



# The Dispatch

Newsletter of the

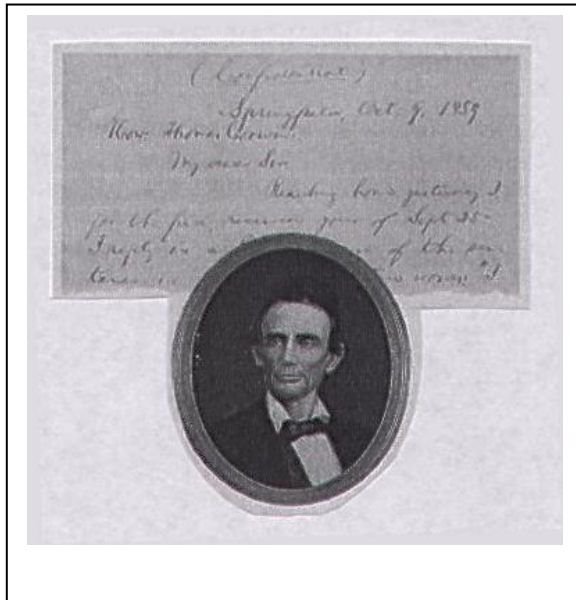
## Capital District Civil War Round Table

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

CDCWRT's web site: [www.cdcwrt.org](http://www.cdcwrt.org)

**Volume 22 Number 7**

**March 2005**



### NEWLY DISCOVERED PORTRAIT

After his nomination, Lincoln sat for an artist, J.C. Wolfe, but the portrait was “lost.” Wolfe apparently had no money for rent and turned the painting over to his landlord. It turned up last year in Chicago, hanging in the home of descendants of the landlord. It is in perfect condition and resembles a seldom reproduced photograph attributed to Joseph Hill of Springfield in the same month of June 1860. The Hill photo was commissioned by Wolfe to serve him as a crutch for capturing Lincoln’s likeness. The photo still bears the outlined impression of the oval mat that once framed it, matching almost precisely the oval painting Wolfe crafted.

### A NEWLY DISCOVERED LINCOLN LETTER

Scholars have known that Lincoln penned a letter in the fall of 1859 to Ohio Republican senator, Thomas Corwin. Two surviving Corwin letters bracket and attest to Lincoln’s missing letter. The “confidential” letter was held by Corwin’s descendants. In the letter Lincoln offers some of the strongest language he ever used to defend his party’s opposition to slavery. Corwin’s first letter chides Lincoln for saying in a speech that a moderate Republican presidential candidate would lose Illinois by 50,000 votes in 1860. Inside this newsletter is Lincoln’s response. *(from American Heritage, February-March 2005)*

## MARCH MEETING

Friday March 11<sup>th</sup>  
Guilderland Library  
2228 Western Ave.

SOCIAL HOUR	6-7PM
BUSINESS MEETING	7-7:30PM
LECTURE	7:30-9PM

*the searing experiences endured by a 15-year old girl had long remained in the grown woman's memory. Now you can step back in time as Tillie retells her story – the story of a young girl first exposed to both the horror and grandeur of battle. This is not a story of battle and tactics, but the story of a young girl who fled the village of Gettysburg to a place of "safety" at the foot of Little Round Top. Her exposure and response to the residue of battle is an enduring human story.*

*Terry, dressed as Tillie Pierce, will be introduced by her husband, John Latschar, Superintendent at Gettysburg National Military Park.*

### CDCWRT MEETING

*Our next meeting of the calendar year will be held on Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, at the Guilderland Public Library. Our guest speaker will be Terry Latschar, who will present a living history program about Tillie Pierce.*

*Terry Latschar is a Park Ranger at Gettysburg National Military Park. Previously she was a Licensed Battlefield Guide for five years. She has conducted seminar programs, military staff rides, and has lectured at Civil War Round Tables. She is the Co-Chair of the Women's History Symposium at GNMP. Terry has appeared on Pennsylvania Cable Network, and has served as an instructor for history teachers at the Governor's Institute. Before working for the Department of the Interior, she was employed by the Department of Defense at a ballistics lab testing Kevlar body armor. She received her education at Towson University and Penn State, York.*

*A quarter-century after the Battle of Gettysburg, Tillie Pierce published her memories of the most terrible of weeks, and retold her story to citizens and veterans. For those who heard her speak, and those who read her little book, it was obvious that*

### UP-COMING EVENTS

**MOVIE: Wednesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, at the Guilderland library.** This is part of the Civil War movies series sponsored by the CDCWRT. The next movie is *The Santa Fe Trail*, starring Errol Flynn as J.E.B. Stuart, Ronald Reagan as George Custer, Raymond Massey as John Brown, and Olivia de Havilland. As a penalty for fighting fellow classmates days before graduating from West Point, Stuart, Custer and four friends are given a dangerous assignment. They are sent to Fort Leavenworth where abolitionist John Brown and his crusaders have camped out. The West Pointers play a drawn out game of cat-and-mouse with Brown's forces, ending at Harpers Ferry.

**On Saturday & Sunday, March 19-20<sup>th</sup>, the Annual Cover Mania Stamp Show will be held at the Quality Inn (soon to be the Clarion) just off Everett Road, exit 5, I-90, from 9:00am to 5:00pm.** This show is open to the public, and is one of the largest cover shows in the northeast. There will be many dealers of stamps, first day

covers, commemorative covers, postcards, coins, ephemera, and old letters. The RT has always had an information table at this event. Volunteers to staff the table are needed. Please contact Matt George, Sue Knost or Joe Stracuzzi.

**On Friday to Sunday, April 1-3, at Gettysburg, the National Park Service with Eastern National will present the fifth in a series of symposiums entitled, "To Bind Up the Nation's Wounds: Caring for Them Who Shall Have Borne the Battle." With well over one million casualties, the American Civil War became one of the bloodiest conflicts in American history.** Charles Teague holds a Master of Divinity and will speak on 19<sup>th</sup> Century religion. George Wunderlich, Executive Director of the Civil War Medical Museum, will talk on the health of the U.S. in the 1850's to 1860's. Dr. Adrian Wheat will talk about Confederate military medicine. Wayne Motts, licensed battlefield guide, will present a program on Civil War pensions. Licensed battlefield guide, Susan Boardman will discuss Camp Letterman. The Fredericks Ladies Relief Society will interpret and depict the U.S. Sanitary Commission. Eric Dean, author of *Shook Over Hell*, will talk about post-traumatic stress disorder and the Civil War soldier. Rebecca Lyons, Park Ranger at Gettysburg, will talk about the director of the nursing corps. Don Steele will examine the Confederate veteran. Artist Amy Lindenberger will discuss her work, "Hard Road to Travel." CDCWRT member, Dr. Matt Farina, will talk about the wounding and death of "Stonewall" Jackson and Joshua Chamberlain. More details on this symposium will follow in subsequent newsletters.

The program begins on Friday afternoon and ends Sunday morning. Registration is \$100

and includes continental breakfasts for Saturday and Sunday, lunch Saturday, and snacks for breaks, plus handouts and a 15% discount in park bookstores. There will be an optional banquet Saturday night at the Pike Restaurant for \$22. Brochures will be available at the Round Table meetings.

**The Round Table Spring Trip** will also be on this same weekend. Sue Knost will be arranging the bus trip to Gettysburg. Participants may attend the conference or go on a battlefield tour. At this time the bus trip will be \$100 for transportation, plus \$100 for the conference or the battlefield tour. Hotel costs will be about \$85/night without tax. There will be more details in next month's newsletter. If you wish to attend, the deadline for conference registration is March 25<sup>th</sup>, but the **deadline for the bus will be Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. A non-refundable deposit of \$100 MUST be made by the 11<sup>th</sup>. If the trip is cancelled, the deposit will be refunded. Mail reservation to CDCWRT, attention Sue Knost.**

**Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup>, is the 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Surrender at Appomattox.** While no trip is planned, a small group of RT members is planning a quick trip to Virginia to carry out a commemorative postal cancellation. Details will follow.

**THERE WILL BE NO APRIL 8<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE CDCWRT. Instead, we invite members to attend the Full Duty Banquet of the Vermont roundtable in Montpelier on Saturday & Sunday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup>. The guest speaker will be the acclaimed Civil War artist, Don Troiani.** Mr. Troiani is America's most collected military artist. Additionally, he served as the Civil War uniform and equipment consultant for the movie, *Cold Mountain*,

and has been military advisor on the A & E History Channel's *Civil War Journal*, and the miniseries, *The American Revolution*.

The banquet will be held at the Capitol Plaza Hotel, and a block of 50 tickets has been put aside for the Round Table. The banquet will feature living historians in period dress, a color guard, and a live performance of Civil War period music. A fund raising raffle will have three major prizes: a reproduction 50 caliber percussion Pennsylvania rifle, a four-day, three-night getaway at the Jerico B&B in Marlinton, West Virginia, and a Don Troiani print, *Put the Boys In*, depicting the VMI Cadets at the Battle of New Market. Raffle tickets are \$5.00 a piece, and winners need not be present.

The Round Table has a bus available, and can do the whole trip for \$139 double occupancy, or \$179 for single occupancy. This includes bus trip, room at the Capitol Hotel, banquet ticket, and some touring Sunday. Drinks and snacks will be provided on the bus, but plan on bringing your own brown bag lunch for Saturday. Those who wish to drive themselves, may still purchase tickets from the Round Table block for \$25.00 a piece. More details will follow in subsequent newsletters.

**The movie on Wednesday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, at the Guilderland Library will be *The Day Lincoln Was Shot*.** This movie stars Lance Henriksen as President Lincoln and Rob Morrow as John Wilkes Booth. The movie follows a team of conspirators led by Booth as they planned to kidnap Lincoln. When the plot is foiled, the conspirators develop the assassination plot. They are defending what they believe to be the basis of Southern civilization: the right to secede from the Union and uphold the legal institution of slavery.

**On Friday, April 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm & Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm, the NYS Museum will present a one-man play about the life and times of our 16<sup>th</sup> President entitled, *ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN TWO MILES A PENNY*.** Tickets are \$5.00 at the door at the museum. Call 474-5877 for more details.

**The May Meeting of the CDCWRT will be held on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> at the Guilderland Library. The speaker will be our own J.J. JENNINGS. The topic will be announced later.**

**Monday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, is Game Day at Cooperstown.** The RT usually participates in the day's activities, and raises monies for preservation by selling our special cachets and T-shirts. Volunteers are being sought.

**The June Meeting of the CDCWRT will be held on Friday, June 10<sup>th</sup> at the Guilderland Library. The topic will be announced at a later date.**

**Peterboro Civil War Days will be held on Saturday and Sunday, June 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.** This small village on route 20 near Syracuse was a stop on the Underground Railroad. Each year the village sponsors a Civil War weekend with encampments, presentations, entertainment and period foods. A number of Civil War groups participate, including the RT with a commemorative postal cancellation. This is always a pleasant weekend in the spring with a nice drive to the village.

**Gettysburg – 142<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary – Friday, July 1<sup>st</sup> to Monday, July 4<sup>th</sup>.** This is always an exciting event with many tours provided by the Park Service, free lectures by authors at the Greystone Bookstore tent, and the daily re-enactments. This is also a major event for the RT to raise money for

preservation activities. The RT will have a block of rooms in the nearby motel. Rates will be higher this year however. Budget cuts for the Park Service may also impact upon the number of guided tour available to the public. More details will follow.

**Civil War Days in Troy will be held on Saturday, July 9<sup>th</sup> and Sunday July 10<sup>th</sup>. The site will be in Troy's Prospect Park.** This has been held at the King Solomon Masonic Temple the past several years, but it had become popular and has outgrown that site. Prospect Park allows for a larger venue. Activities include an encampment and a re-enactment of a Civil War battle. There will be other types of entertainment. The RT will need volunteers for our information tables.

**On Sunday, July 17<sup>th</sup>, the Round Table will have its annual picnic at Thatcher State Park, south of Albany. The picnic will be at the Horseshoe 2 area, which is near the swimming pool. Reserve this date now.**

**Sunday, July 31<sup>st</sup>, is Induction Day at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown.** The RT will have a booth for sales of cachets and T-shirts. Volunteers are being sought.

**Chamberlain Days in Maine will be held on Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, August 13<sup>th</sup>.** President, Matt George has attended this activity several times. He states it is a great experience for Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain fans, and will give anyone more details about the event.

## **CIVIL WAR TRIVIA**

This is an easy one. **What is the connection between Proctor & Gamble and the Civil War?**

William Proctor, a candle maker, and James Gamble, a soap maker, married the Norris sisters. In 1837 their father-in-law convinced them to become business partners. By 1859, gross sales were \$2 million. During the Civil War, P&G obtained contracts to provide candles and soap to the Union army, thus imprinting their business names in the minds of all those soldiers returning home after the war.

## **CIVIL WAR QUIZ**

This is a matching quiz. The Battle of Antietam is also known as Sharpsburg. Match the following battles from the list below.

1. **Wilson's Creek or Oak Hills**
2. **Ball's Bluff or Harrison's Island**
3. **Kearnstown or Winchester**
4. **Shiloh or Pittsburg Landing**
5. **Malvern Hill or Crew's Farm**
6. **Stone's River or Murfreesboro**
7. **Appomattox CH or Clover Hill**
8. **Cedar Creek or Middletown**
9. **Kenesaw Mtn or Lost Mountain**
10. **Port Gibson or Magnolia Hills**

The reference source is **Phisterer's Statistical Record of the Armies of the United States**. The winner with 8 of 10 answers was Terry Fishel.

## **CIVIL WAR NEWS**

John Hennessy, historian, author, and life-time member of the CDCWRT, has recently had an article published in the Winter 2005 issue of *Blue & Gray Magazine*. The 19-page article is entitled, "**Fredericksburg in the War.**" There is also a 14-page companion tour guide entitled, "**The General's Tour.**" The magazine is on sale at various bookstores and news stands for \$4.95.

Issue # 32, January 2005, *The Gettysburg Magazine*, will be available at the March meeting for \$5.00. This is a savings of \$2.95 over the newsstand price, and a savings of \$6.95 over the UPS price. This issue includes the 4<sup>th</sup> part of a series on intelligence operations during the Gettysburg campaign. There is also an article of local interest about Maj. Andrew Jackson Grover, who commanded the 76<sup>th</sup> NYVI at Gettysburg. Another excellent article is entitled, *The Knight and the Pawn: The Story of Two Confederate Soldiers*. This is the story of William Dorsey Pender as the knight, and Pvt. Aaron Jones as the pawn. This is an excellent biography of Pender.

## EDITORIAL

The following editorial by Fred Anderson and Andrew Cayton appeared in a recent issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. It is too long to reproduce in total, so I have abstracted it. It is controversial, and since I read it, I have given it considerable thought. Neither I, nor the Board, put forth our impressions as an endorsement by the Round Table. I present it simply for you to read and think about.

### *American Wars for Liberty and Power (part two)*

*The rhetoric that justified the founding of the United States made inescapable connections between empire and tyranny. Perhaps for that reason, American historians have treated the war fevers of 1812, 1846 and 1898 as unfortunate exceptions to the antimilitarist rule of republicanism. The United States grew by settlement. Apart from the regrettable Indian Wars, the great movement west consisted of the essentially benign inclusion of ever-larger territorial realms into democracy's dominion, freedom's sphere. Or so Americans, for the most part, believe.*

*Since Americans believe themselves to be a peace-loving people, it is an article of faith that their wars have been forced upon them by those who would destroy their freedom. Thus since the autumn of 2001, Americans have remembered New York on September 11 as they have remembered Pearl Harbor since December 7, 1941 --- and as earlier generations remembered the explosion of the **Maine**, the bombardment of Fort Sumter, and the first shot fired at Lexington --- as a moment in which an enemy of liberty showed his barbarous hand and thereby justified the response of a free people, terrible in its wrath. So Americans tend to believe that by winning wars, they make the world a better, safer, freer place.*

*That is the argument that the monuments on the Mall sustain in marble and granite and bronze. That is why they make three great wars for freedom --- the Revolution, the Civil War, and World War II --- the central, defining moments of American history. There are no more important words on the Mall than those inscribed inside the Lincoln Memorial. The Gettysburg Address, composed to give meaning to the torrents of blood spilled around a small Pennsylvania town, also gave meaning to the ordeal of the Union. There, in fewer than 300 words, Lincoln made the Civil War something much nobler than a struggle by one part of a riven nation to bend another part to its will. It was a test for the capacity of human beings for self-government, the supreme trial of a revolutionary United States "conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." And at the heart of America's agonies, Lincoln explained 16 months later in his Second Inaugural Address, was the need to extirpate the great sin of slavery, to cleanse the Republic of the stain it had borne since birth*

*It is impossible to imagine a more powerful conception of the nation's history than that. Because Americans so clearly identify liberty and equality as the core values of the Republic, they necessarily make the inception of those values in the Revolution, the extension of liberty's promise to all Americans and the defense of liberty beyond America's borders central elements in their collective story.*

*The American Revolution and the Civil War can best be understood as unanticipated consequences of decisive victories in the great imperial wars – the Seven Years' War and the Mexican-American War --- that preceded each by a little more than a decade. In both cases, the acquisition of vast territories created severe, protracted, and ultimately violent debates over sovereignty and citizenship. At least from the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present, American wars have either expressed a certain kind of imperial ambition or have resulted directly from successes in previous imperial conflicts. "Imperialism" is full of negative connotations. We suggest, however, that it can be more productively understood in the sense of the progressive extension of a people's dominion over the lands or lives of others, as a means of imposing an order and peace on dangerous or unstable peripheral regions.*

**(to be continued next month)**

## **LINCOLN MEN AND SONS OF DIXIE - A New Feature of *The Dispatch*.**

Starting with this issue of our newsletter, we will feature a biography of relatives who served in the Civil War. If you have a brief bio and a picture, send it to the editor of the newsletter.

## **ABOUT OUR COVER**

Quoting from the recently surfaced Lincoln letter, the candidate warns:

***"Drop that issue, and they (voters) have no motive to remain, and will not remain, with us. It is idiotic to think otherwise. Do you understand me as saying Illinois must have an extreme antislavery candidate? I do not so mean. We must have, though, a man who recognizes that Slavery issue as being the living issue of the day; who does not hesitate to declare slavery a wrong, nor to deal with it as such; who believes in the power and duty of Congress to prevent the spread of it."***

Harold Holtzer noted that one can search high and low in the Lincoln corpus for another use of the word *idiotic* --- or more electric proof that on the cusp of his nomination to the Presidency, he was as strongly committed as ever to keeping slavery at the center of American political discourse until it could be eradicated. Lincoln was unwilling to focus on safer subjects such as ***"tariff, extravagances, live oak contracts, and the like."*** He reiterates that there is only one subject worth discussing: ***"that Slavery issue."*** Thus, Corwin was powerfully rebuked by Lincoln.

About the time the letters were exchanged in 1859, both men received invitations from the Young Men's Central Republican Union of New York to lecture to the group. Corwin promptly accepted and went on to deliver a speech at Brooklyn's Plymouth Church. Lincoln hesitated, negotiated, postponed, and finally agreed to come. But by the time he arrived in New York, the church's lecture series had ended, and he was compelled to give his speech at a different venue: Cooper Union. There, on February 27, 1860, he gave the widely reported speech that was perhaps the biggest single factor in making him President.

*(this article by Harold Holzer appeared in the February-March 2005 issue of American Heritage.)*

**NAME:** Thomas Curry

**DATES:** 1834 – 1864

**ALLEGIANCE:** Union

**RANK:** Private (?)

**UNIT:** 83<sup>rd</sup> New York, Company D

**SERVICE RECORD:** Enlisted August 28, 1863, wounded at the Battle of the Wilderness on May 6, 1864, and taken prisoner; died at Andersonville prison camp on December 20, 1864.

Thomas Curry was born in County Cavan, Ireland between August and November of 1834. He immigrated to New York City in 1850 with his mother and sister, Ann. On March 14, 1856, he married Ellen Reilly (also originally from County Caran). A boy named Patrick was born on June 2, 1856. Sadly Ellen died later that year or the next. Thomas married again in 1857 to Ireland-born Mary Daley. Mary gave birth to a son, Charles, on November 29, 1859. Thomas Curry became an official naturalized citizen on November 19, 1860 in Manhattan Superior Court of New York. His occupation was listed as gas fitter, and an on-the-job accident (an explosion) caused his skin to permanently darken. His nickname after this was “Black Tom.”

Thomas Curry enlisted in the Union Army on August 28, 1863, as a private in order to receive the bounty to help his impoverished family. Both he and his sister’s husband (Thomas Garville) were mustered into Company D. Two months after he enlisted, his second wife, Mary, died. His sister would raise his two boys while he was in the army. During the Battle of the Wilderness, Thomas Curry would not only be wounded and captured, but, to deepen the tragedy, Thomas Garville would be killed on the same day.



The 83<sup>rd</sup> NY suffered such terrible casualties that day, it was disbanded and the survivors were added to the 97<sup>th</sup> NY.

Thomas Curry died at Andersonville with thousands of others later that year. Ann would receive his pension to help raise his two boys and her own daughter, Teresa. Just nine years after the war ended, Ann died. Since 18-year old Patrick had just left home to be on his own, the remaining children were then raised by a family friend, Ann Garrity.

Thomas Curry was the great, great, great grandfather of CDCW Round Table member, Daniel Curry. Dan is an 11<sup>th</sup> year student member who would love to visit the Wilderness Battlefield to see where Thomas Curry was wounded and captured. However, Dan says his favorite general is “Stonewall” Jackson.