

The Dispatch

Newspaper of the

CAPITAL DISTRICT CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

PO Box 14871 Albany, NY 12212
www.AlbanyCivilWar.org



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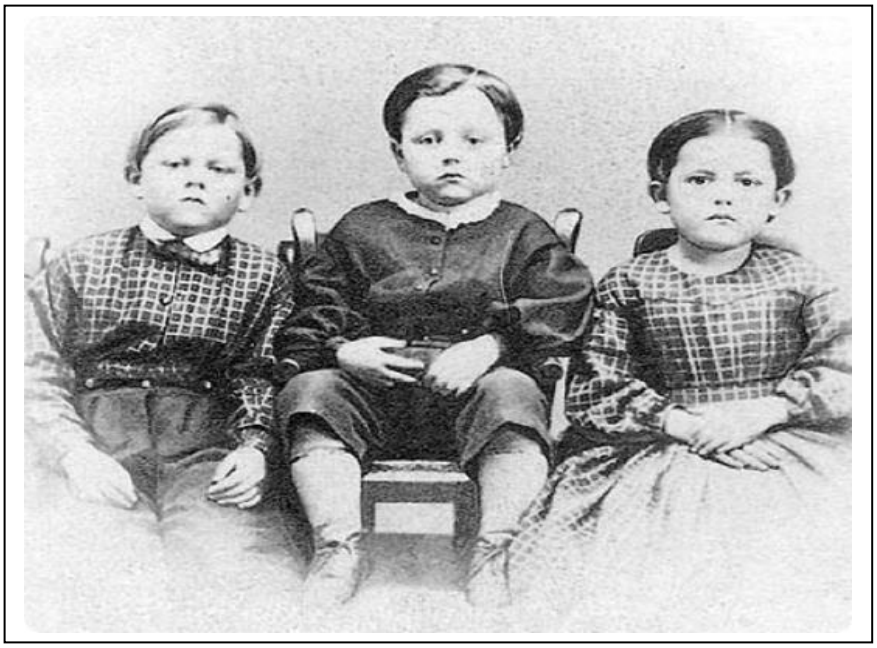
WHO WAS THEIR FATHER?



(Gettysburg – July 6, 1863)
The photograph above was found in the hands of a dead Union solder as burial details moved into Gettysburg today. The soldier had no identification on him. Confederate soldiers may have taken his wallet. In addition, there were no items on his uniform to identify the soldier's Corps (cap insignia), Regiment or State (buttons on uniform). Since the 11th Corps fought north of Gettysburg and then retreat through the town to Cemetery Hill, the soldier may have been a member of that Corps. The remains will be buried as an 'unknown,' but the image will be kept in the hopes of identifying the soldier. Members of the burial detail were moved by the find. The Army of the Potomac left yesterday to follow Lee's retreating army. Thousands of wounded are left behind in homes and the hospitals. Undoubtedly many of these will die over the next several days.

OCTOBER MEETING
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2012
WATERVLIET SENIOR CENTER
1541 BROADWAY
WATERVLIET, NY

GETTYSBURG'S UNKNOWN SOLDIER

MARK DUNKELMAN

Social Hour	**6:00 – 7:00 p.m.**
Business Meeting	**7:00 – 7:30 p.m.**
Presentation	**7:30 – 8:30 p.m.**
Questions & Answers	**8:30 – 9:00 p.m.**
More Socializing	**9:00 – 10:00 p.m.**

CDCWRT MEETING

The October meeting of the Capital District Civil War Round Table will be held on Friday, October 12, 2012. This meeting will be held at the Watervliet Senior Center, 1541 Broadway in Watervliet. Our very special guest speaker will be Mark H. Dunkelman and his topic will be **GETTYSBURG'S UNKNOWN SOLDIER.**

Most Civil War enthusiasts are familiar with the story of the Union soldier who was found dead on the Gettysburg battlefield with nothing on his person to identify him but the ambrotype photograph of his three children that was clutched in his hand. The incident sparked a wave of publicity across the North and led to the identification of the soldier as Sgt. Amos Humiston of the 154th New York when his family was located in Portville, New York.

It also inspired a charitable drive that led to the founding of a soldiers' orphans' home in Gettysburg - - an institution that met its own dramatic and tragic end.

Mark Dunkelman told this story in detail in his 1999 book **"Gettysburg's Unknown Soldier: The Life, Death, and Celebrity of Amos Humiston."** ***He will relate it again in his talk, and tell the story behind the story – how he came to uncover aspects of the tale, never told before.***

Mark has studied and written about his great-grandfather's Civil War regiment, the 154th New York, for decades. He has published five books and dozens of articles on various aspects of the 154th's history, designed and painted the 80-foot mural next to the regiment's monument at Gettysburg, and organized annual reunions of regimental descendants for the past 27 years. A native of Buffalo, NY, he now lives in Providence, RI.

CONFERENCE UPDATE

We were just checking to see how many members actually read the newsletter. Only two noted at the dates of the November conference were wrong! Actually we messed up and were using the 2013 calendar. The correct dates are Friday, November 2nd to Sunday, November 4th. This has been corrected in the enclosed agenda.

Don't forget to send in your ancestor's name and info, along with $10, by October 28th to be listed in the program's Honor Roll.

For those out-of-town guests, we would like to suggest the Holiday Inn Express in Latham where some of our speakers will be staying. Please mention that you are attending the CDCWRT & Siena College Civil War Conference.

All conference attendees on Saturday or Sunday will receive one free raffle ticket with registration. Additional tickets can be purchased for $5 each at the dinner or registration on Saturday.

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 Thursday, October 25th, 5:30 – 8:30 pm, the Hudson-Mohawk Industrial Gateway will honor the CDCWRT for its preservation efforts at the Gateway Gala. The Gala will be held at the New York State Museum at the entrance to the new Civil War exhibit.

Special guests include Childs F. Burden, Henry Burden's great-great-grandson, Karl Kriegskotte, Emmy Award winner, and Stephen Lang, noted actor from the movies, *Gettysburg, Gods and Generals,* and *Avatar.*

Friend reservations are $75 each for the buffet with live music and silent auction. Please call 518-274-5267 for reservations.

Friday – Sunday, November 2-4, 2012 will be the second Sue Knost Memorial Conference entitled *"1862: And the War Came."* Most of our speakers have all confirmed and include Bruce Eelman, Dennis Gaffney, John Hoptak, Chris Kolakowski, Steve Muller, R.L. Murray, Frank O'Reilly, and John Quarstein. The conference will occur at the facilities at Siena College. Look for the conference flyer on our website, or call Matt George at 355-2131 for a hard-copy program.

Friday, December 14th will be the regular holiday meeting of the CDCWRT. Our speaker will be Joseph Thatcher who will talk about the Confederate coal torpedo which was invented by one of his ancestors.

On Friday, January 11th, the regular meeting of the CDCWRT will be the annual Potpourri Meeting. New member, Tom Baker, will bring his collection of photos of the Gettysburg monuments. Lindsay Davenport, a Siena history major, will speak about the mutiny of the 20th NYVI. Lisa Potarcar, a local author, will speak about her historical novel about a woman who enlisted as a man in a Minnesota regiment.

Elections of a new Board will also occur at this meeting

BOARD MEETING – 9/24/2012

The Board met on 9/24/2012. Long-time member, Stan Bergman, has donated 150 books, 6 DVDs, 2 VHSs, 2 commemorative jack-knives and two prints to the RT for sales. Thank-you Stan!! The RT has 158 members, 40 of whom receive electronic newsletters.

Matt Farina reported that the crowds at the Antietam Re-enactment were pitiful despite a 16-page insert on the battle and the Emancipation Proclamation in the ***Washington Post*** on September 9th and even a lead article with pictures at the re-enactment on Sunday morning, September 16th. For the 135th, the crowd was over 100,000; for the 140th, about 50,000. We anticipated a crowd of 20-30,000. It numbered about 4,000. Crowds at the Visitor Center, 2 miles away, were somewhat larger. The RT initially had approval to also be at the VC, but this was rescinded when several local groups sponsored cancellations. Gross sales were $2017. The Civil War Weekend in Saratoga raised $191.

Everything is set for the conference in November, as well as the rest of the year.

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New York State Museum Exhibit "An Irrepressible Conflict: The Empire State and the Civil War"

More than two years in the planning, this new exhibit represents the most ambitious and collaborative exhibit the Museum has ever assembled. The exhibit marks the War's Sesquicentennial Anniversary and fills 7000-square feet with potent objects, iconic photographs and thumbnail histories that carry a visitor through an emotionally wrenching journey that whipsaws between grace and brutality. State Historian Richard Weibel worked with his staff and Civil War historians to select, write and edit 90 text panels and 50 enlarged graphics that compliment more than 200 objects.

Context is the key to understanding the Civil War, and this exhibit extends beyond the fighting in both directions – from the abolitionism of antebellum New York to the civil rights movement – in an effort to come to grips with the darkest chapter in our history.

The exhibit runs until September 2013.
(adapted from Paul Grondahl's article in Times Union)

Editorial

A year ago in the October 2011 newsletter, I urged the membership of the CDCWRT to come to the dinner and program that November that marked an ambitious effort to honor Sue Knost and commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. I was dis-appointed that almost all other states had plans for the sesquicentennial except NYS. Even my adopted winter state of North Carolina had embarked upon an ambitious 5 year plan to teach about the war period even though the state's deficit was as looming as New York's was, on a percentage basis.

About 60 attended the dinner and almost 40 attended the excellent conference at the Military Museum in Saratoga. I was proud of our group, which had come through once again. To paraphrase, now we are engaged in a great effort, testing whether that round table or any other round table so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure and do so again.

I am more optimistic than last year. In the past several months, the *Times Union,* which has rarely published anything on the Civil War, had several articles, including an editorial by editor, Rex Smith. The State Museum has unveiled an exhibit that the staff has been working on under budget constraints. The exhibit also recognizes the resources, human and otherwise, that the state committed to the war. But I am also wary that the public is too disinterested or is too engrossed in their electronic devices or is too concerned about finances, to partake in the once in a lifetime Civil War events.

The 150th Antietam event attendance was disappointing (see Board Meeting). Local Civil War events have had low attendance (Troy, Peterboro, Rome) although some Saratoga was better. The Green Mountain CWRT may have only some previously confirmed programs in 2013 because no one wants to assume the program chair position. Our meeting attendance is lackluster at 35-40 per meeting, despite our 120-plus membership.

This year's conference has more nationally-known speakers and one more day than last year's. It is co-sponsored by a college with a national reputation, and it's in Albany. Yet with one month to go, reservations are still in the single digits. Costs are DOWN from last year because of sponsorships. I would like to see 70-80 for dinner and more than 50 for the conference on Saturday and more than 30 for Sunday. The CDCWRT is being honored at the Hudson Mohawk Industrial Gateway Gala on October 25th. Let's show our mettle and support our programs and share in our speakers' enthusiasm and commitment.