



# The Dispatch

Newsletter of the

## Capital District Civil War Round Table

P.O. Box 14871, Albany, NY 12212-4871

CDCWRT's web site: [timesunion.com/communities/cdcwrt](http://timesunion.com/communities/cdcwrt)

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for us to be here dedicated to the great  
task remaining before us that from these  
honored dead we take increased devotion  
to that cause for which they here gave  
the last full measure of devotion that  
we here highly resolve that these dead  
shall not have died in vain; that this  
nation, <sup>under God</sup> shall have a new birth of freedom;  
and that this government of the people, by  
the people, for the people, shall not perish  
from the earth.

In February 1991, the second page of a draft of the Gettysburg Address was unveiled as a sixth copy. It was discovered, folded in a book titled, *The Lincoln Memorial 1865*. A dab of paste had attached it to the missing first page in the upper left-hand corner. Lincoln stayed in the home of Judge David Wills on November 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, 1863. A documented letter from the Judge to Lincoln requested "the original Manuscript of the Dedicatory Remarks delivered by you last Thursday." The Judge also asked Lincoln to certify the paper. Lincoln obliged, and endorsed it on the reverse side, dating it "Nov 19, 1863." Of the previously known five other copies, numbers 2 through 5 were known to have been written after the occasion. The First Draft, or Nicolay copy, is the earliest version, with the first page written on White House stationery. The Wills draft is clearly folded; the Nicolay draft has faint fold marks. The Wills draft may have been the actual draft Lincoln unfolded and read from on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 1863.

## February Meeting

Friday 02/07/03

Guilderland Library  
Route 20 Western Ave.  
Guilderland, NY

SOCIAL HOUR	6:00 PM
BUSINESS MEETING	7:00 PM
PROGRAM	7:30 PM

### CDCWRT MEETING

The February meeting of the CDCWRT will be held on Friday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, at the Guilderland Public Library. The social hour will start at 6:00pm, with a business meeting at 7:00pm. The scheduled program will start at 7:30.

This meeting should ease some of the disappointment after the decisions to not allow "Gods and Generals" be shown at Proctor's Theater. Our speaker will be author and park historian, Frank O'Reilly. Those who went on the fall trip will vividly remember Frank's learned command of the history of the battles of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, as well as his candlelight presentation of "Stonewall" Jackson's last days at Guinea Station.

Frank's topic will be, "A Place Worse Than Hell: Lincoln and the Fredericksburg Campaign." Lincoln, by signing into law the Emancipation Proclamation, created one his most enduring achievements in the winter of 1862-63. But as commander-in-chief, he had just entered into the gravest crisis to date for his administration. When he heard of the disaster at Fredericksburg, he lamented, "If there is a place worse than

Hell, then I am in it." Lincoln refused to dwell publicly on his losses, blaming his reverses obliquely on circumstances, and never acknowledging his culpability in creating those circumstances ---driving his armies into winter campaigns, against logistical odds, unfavorable conditions, and all for some tenuous political fodder to offset a hostile Congress that took its seat in December. Instead of strengthening his ability to face growing opposition, the dismal campaign compromised Lincoln's position and became an embarrassment.

We will try to have copies of Frank's newly released book, Fredericksburg, available for autographing after the meeting. A portion of the purchase price will be contributed to the Chancellorsville Battlefield Preservation Fund. So even though you may be able to buy the book cheaper on Amazon.com, commit your money to preservation!

We will also have the remainder of our used Civil War magazines at the bargain price of 3 for \$1.00.

### JANUARY MEETING

A full house was present at the January meeting to hear Round Table members, Maxine Getty, Larry Arnold, and Mike Sperenza talk at Potpourri Night. Maxine came well prepared, considering she discovered she was presenting when her newsletter arrived!! A superb collection of cavalry swords was on display. This was followed by a bounty of snacks and cookies that were provided by Stan Bergman.

### BOARD MEETING

The January Board Meeting was held on January 20<sup>th</sup>. The treasurer's report noted \$3865.09 in the regular checking account, and \$6834.63 in the preservation account. The First Night stamp cancellation netted

\$583.00 with kudos for Sue Knost and the RT members who manned the station at Albany City Hall. A contingent of 58 members has signed up for the April Full Duty Banquet in Vermont. The Board was apprised of the decision by Warner Brothers and Ted Turner to cancel the showing of the movie, *Gods and Generals*. Program Chair, Sue Knost, outlined programs into the early Fall of 2003.

A letter from the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT) was read, outlining the opportunity to purchase 875 acres of crucial land at three battlefields --- Aversboro in North Carolina, Mine Run in Virginia, and Ft. Blakely in Alabama. The combined market value is \$3.1 million dollars, but using matching funds and joining with other organizations, CWPT can save this land for \$125,346. In effect a one-dollar donation is leveraged into a 24-to-1 match.

## UP-COMING EVENTS

**February 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>, Saturday & Sunday, the Covermania Stamp and Cover Show** will be held 10:00am to 4:00pm at the I-90 Quality Inn. The RT will do a special cancellation. Over 60 dealers of stamps, cover, postcards and other ephemera will be on hand for this event. It's a great way to spend a bitter cold or snowy weekend. Volunteers are asked to contact Joe or Sue.

**February 22<sup>nd</sup>, Saturday, a conference on the Underground Railroad in Albany** will be held at St. Rose College. For information please call 432-4432.

**March 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>, 2003 is the Spring Muster at Gettysburg.** The cost of the trip is \$199 per person, double occupancy, and includes bus transportation, room, tours, and banquet at the Dobbin House. Our tour guides are Licensed Battlefield Guide, Dr. Charlie Fennell and GNMP Historian, Scott

Hartwig. Bus driver tip is NOT included in this price. February 7<sup>th</sup> is the last day for your \$75 reservation. The balance is due February 21, 2003. Please mail checks to the CDCWRT mail -box, marked GB TRIP.

**March 14<sup>th</sup> is the monthly meeting at the Guilderland Library.** There has been a speaker change. Tentatively, Ray Wemple will speak on the Signal Corps at Gettysburg.

**The Full Duty Banquet in Montpelier, VT on April 12, 2003 is the annual event of several Round Tables in Vermont and New Hampshire. Remember that this will replace our regular April Meeting!!!!** This year's guest speaker will be **Ken Burns**. As of this date we have 51 travelling by bus, and 7 by auto. There will be a special tour of the Capitol building and its Civil War artifacts. On the return trip we will see gravesites of several famous Civil War soldiers (O. O. Howard and Stannard) at Lakeview Cemetery in Burlington.

A short stand-by list is developing, in case of a cancellation. This year there will be four big prizes for the raffle: two Don Troiani prints, *"Fire on Caroline Street"* donated by CDCWRT, and *"Jackson Is with Us"* donated by the Civil War Preservation Trust. Additional prizes include a 3-night stay at the Brickhouse Inn B&B in Gettysburg, and a reproduction musket. Additional raffle tickets will be available at the door. The bus cost **\$44.00**, and the hotel room is **\$50.00** per person, double occupancy. Attendees have already paid a \$50 deposit. Joe Stracuzzi will be happy to accept payments in two installments between now and March 31, 2003 This should be a great weekend. Deposits should be mailed to Joe Stracuzzi, 3 Bradbury Street, Clifton Park, NY 12065.

May 9<sup>th</sup> is the monthly meeting at **Guilderland**. Janet Bucklew will speak, in costume, about the Sisters of Charity at Gettysburg.

May 10<sup>th</sup> is the 125<sup>th</sup> NYSVI bus trip to **West Point**. If you are interested, contact President Joe Stracuzzi for details.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Q. We all know who rode Traveler and Old Baldy, but try your memory skills on the following horses. Who rode, at various times, the following horses?**

Chancellor-	Hero-
Charlemagne-	Sam-
Cincinnati-	Skylark-
Don Juan-	Little Sorrel-
General-	Virginia-

**Q. John Wilkes Booth killed Abraham Lincoln. If George Atzerodt had carried out his assignment and killed Vice-President Andrew Johnson, who would have become president?**

There's a prize for this one!

**FREE**, including delivery, approximately 50 years of *National Geographic*. Contact member, Mr. Luman Rundell, 966-8585.

## DUES! DUES! DUES! DUES! DUES!

Remember that starting January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003, the yearly dues have been increased to **\$25**. This was announced several newsletters ago. The increase is to cover increased operating expenses

## VIDEO LIBRARY

We are looking for a volunteer member of the Round Table to manage our video library. It would involve keeping track of video tapes that would be lent out to RT members. If you are interested, please contact President Joe Stracuzzi.

## GETTYSBURG MAGAZINE

The January 2003 issue of *Gettysburg Magazine* will be available at the February meeting for the unbelievable price of \$5.00. Dr. David Cross of Vermont, is President of his roundtable, and is an organizer of the Full Duty Banquet in Montpelier. **He also has an article in this magazine issue!!**

## JOE'S JOTTINGS

*By Joe Stracuzzi*

We lament the loss of the premiere of "*Gods and General*" and the fact that we will never know if what we were planning would have been the "knock your socks off" event we thought. The positive results were the offers of help we received from our local Civil War community. "Thank you" to all of the organizations and individuals who came forward with offers to help make it a great event. The Proctor's Theatre staff was most cooperative with us during our roller coaster ride. Perhaps in the future we will be able to do a Civil War movie weekend.

My, and I'm sure this should read OUR, major lament is the fact that we did not have the opportunity to make a lot of money to support our preservation activities. This is truly the sad part of all this. We truly lament not the lost opportunity, but the acreage we would have been able to save.

At our board meeting, it was voted to donate \$5040 to the Civil War Preservation Trust and their 24:1 matching fund. By doing this, our donation grows to \$120,960, and enables CWPT to purchase a total of 35 acres of endangered battle sites at Averbosboro, NC, Fort Blakely, AL and Mine Run (or Payne's Farm), VA.

Our Gettysburg trip for March 7-9, is a go, and there are still seats available. Send in your \$75 deposit to make a reservation. The full price is \$199 per person, double occupancy. Remember, you do NOT have to be a member of the CDCWRT to partake

in any of our activities. If you get our complimentary newsletters, or hear about us from a friend, feel free to join us.

## FREDERICKSBURG LETTER

This is the continuation of the letter that was started in the December 2002 newsletter. It has never been published before. The writer describes the aftermath of the battle, but we do not know on which part of the Fredericksburg battlefield he fought. He also describes the beginning of the ill-fated "Mud March." The common soldier knew immediately it was doomed.

*Falsmouth, Va. Jan 20<sup>th</sup>, 1863*

*You were right in supposing that I should not complain if I did not see another battle. I did not want to go home without having a brush with them and told the Col. so one day on picket above Washington, - but I don't think I should (—) not to meet them again till July. However, I don't want to go home whipped, even if I have to pitch in again.*

*Jim Ship is in a Hospital in Washington. He has not even written to one of the Milford boys to let them know where he is. His brother writes that he has had several examinations, but has not made out to get his discharge yet. He don't intend to fight the rebs and never did. Gen. Burnside reviewed our Army Corps the other day. I might have told him that you didn't want him to take us into any more fights but don't suppose it would (have) done any good. There were two darkies present at the review. It was a long time before I could make out what they were — so long since I have seen one. I hope to be on hand for that pic nic next summer. I have an extra amount of writing on my envelopes to minus their weight. If you —*

*in the summer I shall get it some time no matter where I go.*

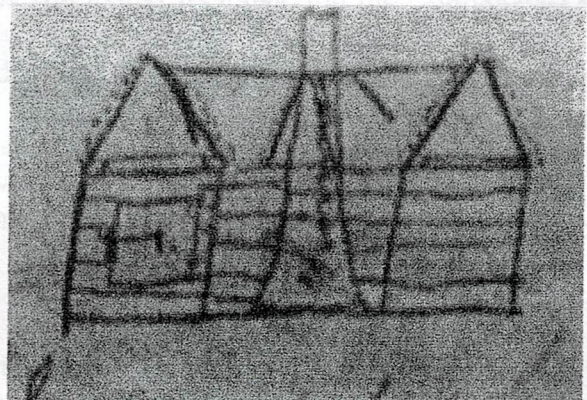
*From your sincere friend, Edwin*

*Wednesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>*

*It commenced to rain last night and has been raining ever since and it looks as if it might the next four weeks. It will seriously affect (the) military in this vicinity. I hope we shall not have to march in this rain and mud. Gen. Hooker's division marched yesterday. It is rumored that we are to support the batteries this side of the river. The artillery are moving past while I am writing. Should we remain in our huts, I will tell you how we live in my next (letter), but if we march from here, I shall have poor facilities for writing. I would suggest with a great deal (?—) that the next time you have any mince pie to spare, you send it to the Rappahonnock where it will be appreciated.*

*My regards to Ellie and the other members of the family. Edwin*

Edwin included a scrap of paper with the letter, which shows his hut. His grammar in this letter has been excellent. I believe he initially meant to write "drawn by an artist" but changed his mind and added "special" after he had already written "drawn by an —"



*Our home — drawn by an special artist on the spot.*

*Length inside*     10 ½ feet  
*Width*             6 ½ “  
*Height*             4 ½ “  
*Length of rafters* 5 “

*The dots indicate where the shelter tents are buttoned together.*

On the back of the envelope he wrote:

*January 1863  
Coming off the Battle field  
At Fredericksburg*

## **OLD ABE: Mascot, 8<sup>th</sup> Regt. of Wisconsin Volunteers**

*By Joan Huguenin of Brownington, VT*

Old Abe was a bald eagle who was captured by Chief Sky, a Chippewa Indian in 1861. The Indian leader had shot the mother eagle and captured two helpless eaglets. The other eaglet did not survive. Mrs. Dan McCann exchanged a bushel of corn for the young eagle, and the family made a pet of it. When the men of Wisconsin were called up to join the war, the son, Dan McCann brought the eagle to a militia company forming in Chippewa Falls. They had no need of an eagle.

McCann then went to Eau Claire, and the company organizing there, was interested. Miles Jeffries, a tavern owner, donated \$2.50 for the purchase of the eagle and the bird had a new home. The bird was still immature and would not have a white head until he was four years old. Old Abe was attached to the 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment until 1864 when a general reorganization took place. The Eagle Brigade became the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> Division, XVI Army Corps.

Old Abe participated in 37 battles and skirmishes mostly along the Mississippi,

including the battle of Vicksburg. He was carried into battle tethered to a perch alongside the regimental colors. Of the six bearers, three were shot out from under him. When the regiment was mustered out in 1864, Old Abe went to the State Capitol in Madison, where he remained until his death at the age of twenty in 1881.

Old Abe spent much of his sixteen years of retirement in a cage in the basement of the Capitol when not traveling about the country in parades, reunions and at rallies. He was very popular on such occasions as he would spread or flap his wings and scream in reply to the cheers of old veterans who passed by. Old Abe was the most popular attraction in Agricultural Hall at the 1876 Centennial in Philadelphia. He was trained to peck carte-de-visite-sized photos of himself, thereby “autographing” them while customers watched in amazement. These autographed portraits sold for \$1.00 each. He appeared at the Old South Church in Boston and helped to raise money for its preservation and historic preservation in general.

His death in March of 1881 was in part due to being subjected to an “enormous volume of black and offensive smoke,” created by a small fire in a storage area containing paints and oils. Even in death, the stuffed bird attracted attention, being exhibited at reunions and exhibitions. Teddy Roosevelt was pleased to see the famous bird he had read about as a schoolboy, when he visited Madison in 1903. Unfortunately the original was destroyed by fire in 1904. A replica eagle was acquired, and it remained on display in the Capitol Museum until recently.

**Spring Muster at Gettysburg**  
**Day Two: The Union Strikes Back**  
**Understanding Terrain and Command**  
**March 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup>, 2003**

\$199 per person, double occupancy  
Includes bus transportation, room, tours, and luncheon at the Dobbin House  
Dinner Banquet at the Cashtown Inn with Speaker – Dr. Charles Fennell  
Tour of the National Civil War Museum, Harrisburg PA

**Our trip is confirmed so mark the date on your calendar!**

A full itinerary with banquet selections will be available at the meeting on Friday.

We will leave Crossgates on Friday at **7 am** and travel to our first stop at the National Civil War Museum, Harrisburg PA, for an overview and welcome by the curator.

Our Friday evening banquet is at the Cashtown Inn, with presentation by Dr. Charles Fennell, Licensed Battlefield Guide and renowned expert on Culp's Hill to set the stage for the command decisions for Lee and Meade, down to significant Corps command, to examine the mindsets of both sides. He will examine Sickles' position and its effects. Our three tours are all battlewalks to fully understand how the terrain affects the command decisions, and ultimately the outcome of the battle, by walking the ground in the footsteps of these famed regiments.

On Saturday, we will first examine the Union position of Berdan's Sharpshooters with Wayne Motts. After lunch at the Dobbin House, Scott Hartwig, GNMP Historian, will lead the afternoon battlewalk on Confederate Brigadier General Cadmus Wilcox's action on the late afternoon of July 2<sup>nd</sup>, and how he prepares for the third day. A more detailed explanation will be available at the meeting.

On Sunday, Dr. Fennell rejoins us on Culp's Hill for the Union reaction to the Confederate attack. We will explore the evening action, the Union defense and its use of terrain to understand the rout of the XII Corps and assess its impact on the Confederate left (Wilcox's position). As a special treat, we will go to the area where the 157<sup>th</sup> NY was, as presented by our own member Larry Arnold at the January meeting.

We will close out the day by visiting the latest sculpture by Ron Tunison, the Women's Memorial at Evergreen Cemetery, where we will have our group picture taken. There will be time on your own to see the Visitor's Center, check out the bookstore, and view the Cyclorama. In midafternoon, we will depart Gettysburg and arrive in Albany around 9 pm.

Bus driver tip is NOT included in this attractive price of \$199 per person. **Reserve now by sending in your check for \$75 at the meeting on Friday February 7<sup>th</sup> – a few spots are still available!** Balance will be due by February 21, 2003, but you can also pay at the meeting to reserve your spot.