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The Hoofs and Guns of the Storm: Chicago's Civil War Connections (Great Lakes Connections: The Civil War)

Arnie Bernstein

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Chicago: The Northern Center of the Civil War

While America's Civil War was fought on Confederate battlefields, the northern center of Chicago played numerous crucial roles in the Union's struggle towards victory. The Hoofs and Guns of the Storm takes you deep into this 19th-century whirlwind.

—Go inside the "Wigwam" where a well-orchestrated political strategy led to dark horse Lincoln becoming the 1860 Republican Party presidential candidate, an unexpected nomination with profound impact on American history.

—Explore the profound impact the city had on Abraham Lincoln and his family. Find out the story behind Mary Todd Lincoln's exile to Chicago following her husband's assassination. Was she truly insane or did her eldest son, rising businessman and attorney Robert Todd pull strings to have his mother put away? The real tale is filled with Shakespearean complications and intrigue, a tragic story of a family destroyed in the aftermath of the patriarch's murder.

—Lincoln's skill as a lawyer, his public appearances, and his funerary services in Chicago's City Hall, are all detailed in this comprehensive section devoted to America's 16th president and his connections with Chicago.

—Meet other important figures in Chicago's Civil War history, including Lincoln's political and personal Senator Stephen A. Douglas; Joseph Medill and Wilbur F. Storey, two newspaper publishers with very different takes on the war effort; Mary Livermore, a tireless force and fundraiser for the Northern cause; Elmer Ellsworth, a Chicagoan and the Union's first casualty; freed-slave and abolitionist John Jones; and George F. Root who gave the Union troops and civilians inspiration through song.

—Delve into the seamy side of Civil War-era Chicago, a notorious hotbed of sex, gambling, and street-corner shootouts. Go backstage at the popular McVicker's Theater, where an actor named John Wilkes Booth gave blunt and prophetic opinions on President Lincoln.

—Witness the hell on earth that was Camp Douglas, a corruption-riddled POW camp just south of the city where more than 6,000 Confederate prisoners died of disease, torture and inhumane conditions.

—Was Chicago ever in danger of a Confederate attack? The surprising answer combines cloak-and-dagger plotting with a ragtag band of woefully incompetent conspirators.

—Chicago abounds with Civil War memorials and statues. Here's an opportunity to see these monuments in a new light, as Bernstein details the history behind these city landmarks.

—Get a detailed guide to Graceland, Rosehill and Oak Woods, three Chicago cemeteries with considerable Civil War links. —Packed with historic and contemporary illustrations, an appendix of Civil War resources, and the reprint of a revolutionary tract demanding equal rights for African-Americans.

See modern Chicago through the prism of its Civil War past.

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