

The Dispatch

Newspaper of the

CAPITAL DISTRICT CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

PO Box 14871 Albany, NY 12212
www.cdcwrt.net



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Pictured above is the March 26, 1864 wood cut from Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper. It depicts the presentation of Colors to the 20th U.S.C.T. in New York City just 8 months after the draft riots. A vast crowd of over 100,000 New Yorkers of every color and class thronged Union Square. The 20th Regiment was the first all-black unit raised in the Empire State. Blacks from the state had joined other units, including the 54th and 55th Massachusetts. The 20th was sponsored by the Union League Club, in particular the wives of members. Governor Horatio Seymour had opposed the raising of black regiments, fearing alienation of his Irish-American supporters. He later backed down under moral and political pressures. New York State provided only 4125 African-Americans for the U.S.C.T., fewer than Ohio (5092) and Pennsylvania (8612), and far fewer than Tennessee (20,133) and Kentucky (23,703). Blacks in New York were more likely to be free men, while black from southern states were more likely to be freed slaves. The legacy of the 20th had more to do with symbolism than sacrifice. The unit lost 283 soldiers, but only 1 died of wounds received in action. (Read more in The Civil War in 50 Objects by Harold Holzer)

SEPTEMBER MEETING
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2013

WATERVLIET SENIOR CENTER
1541 BROADWAY
WATERVLIET, NY

"Third Regiment United States Color Troops: Fatherly Guidance or Paternal Abandonment"

Katherine Hawkins

Social Hour	**6:00 – 7:00 p.m.**
Business Meeting	**7:00 – 7:15 p.m.**
Presentation	**7:15 – 8:15 p.m.**
Discussion	**8:15 - -8:45 p.m.**

CDCWRT MEETING

Our first meeting after the summer break will be at the Watervliet Senior Center on Friday, September 13, 2013. We hope that you are not superstitious! Our very special guest speaker is Katherine Hawkins. Her topic is one which I do not recall ever having been discussed in our Round Table's history. Her presentation is entitled, **"Third Regiment United States Color Troops: Fatherly Guidance or Paternal Abandonment."**

With standards set high for white officers in leading black soldiers, a paternalistic attitude prevailed. Considering this and additional factors, including the exigencies of the service, officers' conduct, and varying levels of discipline regarding enlisted men, were these standards maintained, was the tragic denouement to the regiment's honorable service inevitable or preventable, and where does responsibility rest?

Katherine Hawkins, a great-granddaughter of Lewis Merwin Hobbs, chaplain of the 3d USCT, graduated in 1995 with a BA from the University at Albany, and since 2007 has edited a monthly Civil War roundtable newsletter. She is an honorary member of the 3d USCT Reenactors and is writing a book on the regiment. Katherine is also a member of the GAR Museum and Library, and the Abner Doubleday CWRT.

Ever since a childhood visit to the Gettysburg battlefield, Katherine has maintained and nurtured an interest in the Civil War. That affection carried through until the 1990s when, while engaged in undergraduate studies, she received several boxes of family letters and other documents, including a diary dating from 1851.

Knowing that her great-grandfather had served in that war, as had four great-granduncles, Katherine began delving into the military record of Lewis Merwin Hobbs, the Chaplain of the 3rd U.S. Colored Troops. This initial research opened new avenues of investigation leading to a full examination of the regiment itself and its individual members.

While Reverend Hobbs did not join his regiment until December 1863, he did journey to the Gettysburg battlefield in the summer of 1863. Carrying supplies to the wounded as part of the Christian Mission Society, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, branch, he also found time to roam the fields of carnage.

"I was there three days, one week after the battle," Hobbs said. In an 1895 letter to his youngest son, he described how dead soldiers still occupied trenches, and decaying horses by the hundreds lay about. He said, "the stench was awful."

Thousands of wounded soldiers, both Union and Confederate, were quartered in churches, houses, barns and tents. The scene, he wrote thirty years later, "is indelible in my mind."

Katherine's undertaking the writing of the 3rd U.S. Colored Troops is to honor her great-grandfather and those with whom he served.

UP-COMING EVENTS

The following list of up-coming events is provided to help Round Table members plan their long term calendars. These are events that involve our Round Table, especially events that provide opportunities to raise funds for our preservation activities. Some events may change as the year progresses, so members should check the list monthly. Details of Sesquicentennial Civil War events can be found on the web-site: www.nycivilwar150.org.

On September 14-15, 2013, Saturday and Sunday, there will be a Civil War Weekend in Saratoga, in the downtown park. Re-enactors and exhibits will be present. The CDCWRT will have an information tent and will be selling cachets , books and t-shirts. Any members who would like to assist for either day should contact Matt Farina.

On September 15, 2013, Sunday, there will be a Sojourner Truth Celebration at 2:00 p.m. at the junction of route 9W and 1 River Road in Ulster Park, NY (5 miles south of Kingston on route 9W). This is where Sojourner was ensalaved from 1810-12. There will be an unveiling and dedication of an historical marker, newly composed music, including a Fanfare and music sung by Johns Hopkins University's Peabody Conservatory soprano, Pamela Poulin, a living history program and a car pool driving tour of Sojourner sites.

On October 11, 2013, Wayne Mahood will talk about the 126th NYVI, in a presentation entitled "Fight All Day, March All Night."

On October 12, 2013 Alvin Parker will provide a living history program about Ely Parker, a Seneca Indian who was U.S. Grant's secretary. The program will be at Grant's Cottage in Wilton at 1:00 p.m.

On November 1-3, 2013, the CDCWRT will sponsor the 1863 Sesquicentennial Conference at the NYS Museum.

On Thursday, November 7, 2013, from 5:30 -8:30 p.m. the Hudson Mohawk Industrial Gateway Gala will take place. The honoree for 2013 is the Watervliet Arsenal. Those wishing to attend should go to the website www.hudsonmohawkgateway.org for details. The event will be held at the Franklin Terrace Ballroom in Troy.

On December 13, 2013, the CDCWRT will again meet at Siena College to see a movie, inspired by Stephen Crane, and produced locally in Albany. It is entitled: *Thirst: A Civil War Story.* It is about two Union soldiers who deserted. They are driven by thirst, but the well they discover is guarded by Confederate soldiers.

CHRISTMAS CLUB

If you started your conference "Christmas Club" with $30 last June, you would now have $90. Add $30 for September and you are almost there. So no excuses about the conference being too expensive!

BOARD MEETING

A Board Meeting was held on July 15, 2013. The Treasurer reported $3248.25 in the regular account and 2968.50 in the Preservation Account. Matt Farina reported on the 150th Gettysburg cancellation and sales, along with mail orders. The gross from these sales was $9238.50. The CDCWRT will net around $5000 after expenses for envelopes, stamps, and tables. There are also residual cachets which are now all paid. Sales of this stock will be clear profit.

NYS MILITARY MUSEUM

The NYS Military Museum in Saratoga has opened the Sesquicentennial Civil War Exhibit after two years of preparation. Those who have seen the exhibit are impressed. We would urge members to view the exhibit this fall if you are leaf peeping up north.