

THE NATIONAL
CIVIL WAR
MUSEUM
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

November 1, 2016

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Dr. William Blair

The NCWM Welcomes Dr. William Blair as he presents “The Violent Side of Reconstruction”

(Harrisburg, PA) – [The National Civil War Museum](http://www.NationalCivilWarMuseum.org) announces historian Dr. William Blair will open the Museum’s newest exhibit; *Reconstruction: The Unfinished War* on Wednesday, January 18, 2016 • 5:30pm-7:30pm. The evening will begin with refreshments, followed by a presentation, *The Violent Side of Reconstruction* by Historian Dr. William Blair and a tour of the new exhibit with Museum Curator Brett E. Kelley. The cost is \$10.00 per person and is free to Museum members.

About the Presentation: Dr. William Blair presents *The Violent Side of Reconstruction*. This talk deals with 4,000 cases of atrocities compiled by the Freedmen's Bureau in a record known as "Murders and Outrages." Republicans and Democrats entered fierce debate after the war over whether former Confederates had accepted defeat and maintained peace. To overcome the charges of political bias, Republicans began tapping the reports from military officers with the Freedmen's Bureau concerning the lack of justice in the South. The cases of atrocities included murders of freedmen and the assassinations of white people, which verified an insurgency by former Confederates to maintain white supremacy. The data that was collected was used by Radicals like Senator Henry Wilson to justify the legislation in 1867 that installed martial law and military occupation in the South.

About the Author: Dr. William Blair, Walter L. and Helen P. Ferree Professor of Middle American History and Director of the Richards Civil War Era Center, is a historian of the Civil War era, focusing primarily on the home front and political culture in the middle nineteenth century. His work has focused on the construction of Confederate identity during the war and the use of ceremonies such as Memorial Days and Emancipation Days after the war to reinforce and contest political identities.

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www.NationalCivilWarMuseum.org

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Dr. William Blair is currently working on a book-length project that examines the uses and misuses of treason during and after the Civil War. As director of the Richards Civil War Era Center, I work with student interns, sponsor symposia, and serve as the organizer for a biennial conference with the Society of Civil War Historians. I also am the founding editor of The Journal of the Civil War Era," published by the University of North Carolina Press.

For a complete listing of other events at the Museum, please visit the Museum website:
www.nationalcivilwarmuseum.org or call 717.260.1861.

About The National Civil War Museum: Opened in February 2001, The National Civil War Museum, a member of the Smithsonian Institution Affiliations Program, is a non-profit private educational institution dedicated solely to the American Civil War. It is one of the largest museums in the world which interprets the entire American Civil War from a military and civilian perspective. The Museum preserves and exhibits some of the nation's treasures, including General Robert E. Lee's personal Bible, and more than 24,000 artifacts, documents and photos. Admission to the Museum is \$12.00 for adults, \$11.00 for seniors, and \$10.00 for students with reduced rates for children and families. The Museum offers complimentary ample parking. For more information, please call 717.260.1861, or visit the Museum's website at www.nationalcivilwarmuseum.org. Connect with us!

Facebook.com/TheNationalCivilWarMuseum; Twitter.com/NCWM; and FourSquare.com/NationalCivilWarMuseum

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