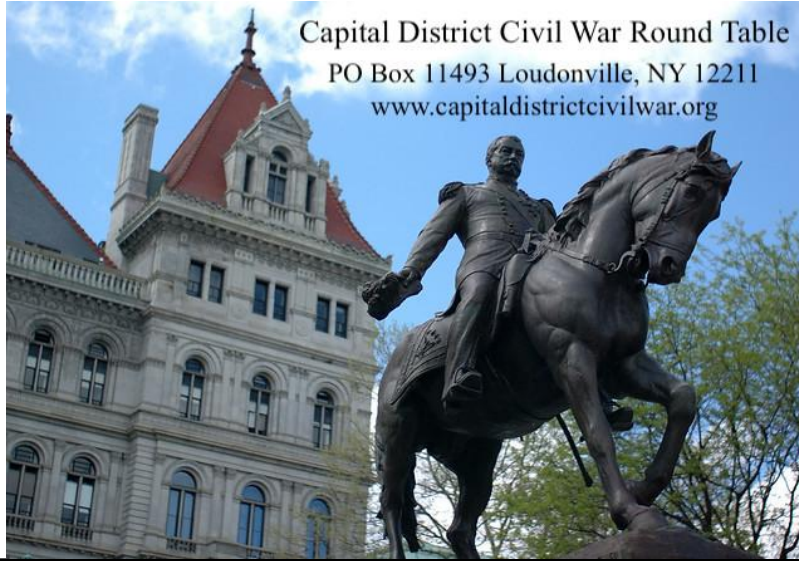


# The Dispatch

Volume 38, Number 7

September 2021



## The Influence of Women



Homer, Winslow, "Our Women and the War, from Harper's Weekly, September 6, 1862," Digital Public Library of America, <https://dp.la/primary-source-sets/women-in-the-civil-war/sources/813>.

## SEPTEMBER MEETING

Friday, September 10, 2021

### IN-PERSON MEETING AT THE WATERVLIET SENIOR CENTER

#### RON KIRKWOOD

Women to the Rescue at the  
Spangler Farm, Gettysburg

Social Hour	6:00 p.m.
Business Meeting	7:00 p.m.
Presentation	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Questions & Answers	8:00 – 8:30 p.m.

*Ronald is a native of Dowagiac/Sister Lakes, MI, and a graduate of Central Michigan University, where he has returned as guest speaker to journalism classes as part of the school's Hearst Visiting Professionals series. Ronald has been a Gettysburg Foundation docent at The George Spangler Farm Field Hospital Site since it opened in 2013, and he explores the Gettysburg battlefield dozens of times a year. Ronald and his wife, Barbara, live in York. They have two daughters, two sons-in-law, and three grandchildren.*

**MASKS ARE REQUIRED,  
REGARDLESS OF  
VACCINATION STATUS.**

*The regular meeting of the CDCWRT will be held at the Watervliet Senior Center on Friday, September 10, 2021.*

*Our guest speaker is historian Ron Kirkwood who will speak on the women at the Spangler farm in Gettysburg. Ron spoke to us in September, 2019 on the Eleventh Corps field hospital in Gettysburg.*

*Ronald D. Kirkwood retired after a 40-year career as an editor and writer in newspapers and magazines including USA TODAY, the Baltimore Sun, the Harrisburg (PA) Patriot-News, and the York (PA) Daily Record. Ronald edited national magazines for USA TODAY Sports and was NFL editor for USA TODAY Sports Weekly. He has won numerous state, regional, and national awards for his writing and editing and he managed the copy desk in Harrisburg when the newspaper won a Pulitzer Prize in 2012.*

## IN REMEMBRANCE

We've lost four long-term members recently: Gene Gore, Ray Wemple, Mary Heisinger, and Nancy Farina.

Gene was a life-long history buff with a passion for his family's history. Ray was an expert and lecturer on the Signal Corps and Lowe's balloon corps. Mary served on the Board of the Greene County Historical Society, and Nancy had a long career in the physical therapy field and was the wife of Dr. Matthew Farina, a fellow CDCWRT member and past Board member.

We invite members to share some of their fond memories of Gene, Ray, Mary, and Nancy during the social hour of our September meeting. Any donations to the Round Table in their name will be donated in their memory.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

October 8: Phil Vitiello's program will focus on Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain.

November 12: Chuck Viet presents "Verge of the Great War."

December 10: Pat Schroeder will present "Don't Touch That: the Appomattox Collection."

## THANK YOU, MEMBERS

The Round Table wishes to thank Matt George and Leo McGuire for their donation to the Preservation Fund.

## SHE RANKS ME

from Ken Burns' *The Civil War*, p. 148-149.

*"The suffering of men in battle,' a Union relief worker wrote, 'is nothing next to the agony that women feel sending forth their loved ones to war.' North and South, women struggled to fill in for missing men as best they could, working in mills and factories, running the family farm. 'Our hired man left to enlist just as corn planting commenced,' wrote an Iowa woman, 'so I shouldered my hoe and have worked out ever since. I guess my services are just as acceptable as his.'"*

*"Women also looked for other ways to further the war effort. In Concord, Massachusetts, Louisa May Alcott begged a friend to forgive her for not writing sooner -- 'too occupied violently sewing patriotic blue shirts.' So many socks were knitted in Charleston, May Chestnut noted, that*

*'one poor man said he had dozens of socks and just one shirt. He preferred more shirts and fewer stockings.'"*

*"In the North, the United States Sanitary Commission and other private relief agencies provided ways by which women's efforts could be efficiently channeled. When the war began, Mary Livermore, a Chicago minister's wife, left her children in the care of a housekeeper and went to work full-time for the commission, organizing midwestern volunteers into three thousand chapters and, when Grant's army was threatened with scurvy, send so much food south, one reporter wrote, 'that a line of vegetables connected Chicago and Vicksburg.'"*

*"Mary Ann Bickerdyke, a widow and Sanitary Commission agent, traveled with the Union army through four years and nineteen battles, assisting at amputations, brewing barrels of coffee, washing clothes, rounding up cattle and chickens and eggs to feed the grateful men whom she called her boys, and who called her 'Mother Bickerdyke.' When a surgeon asked her on whose authority she acted, she answered, 'On the authority of Lord God Almighty, have you anything that outranks that?' She was the only female visitor William Tecumseh Sherman allowed in his camps; asked why he made an exception in her case, he answered simply, 'She ranks me.'"*

*"Southerners, too, tried to care for their soldiers, but 'we had no Sanitary Commission...' a Confederate veteran remembered. 'We were too poor; we had no lines of rich and populous cities closely connected by rail, all combined in the good work of collecting and forwarding supplies and maintaining*

**costly and thoroughly equipped charities. With us, every house was a hospital.”**

**“Only four Confederate states managed to organize formal relief organizations -- and each of them was careful to provide only for its own sons: Georgians looked out exclusively for Georgians, Alabama blankets warmed only Alabamians.”**

**“More than three thousand northern women served as army nurses, despite bad pay, worse conditions, and the frequent hostility of the men with whom they worked. Just five days after Sumter fell, Dorothea Dix, fifty-nine-year-old crusader for the mentally ill, volunteered her services to the Union. She was put in charge of all female nurses employed by the armies.”**

**“Tireless, unbending, and so autocratic that one woman called her ‘Dragon Dix,’ she barred any applicant she thought interested only in romantic adventure -- even nuns were sometimes turned down. ‘No woman under thirty years need apply to serve in government hospitals,’ she insisted. ‘All nurses are required to be very plain-looking women. Their dresses must be brown or black, with no bows, no curls, no jewelry and no hoop skirts.”**

**“‘Working on her own hook she does good,’ George Templeton Strong wrote after one stormy meeting with her, ‘but no one can cooperate with her, for she belongs to the class of comets.’ Nevertheless, under her relentless guidance, the standard of care was improved and, despite the bitter rivalry of male colleagues, she stayed at her**

**post throughout the war without pay.”**

**“Southern women worked as nurses, too, despite criticism that it was unladylike for them to care for ‘ruffians.’ ‘A woman’s respectability must be at a low ebb,’ wrote one southern nurse, ‘if it can be endangered by going into a hospital.”**

**“Sally Tompkins of Richmond and a staff of only six nursed 1,333 wounded men in her private hospital -- and kept all but 73 of them alive, a record unmatched by any other Civil War hospital, North or South.”**

**“Some northern women took a still more active role. It has been suggested that as many as four hundred of them disguised themselves as men and became soldiers. Patriotism moved many; some simply could not bear to be away from husbands or sweethearts; still others enlisted for more complex psychological reasons. After Chickamauga, Confederates sent a disguised and wounded woman captive back to her unit with a note: ‘As the Confederates do not use women in war, this woman, wounded in battle, is returned to you.”**

## **BOARD UPDATES**

The Executive Board met via Zoom on June 21 and August 12. Treasurer Steve Muller reported that the Operating Account has \$3,125.26. The Preservation Account has \$3,355.31.

Several board members participated in a living history event at the Brunswick library in July. We raised \$139 for preservation through the sale of shirts

and books, along with a raffle of a donated model cannon and carriage.

The Board also approved a \$500 donation to the American Battlefield Trust for a 53-to-1 match for land in Tennessee.

## **BUFORD'S VIEW**

by Matt George

I just returned from the Savas-Beatie Book Meet Up in Gettysburg. I took some interesting tours of the battlefield, heard some great talks and possibly added two speakers for the fall of 2022. There were 70-80 people attending this free event. The Savas-Beatie Book Publishing Company was hoping to sell the books of their attending authors. Of course, I could not resist the temptation and bought four books. The best battlefield tour was given by Eric Wittenburg on Buford's actions on day one of the battle. I really wish we could have Eric as a speaker. However, he is a lawyer who lives in Ohio and it would be expensive for our group to cover his costs.

There were two other speakers who were enthusiastic about speaking to us. The first was Brad Gottfried who is most well-known for his books on the Maps of Gettysburg and Maps of Antietam and other battles. Officially he is a certified NPS Guide at Antietam. The other possible speaker is Dwight S. Hughes, a Civil War Naval History author and speaker. He gave an interesting talk on the Monitor – Virginia battle at Hampton Roads. However, he has never been to Troy. It would be great to get him together with Steve Muller, our own expert on the

Monitor.

Sometimes speakers come from unexpected places. Just before I left, I was in a local coffee shop called Bagels and Bakes where I have coffee almost every morning. I mentioned to one of "regulars", a lady named Claire, that I was traveling the next day to Gettysburg. She then told me that one of her husband's ancestors lived and died in Gettysburg and had fought in the Civil War. His story was amazing. When Jubal Early traveled through Gettysburg on June 26, 1863 on his way towards Harrisburg, he kidnapped a young seventeen-year old blacksmith named John Etine Hamilton for two days, intending to force him to shoe Confederate horses. He escaped and was so angry he decided to join the 195th Pennsylvania and fight against his former captors. After the war he lived, died and was buried in Gettysburg on January 18, 1927. Unable to cross the Susquehanna River at Harrisburg, Jubal Early returned to Gettysburg when Lee consolidated his forces to fight in the battle July 1-3. Claire has agreed to be one of our potpourri speakers on January 14, 2022.

Our February speaker is scheduled to be Matt Watros from the western part of New York State. He will be speaking to us about the historical novel he wrote about his real life ancestor Gerald R. Ballard who fought in the Civil War as a member of the 143 rd N. Y.. The book is entitled "Gabriel – A Novel of the American Civil War". It was published by the Troy Book Makers which is associated with Market Block Books in Troy. However, I first heard about it from the Newsletter of the 154th N. Y. sent to me by Mark Dunkelman.

**CDCWRT  
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*Created in 1984, the Capital District Civil War Round Table is an incorporated non-profit educational organization. Meetings are held monthly in various locations in the Capital District. This newsletter is published eleven times per year. Annual dues are \$35. The purpose of the organization is to promote, educate, and further stimulate interest in, and discussion of, all aspects of the Civil War period.*

Contact the Capital District Civil War Round Table through  
our website: [www.capitaldistrictcivilwar.org](http://www.capitaldistrictcivilwar.org)  
or email: [cdcwrt@hotmail.com](mailto:cdcwrt@hotmail.com)

#### **THE OFFICERS**

<b>President</b>	Erin Baillargeon	<b>Vice-President</b>	Nick Thony
<b>Treasurer</b>	Steve Muller	<b>Secretary</b>	Rosemary Nichols
<b>At-Large</b>	J.J. Jennings	<b>At-Large</b>	Mark Koziol
<b>At-Large</b>	(open)		

#### **THE NONCOMS**

<b>Program</b>	Matt George	518-355-2131	Jbuford63@aol.com
<b>Membership</b>	Erin Baillargeon and Steve Muller		
<b>Refreshments</b>	Dean Long and Luanne Whitbeck		
<b>Webmaster</b>			
<b>Education</b>	Matt George		
<b>Newsletter</b>	Rosemary Nichols and Erin Baillargeon		