



EAST TENNESSEE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Lecture by Civil War Historian Edward L. Ayers & Exhibit Preview

Tuesday, June 4, 2013, East Tennessee History Center

- 6:00-7:15 p.m. *Preview opening of new exhibition: Of Sword and Pen: Pivotal Moments in Civil War Tennessee*
- 7:30 p.m. *Lecture: "The Surprises of the Civil War," Edward L. Ayers, Ph.D.*

Knoxville, Tenn., May 13, 2013 – The turning points of the Civil War and some of the “big surprises hidden in plain sight” will be the focus of a lecture by a Dr. Edward L. Ayers at 7:30 p.m., June 4, at the East Tennessee History Center. Dr. Ayers is the president of the University of Richmond and an East Tennessee native. The lecture will be preceded by a preview reception for a new exhibition, *Of Sword and Pen: Pivotal Moments in Civil War East Tennessee*, from 6:00-7:15 p.m.

With tens of thousands of books, documentaries, and articles on the Civil War, surely there can't be anything new to learn? Not so, says Dr. Edward L. Ayers, pointing out that some of the biggest aspects of the war are still surprising, citing slavery and the true turning points of the conflict as examples. To really understand the war, he advises, “You have to put yourself in the mindset of Americans at the time.”

One of the country's foremost Southern scholars and a native of Kingsport, Tennessee, Edward L. Ayers is the president of the University of Richmond in Virginia. The award-winning author's many books include *What Caused the Civil War: Reflections on the South and Southern History*, *The Crucible of the Civil War: Virginia from Secession to Commemoration* (edited with Gary Gallagher), and *The Valley of the Shadow: Two Communities in the American Civil War--The Eve of War*. Dr. Ayers helped found the Virginia Center for Digital History and was its director until 2001. With two former colleagues at the University of Virginia, he began in 2008 hosting a radio call-in program, “BackStory with the American History Guys.”

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The lecture is made possible by the support of Shelby and Carrington Montague of Lookout Mountain, Tennessee.

The lecture will accompany the preview opening of the exhibition *Of Sword and Pen: Pivotal Moments in Civil War East Tennessee*, featuring important documents from the Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, as well as artifacts from ETHS and other collections to chronicle momentous turning points in our history.

About the ETHS

Established in 1834, the East Tennessee Historical Society is widely acknowledged as one of the most active history organizations in the state and enjoys a national reputation for excellence in programming and education. For 179 years the East Tennessee Historical Society has been helping East Tennesseans hold on to our unique heritage-- recording the events, collecting the artifacts, and saving the stories that comprise the history we all share.

The historical society pursues its education mission through publications, lectures, conferences, school programs, museum exhibits, and heritage programs such as the popular First Families of Tennessee and the new Civil War Families of Tennessee. The East Tennessee History Center houses the staff and programs of the East Tennessee Historical Society, the Museum of East Tennessee History, the Calvin M. McClung Historical Collection, and the Knox County Archives.

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