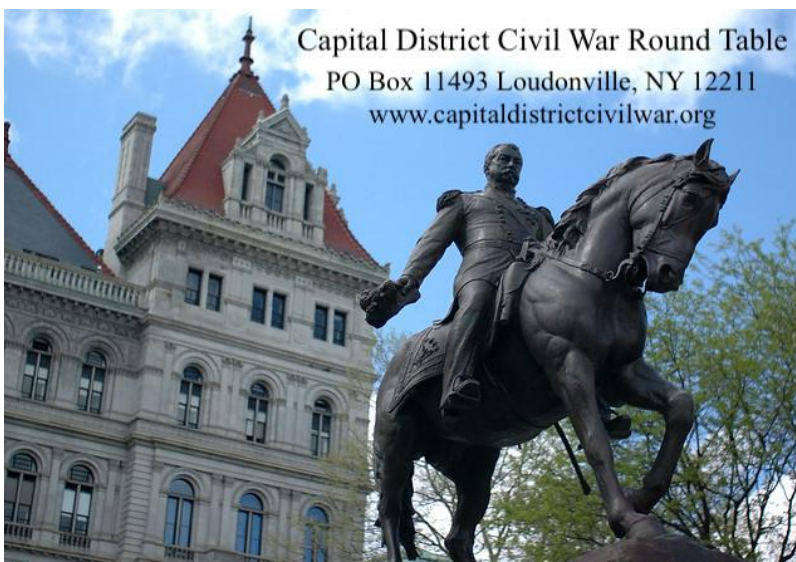


The Dispatch

Volume 38, Number 8

October 2021



JOSHUA LAWRENCE CHAMBERLAIN



Led by Lt. Colonel Joshua Chamberlain, the 20th Maine played a decisive role in the Union victory at Gettysburg. Running low on supplies and ammunition, the 20th held its position on Little Round Top, preventing the Confederates from flanking the Union line. Image from the US Census Bureau.

https://www.census.gov/history/www/homepage_archive/2018/july_2018.html

OCTOBER MEETING

Friday, October 8, 2021

IN-PERSON MEETING AT THE WATERVLIET SENIOR CENTER

PHIL VITIELLO

Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain: A
Life Well Lived

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 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. |

Our guest speaker is Phil Vitiello who will speak on Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain. Starting from the early years of his youth, to the war years, and to after the glory, this presentation includes the story of Chamberlain's first Medal of Honor lost for years and recently found. Also rare photos of Chamberlain with little known facts of this great American will be included.

Phil Vitiello is the current Vice President of the Civil War Round Table of South Central Connecticut, a charter member of the "Friends of the Hunley," a lifelong member of the Titanic Historical Society and a charter member of TIGHAR — The International Group for Historical Aircraft Recovery. A lifelong resident of New Haven, he is a graduate of the University of New Haven, majoring in law enforcement administration.

Phil has been a Civil War historian and re-enactor for more than forty years,

studying and visiting Civil War eastern theater battlefields. He spoke to us in September, 2020 on the Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley.

MASKS ARE REQUIRED, REGARDLESS OF VACCINATION STATUS.

We will not have refreshments available.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATIENCE

In September our plan for an in-person meeting was scuttled when our speaker wasn't able to travel to the Capital Region. Thankfully, Ron Kirkwood was able to present through a Zoom presentation. Last minute changes like this may become common as the pandemic continues. We will do our best to inform members via email as soon as possible when meeting plans change. We will also do our best to either live-stream or record in-person presentations to share through Facebook or Zoom. Thank you for your understanding as we navigate the challenges of having both in-person and virtual presentations.

IN REMEMBRANCE

We planned to share memories of recently deceased members Gene Gore, Ray Wemple, Mary Heisinger, and Nancy Farina at our September meeting. That did not happen in the virtual format, so we will try again during the social time before this month's meeting. Any donations to the Round Table in their name will be donated in their memory.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

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

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

January 14: Potpourri night of "amateur" speakers, arranged by Matt George

THANK YOU, MEMBERS

The Round Table wishes to thank Matt George for his donation to the Preservation Fund.

"DEAR FATHER"

from the George J. Mitchell Department of Special Collections & Archives, Bowdoin College, Joshua L. Chamberlain Collection, M27. <https://learn.bowdoin.edu/joshua-lawrence-chamberlain/documents/1865-02-20.html>

"During the winter of 1864-1865, Chamberlain's parents strongly urged him to remain in Maine and to take a position as Collector of Customs in Bath. They argued that it would be better for him to stay closer to home in order for his health to be fully restored and to be closer to his family. The following is Chamberlain's response to his family, in which he voices a sincere desire to return to the army and fulfill his obligations to his country. Chamberlain speaks to the soldiers he left back in Virginia as well as a desire not to miss out on 'the decisive moment.'"

Brunswick

Feb. 20th, 1865

Dear Father,

I appreciate fully the view you + Mother take of the Collectorship offered me. It is natural and proper advice, + such as I certainly expected. But my own consideration of the subject has not, as yet, brought me to favor the proposal any more than at first.

I owe the Country three years service. It is a time when every man should stand by his guns. And I am not scared or hurt enough yet to be willing to face to the rear, when other men are marching to the front.

It is true my incomplete recovery from my wounds would make a more quiet life desirable, + when I think of my young + dependent family the whole strength of that motive to make the most of my life comes over me.

But there is no promise of life in peace, + no decree of death in war. And I am so confident of the sincerity of my motives that I can trust my own life + the welfare of my family in the hands of Providence.

And then as far as mere human probabilities go, my position + prospects in the Army were never better. I am now among the senior officers of my rank. And after all I have gone through, I am not willing to back out just at the decisive moment, + leave the rewards + honors of my toil + sufferings to others. I had a great deal rather see another man in that Custom House, than see another next commander of the 1st Division.[1] Nor will my claims be any less for an

honorable post in civil life after still longer + better service in the Field, nor for having declined advantageous offers for myself personally, rather than to abandon our cause in the hour of its need.

At all events I must return to the army, and if I find I cannot stand it I shall not be foolish about it but shall take proper care of myself.

I shall leave tomorrow. Have not yet been out of the house, but think I can bear the journey. Am sorry not to have seen you before leaving. Will write as soon as I reach the front.

Your aff. son

Lawrence

[1] The First Division of the Fifth Corps of the Army of the Potomac. Chamberlain commanded a brigade in this division beginning in the Spring of 1864. He would ultimately command the division by the end of the war.

BOARD UPDATES

The Executive Board met via Zoom on September 13. Treasurer Steve Muller reported that the Operating Account has \$3,120.32. The Preservation Account has \$2535.37. The Preservation Account balance reflects two \$500 donations to the American Battlefield Trust made at recent board meetings.

Program Chair Matt George has speakers arranged through the spring, and he has several more as possible fall speakers.

Board members will meet in the early

fall to assess the contents of the CDCWRT storage shed.

BUFORD'S VIEW

by Matt George

If we do have an in-person meeting on Oct. 8, I will bring several boxes of books. Those people who won books as a result of winning past trivia contests in my column, will get first choice of the book selection. Some of the rest will be used both for our customary raffle, and still others will be put on sale.

On Sept. 11 I attended a one day symposium on the Civil War held at the West Haven, Connecticut Veterans Museum & Learning Center. The symposium included some excellent speakers, a tour of the museum, and a catered lunch. Phil Vitiello gave his excellent powerpoint presentation on the *Hunley*. Bob O'Brien's talk was about a soldier in the 20th Connecticut who lost both his arms during the battle of Gettysburg, possibly from friendly artillery fire at Culp's Hill. Private George Warner survived for many years after the war with the help of his wife and son. There were many soldiers with the last name of Warner who served in several of our local regiments. I couldn't help but wonder if they were somehow related to George. The last speaker was Carolyn Ivanoff who gave a wonderful first-person presentation of Clara Barton. While I listened to her, I realized I had met and talked to Carolyn many years before at a Gettysburg event. Carolyn agreed to do her Clara Barton presentation for us in December, 2022.

On Friday, Sept.3, I was in uniform as I assisted Mike Diana of the Schenectady County Historical Society as he led a group of about a dozen people on a tour of Civil War Schenectady. We walked all around the older part of the city (“the Stockade”), including the homes and locations of people and events related to the Civil War. One location of interest to me was 8 Front Street where Allen Jackson, the colonel of the 134th N.Y., lived and died (in 1911). Jackson was the colonel of the regiment during the first day’s fight at the “brickyard” in Gettysburg. Thanks to a Gettysburg woman who hid him and then disguised him, he eventually found his way back to his regiment.

We also saw the location of the Clute Brothers’ business that made the small “donkey” engine that turned the turret on the *Monitor*, and the site of the railroad station where the Lincoln

funeral train passed. Another home was the residence of a Union soldier named William Caw. He joined the 77th New York (the Bemis Heights Regiment of Saratoga County). He and a friend walked the sixteen miles to Ballston Spa to enlist. He felt it was his duty to help his country. It probably was also significant that his older brother David was a Lt. Colonel in the regiment. David referred to William as his “little” brother which was interesting since William was 6’4”and 170+ lbs. Both were in the forefront of the charge that broke through the Confederate lines at Petersburg.

Once we return to our regular in-person meetings, I will continue with the monthly trivia questions. I’m looking forward to seeing everyone on Oct. 8.

Image and description from *The Horse Soldier*, Gettysburg, PA.

<https://www.horsesoldier.com/products/identified-it-ems/photography/6460>

“This identified Civil War CDV image is that of Allen Hyre Jackson of the 91st New York Volunteer Infantry and later the 134th NY Infantry. The twenty-six year old from Schenectady, New York enlisted as a Captain on October 1, 1861 and was commissioned into Co “G”, 91st NY infantry on Dec 10, 1861. Discharged for promotion on Feb 23, 1863, Jackson was commissioned to the F&S, 134th NY Infantry as a Lieutenant Colonel and served with that regiment until he mustered out on June 10, 1865 at Bladensburg, MD. Jackson had subsequent military service in the Army from May 11, 1866 until he retired on Oct 29, 1898.

In this image Jackson with his family present a full seated studio view with his wife and son as all three gaze upon a large map (?) on Jackson’s lap and not at the camera.”



**CDCWRT
P.O. BOX 11493
LOUDONVILLE, NY 12211**

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
or email: cdcwrt@hotmail.com

THE OFFICERS

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

THE NONCOMS

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