

The Civil War on The Circle: The Pre-History of the Columbia Club

Dr. Dan Miller, Historian-In-Residence



Civil War on The Circle: Club Pre-History

Welcome, and thank you for attending

Introductions

Our set-up for today...

What has war been in your experience?



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My Construct: Time in Life is a River

1. Flows in one direction—ahead

2. More than water

3. A focus is artificial

4. Multiples without repetition

5. % Change & % Continuity

6....a 32-second look...



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The concept of “pre-history”

Before writing and written documents for research

Anthropology and archaeology

Combined with various theories (chaos, game, and so on)

But what if we adapted it for the Columbia Club?

It is the time preceding the Club's formal founding and formation in 1889

It is the pertinent and relevant experiences of people and places ultimately associated with the Columbia Club

What if you tried to understand the American Founding of 1776 without any knowledge of pre-1776 events and people?

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The city's design heritage – a mini-Washington DC for a state within a nation

Government is the founding industry

Reflected in the term “polis”

Circles have a special place in that design

The formal name of the Circle is also revealing

Governor's Circle

“Church Circle” is the informal nickname – 5 in all

Of a park, the pigs, and an abandoned home

This is one River current of the Club's Pre-History



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Friday, April 12, 1861

First Presbyterian Church, next door

Benjamin Harrison is a young elder

Working in a basement office

A man descends the stairs...

“They've fired on Fort Sumter”

Harrison sits and stares, alone, in the candlelight

What do you suggest he do in his relationship with his father?



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Saturday, August 31, 1861

The Democratic Party of Indiana holds its convention

Nominate candidates and write platforms

Toward the end of the meeting a group of people emerge...

...with threats of violence and intimidation

Demand Democratic Party members take an oath of allegiance – tense agreement, Militia Act's oath

Marion County Sheriff William Wallace leads 100 men into Governor's Circle to maintain civic order

Is a loyalty oath a part of war?

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Wednesday, July 23, 1862

Benjamin Harrison has been a Lt. Colonel for two weeks

He is organizing a 1,000-man unit, the 70th Indiana Regiment, comprised of 10 100-man companies

The Circle is the scene for a 8pm rally

The sole purpose is to continue the process of filling the 70th Indiana, set to depart sometime in the next several weeks

Special speakers will be featured

This is the Circle's Indiana Regiment

“Remember _____!”

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The Indiana Album: Randy McWethy Collection

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Wednesday, May 20, 1863

75,000 people in the city at the State Capitol

The Democratic Party convention

US and Militia troops stationed throughout downtown

Infantry and artillery located at Governor's Circle

Dispute over whether cannon were aimed west on Market St.

Clement Vallandigham

The military draft

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1864

Captain James Bracken of Hancock County meets with former members of his cavalry unit on Governors Circle in his campaign to become a Democratic State Senator

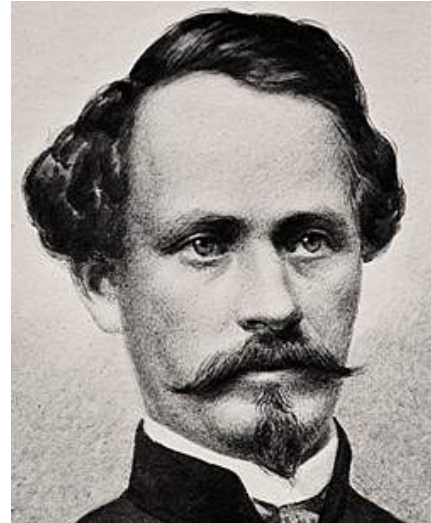
Republican anti-Sons of Liberty (abolition?) hold a disappointing meeting in Governor's Circle – few participate

General Alvin Hovey is keynote speaker at a rally – Reserve Military Band - strong support for Lincoln and urges harsh treatment toward Southern sympathizers

Lambdin Milligan et al on trial

What is the reality of “home front” in time of war?

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The Club's Founders shared a common event and experience 24 years before Club Founding

This event and experience was not the same for all Founders

This event and experience is the defining adult moment of the Club's Founding spirit, Benjamin Harrison

The Walkshop—you're invited

Thank You!

