could have been identified as a Confederate soldier, was not arrested. They watched as two soldiers came up to the corral where Elam's two old mules were kept, took the animals back to the wagon and harnessed them; leaving the two army mules to die in the mud. The column of wagons with so many injured soldiers then moved on.

But, somehow, the two deserted army mules managed to cling to life.

Alex then said, "After dark, we managed to get them up and took them deep into the woods. Pa said, 'Boys if we can get them through the next day or two, we'll have us a good matched pair of young mules. Those old mules of mine won't last long.' We would go and feed them each day and they were as fine a matched pair as you could find."

As the years went by, Alex recalled that his father often bragged about the "Good Swap" and said; "I think we may have won out over those Yankees. They stole our mules, but we got the best of the bargain."

Of course, the wounded Union soldiers whose wagon was no longer moving due to the two exhausted Army mules, must have thought the two old stolen mules which (presumably) were able to help get them to safety and needed medical care, were a "Good Swap" as well.

Seems to have been a win-win and a "Good Swap" all around.

It is with great sadness and a heavy heart that the Round Table announces the passing of our dear and valued members. In memorandum of:

Wink Blair

Dr. Larry Brown

Ted Cunningham

John Martin Wienshienk

Paul Nichols

Marlen Polhemes