

The Charger



The Cleveland Civil War Roundtable

March 2021

vol. 44 # 5

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE MARCH 2021

MARCH SPEAKER

Our March meeting will be headlined by Dr. Tamika Nunley who will be speaking about her new book: AT THE THRESHOLD OF LIBERTY - Women, Slavery, and Shifting Identities in Washington, D.C. DURING THE CIVIL WAR. This should prove to be an interesting and informative look at an aspect of the Civil War different from our past explorations this year. I'm excited to have Dr. Nunley as she represents the younger generation of civil war scholars and is also a Cleveland area native [Euclid High grad] who has returned home after pursuing her higher education at Columbia and the University of Virginia. She is currently associate professor of History at Oberlin College [expect lyrics to school song to be forwarded by William Vodrey]. For a more complete preview of her presentation and background, please check out our website at clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com.

PETERSBURG FIELD TRIP

The delayed 2020 field trip is now simply the Petersburg Field Trip scheduled for April 30 to May 1. For travel purposes, plan on April 29 to May 2. We have a very comprehensive two days devoted to the longest campaign in US history. We are fortunate to have one of the most experienced historians in the area as our guide. In addition, we will be leveraging the Pamplin Park historic site and museum for our lunches on Friday and Saturday as well as dinner on Saturday evening followed by a night at the Museum of the Civil War Soldier. I checked out the Pamplin Park facilities in 2019 and they are state of the art in every way. We still have openings and if you have \$150 and time available, contact me at stevepcwrt@yahoo.com for information on how to sign up and make hotel reservations. There is a complete itinerary of the trip on our web-

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WEBSITE

And speaking of our website, if you want to stay up to date on all things Cleveland Civil War Roundtable, get in the habit of checking out the website on a weekly basis for articles and updates about what we are planning. Lily Korte and Dave Carrino have worked very hard over the last few months to improve the site, move old articles over from the old website, and provide a better organization of new and existing material. You can also see links to other civil war sites. In addition, if you click on a book link, it will take you to Amazon where anything you buy will result in a small percentage of the proceeds coming back to the club. Remember its clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com or just google Cleveland Civil War Roundtable.

Steve Pettyjohn, President



Whatever Happened to Lincoln's Body, (The Story Behind the Story) Paul Siedel

As most of us have been doing over the past year, yours truly has tackled some projects around the house that I've been meaning to get to but never had the time or motivation to undertake. So cleaning out my closets during the Pandemic was at the top of my "to do" list. In the back of one of these treasure troves were such things as old college textbooks and jeans which being size thirty waist I will never get into again. All went to the Goodwill. However in amongst the articles down on the floor sat an old copy of Life Magazine from February 1963! "What is this doing here and why have I held onto it for all these years," I said to myself. I took it out into the light and then it hit me. The magazine contained an account of the interview taken from the last member alive who attended Lincoln's reburial in 1901. His name was Fleetwood Lindley, and this is the story of how he came to gaze upon the face of the sixteenth president who had died thirty six years earlier.

It seems that in 1876, long before Mr. Lindley was born, there was an attempt by a gang of counterfeiters to steal Lincoln's body and hold it for ransom. The plot was discovered and foiled. by the Pinkerton detectives, but the body was never returned to the original resting place. It was buried in the basement of the Lincoln Tomb in Springfield, Illinois. Over the years the tomb itself began to list as the foundation gave way, and it was evident the structure had to be disassembled and rebuilt. There was a committee formed to accomplish this, and among the members was the father of our Fleetwood Lindley. The tomb was eventually rebuilt, and when the time came to reinter the Lincoln family coffins, the question arose as whether or not the lid of Lincoln's should be lifted to see if he was really in it, as there had been some controversy as to his body having been removed.

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The family was consulted, and it was decided to take the lid off Lincoln's coffin and identify the body if indeed after thirty six years it would be recognizable. This is where Mr. Lindley comes into the story. He was sitting in class when the school's principal came in and handed his teacher a note, she immediately came to Fleetwood and said, "Get on your bike and go right over to the cemetery you'll never see anything like this again!" Fleetwood thinking his father who he knew was on the committee and was at the cemetery thought he may have fallen ill. He rode quickly to Oak Ridge Cemetery and upon arriving he leaned his bicycle up against the wall not far from the coffins, which were laid out on sawhorses surrounded by a large crowd of around twenty three dignitaries. He then knew exactly what he was about to witness. He stood beside his father and according to Life Magazine describes the scene this way: "The room was hot and damp- an imperfect electric fan droned on and on and a single incandescent lamp produced a weird light. Suddenly voices were dropped to a low prayerlike murmur. The section of green-colored lead was lifted from above Mr. Lincoln's head and chest. A pungent, frighteningly choking smell arose and all twenty three persons crowded forward. The dark brown face was covered with a distinct rubbing of white chalk which was applied by an undertaker in Philadelphia in 1865. The features were entirely recognizable and the expression was one of sadness. The black chin whiskers were perfect, and the small black bow tie, the wart on his cheek, the coarse black hair all were unmistakable. The black broadcloth suit which the President had worn, new at his second inauguration, was covered with tiny delicate stalagmites of yellow mold. After a few moments heads began nodding-yes, it was the President, it was he, it was the President beyond all manner of doubt. The viewers backed away." Resoldering the cut-out piece was the work of a few moments, and as one spectator said "I watched the shadow of the lid fall across Lincoln's face as that face disappeared from mortal view forever."

Robert Lincoln's burial specifications were followed. The grave was dug as a twelve by twelve foot pit. On the bottom was poured six feet of solid concrete and then left to dry, the coffin was laid into a cage and laid on top of the concrete. On top of the coffin was poured another six feet of solid concrete. It seems that after the attempt of steal the body back in 1876, the Robert Lincoln family had been disturbed many times in the middle of the night whenever anyone was found snooping around the tomb after hours. This was to put an end to those night time phone calls.

Fleetwood Lindley had always down through the years said that his father had been right, he had never forgotten that day and now upon being interviewed in 1962 he was the last person alive who was at the Oak Ridge Cemetery that fateful day in 1901. It seems that after giving this interview Mr. Lindley went into the hospital for surgery. Between the time he gave the interview and the date of Life Magazine's February 1963 publication Mr. Lindley passed away and so as a postscript the editor adds at the end of the article. "Now there is not even one left of the 23 who can say, "I saw him"

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Paroles and Exchanges: Who Got the Best of the Deal? (edited)

By Brian D. Kowell 2021

In the early months of the War of Rebellion, soldiers captured by both sides were either imprisoned or paroled. If paroled, the soldiers would be released to their respective armies, honor-bound not to take up arms again until they were exchanged. This ad hoc arrangement was superseded on July 22, 1862 by a formal agreement called the Dix-Hill Cartel, named after Union General John Dix and Confederate General Daniel H. Hill who negotiated the terms on behalf of their respective governments.

In the North, special camps were established where returning Federal soldiers were held under guard to prevent them from absconding. In practice, at any given time, as many as 50% of Union parolees found their way out of these camps, considering themselves out of the war. In the South, controls were even looser. Allowed to return under parole, many Confederates went home, content to await legal exchange. Many others ignored the rules of exchange and rejoined their combat units at once, either voluntarily or under compulsion.

The Dix-Hill cartel established a detailed formula to calculate the value of any exchange. For men of equal rank, exchanges would be one-to-one. That is, one general for one general or one private for one private. If not of equal rank the following ratios applied:

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| General in Chief/Admiral | = 60 privates/seamen |
| Major General/Flag Officer | = 40 privates/seamen |
| Brigadier General/Commodore | = 20 privates/seamen |
| Lieutenant Colonel/Commander | = 10 privates/seamen |
| Major/ Lieutenant Commander | = 8 privates/seamen |
| Captain/Lieutenant or Master | = 6 privates/seamen |
| Lieutenant/Masters Mate | = 4 privates/seamen |
| Non-Commissioned Officer | = 2 private/seamen |

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The Union government was opposed to engaging in anything that suggested recognition of the legitimacy of the Confederacy and as the war progressed the cartel became more difficult to implement. The increase in captures by both sides created a logistical and accounting nightmare. Before long, the North realized that following the rules of exchange gained it less than it did the rebels. Union parolees were incarcerated (or vanished) while southern soldiers simply rejoined their units. The Federal government suspected a growing realization among its troops that capture followed by a quick parole was an easy way to avoid combat. Still another factor was the political and/or personal disputes such as those which occurred in December 1863 between the Officers of Exchange, Judge Robert Ould and General Benjamin Butler.

Earlier in the war when Butler had William Mumford executed for desecrating the American flag flying over the U.S. Treasury building in New Orleans, President Jefferson Davis decreed no Union officer taken captive would be released, paroled, or exchanged until Butler was captured or hanged. Butler was considered a war criminal by the South and as such Ould had difficulty dealing with the General. Because of these political motives, prisoners were often used as hostages or pawns for political gains or leverage.

Throughout the war the exchange system experienced many temporary interruptions, until in 1864 the Federal government suspended formal exchanges entirely. General Grant recognized that it was hard on the men held in Southern prisons but said that every southerner released on parole becomes an active soldier against the North. "If we commence a system of exchange which liberates all prisoners taken," he said, "we will have to fight on until the whole South is exterminated. If we hold those caught they amount to no more than dead men."

In addition, on May 1, 1863, the Confederate Congress declared black soldiers captured to be returned to their southern states as slaves and their white officers "deemed as inciting servile insurrection and if captured put to death."

In consequence, the number of Union soldiers in Southern prisons soared. When the exchange resumed and some of the sick and emaciated prisoners from Libby and Andersonville prisons returned North there was a public outcry to exchange the soldiers from this cruel treatment. In an election year their demands were heard. Disputes as to who was responsible for the many breakdowns would continue long after the war ended.

At Ball's Bluff (Oct. 21, 1861), the Confederates captured 550 officers and soldiers. The Federals captured one – Lieutenant J. Owen Berry of Co. G, 8th Virginia Infantry. Most of the Union prisoners were released on parole. One was Major Paul Revere (grandson of the patriot famous for his midnight ride) along with his brother and another officer. Revere, on returning from Richmond, went to Fort Warren and selected three Confederate officers of equal rank and persuaded Stanton to make the exchange. Revere would die at Gettysburg a brevet Brigadier General. There is no record of the identity of the three Confederate officers.

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Several Union officers were captured during the Federal retreat from 1st Bull Run (July 21, 1861). Among them were Colonel Orlando Willcox of the 1st Michigan Infantry, Colonel Michael Corcoran of the 69th New York Infantry and Captain James B. Ricketts of Battery I, 1st US Artillery. (Ricketts and Willcox would both rise to the rank of general). All three were confined in Libby Prison. Ricketts was joined there by his wife Fanny who was allowed through the lines and into the prison to care for her wounded husband.

The three were used as pawns in a high-stakes diplomatic standoff. When the Confederate privateer *Savannah* was captured in June 1861, the Federal government rejected the legitimacy of Captain Thomas Baker's letter of marque and wanted to hang him as a pirate. The Confederates retaliated by threatening the three Union officers among others with the same fate. Later, when Confederate emissaries to Europe were captured during the Trent affair, Schuyler Colfax of Indiana made a motion before the U.S. House of Representatives to have James Mason of Virginia confined and offered to exchange him for Colonel Corcoran. Both of these gambits failed. However, Ricketts was exchanged in January 1862 while both Willcox and Corcoran were exchanged August 19, 1862. There is no record of which officers of equal rank they were exchanged for, if any.

What always interested me was some of the recorded exchanges of the officers during the war. Much like trades in baseball today, I wondered who was getting the best of the trade or if management ever regretted making the trade.

For example, Captain John Singleton Mosby was captured by Colonel H. Judson Kilpatrick's 2nd New York cavalry at Beaver Dam Station on July 19, 1862. Mosby was exchanged on August 5th for Lieutenant C.A. Bayard of the 5th Wisconsin Infantry. (He must have been traded for one lieutenant and two privates or two future draft choices). We know who got the better of that trade. History says little of C. A. Bayard but Mosby, the "Gray Ghost", became a major pain in the Union rear until the end of the war.

On the night of March 8, 1863 at Fairfax, Va. Mosby captured the sleeping brevet Brigadier General Edwin H. Stoughton, along with 32 other prisoners and 58 horses. (Mosby was literally a pain in Stoughton's rear.) Lincoln quipped that he didn't mind losing a brigadier general as much as the horses, "for I can make a much better brigadier in five minutes but the horses cost a hundred and twenty-five dollars apiece." The U.S. Senate failed to confirm Stoughton's promotion to brigadier while he languished in the Libby prison and in May 1863, in ill-health, he was exchanged (I don't know for who) and no move was made by the government to reinstate him. Stoughton was out of options and resigned to practice law in New York City.

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Robert E. Lee's son, Brigadier General W. H. F. "Rooney" Lee was gravely wounded at Brandy Station on June 9, 1863. While recovering at his father-in-law Colonel Williams C. Wickham's house – "Hickory Hill" in Hanover County - he was captured and taken from his sickbed by Colonel Samuel Spear and his 11th Pennsylvania cavalry on June 26, 1863. While incarcerated Lee learned that his wife was dying of tuberculosis, but Union officials refused his request for parole before she died. Lee was later exchanged for Brigadier General Neal Dow – the great temperance advocate from Maine. Dow was wounded and captured on May 27, 1863 at Port Hudson. He was the highest ranked officer held by the Confederates at that time. The exchange took place on March 3, 1864 but for some reason Lee was not released from Fort Monroe until March 11.

So who made out better in that trade? Dow, his health undermined by prison life, resigned in November 1864 and returned to Maine to continue his anti-liquor campaigning. Lee returned to the Army of Northern Virginia at Petersburg. He was promoted to Major General and participated in all the cavalry operations there, rising to command all the cavalry south of the James River when Wade Hampton transferred to South Carolina. Lee helped cover his father's retreat to Appomattox where he surrendered.

When General John F. Reynolds' position was overrun on June 27, 1862 at Gaines' Mill, Reynolds found himself cut off and captured the next morning. He was exchanged in mid-August for General Lloyd Tilghman who had surrendered at Fort Henry. Tilghman went on to fight at Corinth and under Pemberton at Champion's Hill where he was killed. Reynolds fought at 2nd Manassas, commanded the Pennsylvania militia during the Maryland campaign, fought at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville. Allegedly, Lincoln then offered him command of the Army of the Potomac which he turned down when the President, Commander in Chief of all Federal forces, refused Reynolds' demand for freedom of interference from civilians in Washington DC. He remained at the head of that army's I Corps and was further entrusted by Meade to lead the I, II, and III Corps north toward Gettysburg where he was mortally wounded west of that town on July 1, 1863. Reynold's stats look a little better in that trade.

General Simon Bolivar Buckner from Kentucky was captured when he surrendered Fort Donelson to General Grant in February, 1862. While he was imprisoned for four months, General George A. McCall – Division commander of the Pennsylvania Reserves - was captured at Glendale in June, 1862. The two were exchanged for one another on August 16, 1862. McCall grew ill during his confinement in Libby prison and when released, returned home to later resign. Buckner, promoted to Major General, led a division in Hardee's Corps where his knowledge of Kentucky contributed to the Confederate success at Munfordville and Perryville. He led a corps at Chickamauga and ended the war a Lieutenant General serving under General Kirby Smith in the trans-Mississippi. I think the better of the trade goes to the Rebs.

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On July 31, 1864, Brigadier General George Stoneman was captured leading a raid designed to free the prisoners at Andersonville, Georgia. He was exchanged in October for Brigadier General Daniel Chevette Govan, who was captured at the battle of Jonesboro during the Atlanta campaign. Stoneman went on to lead a raid from southwest Virginia, through the Carolinas to Georgia where he helped pursue the fleeing Confederate President. Govan, imprisoned for only three weeks, returned to participate in Hood's ill-fated Tennessee campaign where he was wounded at Nashville. Recovered, he returned in time to surrender with Joe Johnston at Greensboro, North Carolina on May 1, 1865. I don't know who made the better trade.

Colonel August Willich was captured at the battle of Murfreesboro, sent to Libby prison, and was exchanged in May, 1863. He returned to duty and fought at Chickamauga and the beginning of the Atlanta campaign where he was wounded at Resaca. He was brevetted a Major General on October 21, 1865. No record who he was exchanged for.

Only 22 years old, Confederate Lieutenant Jessie McNeill and his partisan rangers rode into Cumberland, Maryland at 2 a.m. on February 21, 1865. He split his men into two parties and surrounded the Revere House – Headquarters of Major General George Crook - and the Barnum House (later Windsor Hotel) – Headquarters of Brigadier General Benjamin Franklin Kelly. Both Kelly and Crook were, at the time, engaged to two belles of the town – Mary T.D. Bruce and Mary Dailey, respectively. The flirtatious affair created a contemporary furor. It seems that Jessie McNeill was in love with Mary Bruce. What also makes the story more interesting is that the hotel operator of the Revere House was a man named Dailey (or Daily) whose daughter Mary was Crook's fiancé. Riding with Jessie McNeill was Mr. Dailey's son, Sergeant James Charles Dailey

Both generals were captured and whisked south to Libby prison. Ironically, also in the hotels that night but undisturbed were future Presidents of the USA, Brigadier General Rutherford B. Hayes and Major William McKinley. Secretary of War Edwin Stanton was peeved by the whole affair and also by some of the remarks that Crook made and as a result did not want to make an exchange for the two. General Grant and General Sheridan, however, wanted Crook and through Grant's influence the two generals were exchanged on March 10, 1865. Kelly later resigned on June 1, 1865. Crook returned to command a division of cavalry and participated in the final operations culminating in the surrender at Appomattox. Crook and Kelly did marry the two ladies from Cumberland, Maryland.

There is no record of who Kelly and Crook were exchanged for, but there were a number of Confederate generals in Northern prisons. Major General Edward "Old Alleghany" Johnson and General George H. "Maryland" Steuart were both captured when Hancock's Corps overran the Mule Shoe at Spotsylvania, May 12, 1864. The date of Steuart's exchange is unknown but he returned to command a brigade in Pickett's Division at Five Forks and surrendered at Appomattox. Johnson was exchanged, date unknown, and led a division in S.D. Lee's Corps in Tennessee where he was again captured at Nashville. He was released from Old Capitol prison in July 1865.

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General James Archer was captured July 1, 1863 at Gettysburg and was imprisoned for more than a year when, in ill-health, he was exchanged in August 1864. He tried to return to duty but died in Richmond October 24, 1864.

In 1864, Confederate General Samuel Jones was the commander at Charleston, South Carolina. The Yankee fleet and the surrounding Federal land forces routinely bombarded the city and its civilians. To deter the bombardment, Jones placed 50 captured Union officers in the targeted area and advised his counterpart, Major General John G. Foster, of the fact. Foster retaliated by bring 50 Confederate officers confined on the ship *Dragoon* and placed it off Morris Island between the fleet and Confederate guns. Among the officers was Generals Basil W. Duke (captured with Morgan, his brother-in-law, on his raid to Ohio), Franklin Gardner (captured at Port Hudson), Edward Johnson, Steuart, Archer, and Jeff Thompson. Also with them was John H. Morgan's brother, Colonel Richard Curd Morgan.

Jeff Thompson, known as the "Swamp Fox of the Confederacy" was captured on August 22, 1863 at Pocahontas, Arkansas. Thompson composed a poem about the Charleston stand-off:

*"If I had Sam Jones –
I'd bruise his bones
Until I'm sure he'd tire
Of playing pranks, with captured Yanks
By placing them under fire.
For here we are, brought down by sea
To try retaliation.
And curse the trick, I was made seasick
To appease the Yankee nation.*

All the generals were exchanged on August 3, 1864

Brigadier General Adam R. "Stovepipe" Johnson, whose nickname was given to him when he used two stovepipes mounted to replicate cannons to deceive the Yankees, swam the Ohio River and escaped capture with Morgan and Duke on Morgan's Raid. Later in the war at an engagement at Grubb's Crossroads near Princeton, Kentucky, he was accidentally shot in both eyes by one of his own men. He was left on the field and captured. Imprisoned at Fort Warren he was exchanged February 21, 1865. There is no record of who he was exchanged for.

Brigadier General Alfred Napoleon Alexander Duffié was captured in October 1864 near Bunker Hill, Virginia. General Sheridan had been unsparing in his condemnation of Duffié for allowing himself to be captured and requested his dismissal. That didn't happen but he wasn't exchanged until the end of February,

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1865. He may have been exchanged for “Stovepipe” Johnson but there is no evidence other than the closeness of the dates of exchange to suggest it. If they were exchanged for one another, I don’t think either side benefited in this exchange.

One of the strangest incidents of exchange was that of Major General John C. Pemberton. He was captured at the fall of Vicksburg and went home on parole until in October 1863 when he was called to Richmond by President Jefferson Davis. He accompanied Davis on his visit to Bragg’s headquarters when Bragg’s subordinates were calling for his removal from command. Davis had in mind giving Pemberton a corps command in the Army of Tennessee, but the men in the ranks would have none of it. Pemberton returned to Virginia, voluntarily took a reduction in rank to Colonel of artillery in 1864 and served until the end of the war. All this was done without Pemberton having been legally exchanged as far as I can tell.

While some of these exchanges may not have been one-for-one trades for an officer of equal rank and instead were an officer for 40 or 20 privates, if anyone can fill in blanks for any of these exchanges the author would be in their debt.

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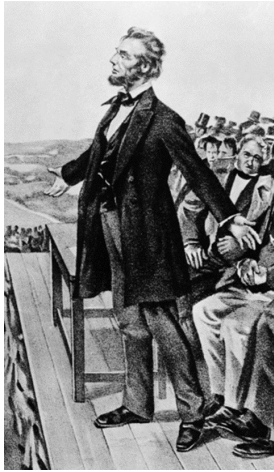


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Cleveland Civil War Roundtable Speakers Bureau



The website of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable has been undergoing a major renovation. As this renovation nears completion, one web page that is in need of updating is the Roundtable's speakers bureau. This web page consists of a list of Roundtable members who are available to give presentations to other groups. The web page also provides a speakers bureau profile for each speaker. The speakers bureau profile includes contact information (i.e., email address), the titles of the presentations that each speaker can give, and a short description of each presentation.

In order to update the speakers bureau web page, current speakers are asked to verify their information on the web page. The speakers bureau web page can be accessed from the home page of the Roundtable's web site by clicking on the "Speakers Bureau" link that appears in the row of links at the top of the home page (www.clevelandcivilwarroundtable.com).

Current speakers should send an email to Dave Carrino (dac5@case.edu) and tell Dave if they want to remain in the speakers bureau or be removed from the speakers bureau. If necessary, current members of the speakers bureau can make revisions to their profile, including updating contact information. Any revisions should be done as a Microsoft Word document which is emailed to Dave.

Also, if any Roundtable members want to be added to the speakers bureau, please let Dave know by emailing a Word document containing a list of presentations with presentation titles and short (one- or two-sentence) descriptions. Current members of the speakers bureau and any Roundtable members who want to be added should contact Dave in the next one to two weeks, so that the speakers bureau web page can be finalized expeditiously. Thank you.

March Speaker: Dr. Tamika Nunley

Dr. Tamika Nunley is an Associate Professor of American history at Oberlin College and Conservatory. Her research and teaching interests include slavery, gender, nineteenth-century legal history, digital history, and the American Civil War. At



Oberlin, she created the History Design Lab which allows students to develop scholarly projects that involve methodological approaches such as digital humanities, public history, creative nonfiction, and curatorial practices. Her book, *At the Threshold of Liberty: Women, Slavery, and Shifting Identities in Washington, D.C.* (University of North Carolina Press) examines African American women's strategies of self-definition in the contexts of slavery, fugitivity, courts, schools, streets, and the government from the founding of the nation's capital to the Civil War. Her work has been supported by the Andrew Mellon and Woodrow Wilson foundations as well as the American Association of University Women.

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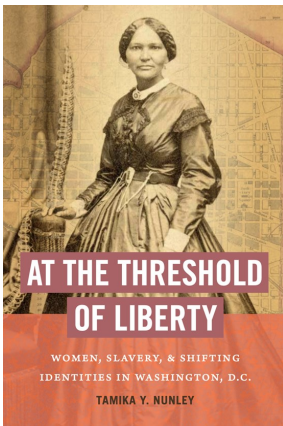
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Dr. Nunley, a 2003 Euclid High graduate, spent over six years diving into historical archives and court records while researching for her first nonfiction book, "At the Threshold of Liberty: Women, Slavery & Shifting Identities in Washington D.C." Nunley spent several years out of state pursuing her master's degree from Columbia University in New York City, and her doctorate from The University of Virginia, before returning home to the Cleveland area to become an associate professor at Oberlin College in the history department. Now residing in Cleveland Heights, Nunley said she loved growing up as a Euclid resident and student, and high school left lasting impressions on her. "Growing up in Euclid was really special, and attending the high school was wonderful," she said. "My life has been really positively impacted by the teachers at Euclid High School. It has a special place in my heart."

MARCH 2021 ROUNDTABLE MEETING:



AT THE THRESHOLD OF LIBERTY - Women, Slavery, and Shifting Identities in Washington, D.C. DURING THE CIVIL WAR

Dr. Tamika Nunley will be with us on March 10 to discuss highlights from her first book At the Threshold of Liberty. It tells the story of enslaved and free African American women's claims to liberty in the nation's capital.

The capital city of a nation founded on the premise of liberty, nineteenth-century Washington, D.C., was both an entrepot of urban slavery and the target of abolitionist ferment. The growing slave trade and the enactment of Black codes placed the city's Black women within the rigid confines of a social hierarchy ordered by race and gender. At the Threshold of Liberty reveals how these women--enslaved, fugitive, and free--imagined new identities and lives beyond the oppressive restrictions intended to prevent them from ever experiencing liberty, self-respect, and power.

Consulting newspapers, government documents, letters, abolitionist records, legislation, and memoirs, Tamika Y. Nunley traces how Black women navigated social and legal proscriptions to develop their own ideas about liberty as they escaped from slavery, initiated freedom suits, created entrepreneurial economies, pursued education, and participated in political work. In telling these stories, Nunley places Black women at the vanguard of the history of Washington, D.C., and the momentous transformations of nineteenth-century America.

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March 10th Meeting

Program: Speaker: Dr. Tamika Nunley

Discusses highlights from her first book At the Threshold of Liberty.

The program will be conducted via Zoom so be on the look out for a Zoom invitation a day or two before February 10

The session will start at 7 p.m.

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