



The Dispatch

Newsletter of the

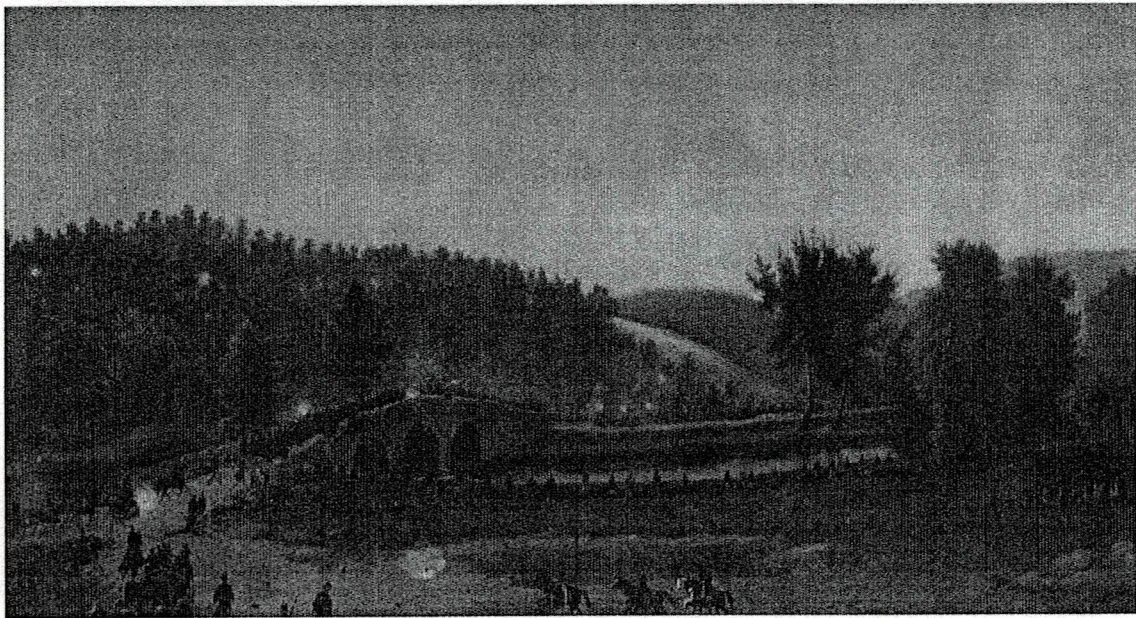
Capital District Civil War Round Table

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

CDCWRT's web site: timesunion.com/communities/cdcwrt

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This episode in the Battle of Antietam, September 17, 1862, was painted by an eyewitness, Cpt. James Hope, a landscape artist before he joined the Vermont infantry. It is one of four paintings, 12 x 5.5 feet, displayed at the NPS Visitor Center at Antietam. In this view of the Lower Bridge, the 51st Pennsylvania and 51st New York regiments storm the bridge and seize the hillside from Georgian sharpshooters who have defended the western bluff of Antietam Creek much of the day against Gen. Burnside's 11th Corps. Thereafter the bridge became known as Burnside Bridge.

**September Meeting
Friday, 9/14/01**

Pruyn House

**207 Old Niskayuna Rd.
Newtonville, NY**

**Social Hour 6:00 pm
Business Meeting 7:00 pm
Presentation 7:30 pm**

CDCWRT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Round Table will Friday, September 14th at 7:30 p.m. at the BURMASTER BARN AT THE PRUYN HOUSE as part of a Civil War Weekend, September 14th-16th. The 125th NY Regimental Association, the CDCWRT, and the Friends of the Pruyn House are jointly sponsoring this weekend event. There will be tours, military demonstrations, camp life, lectures, displays, gifts for purchase, period artifacts related to the American Civil War, and much more. This will be a great event for children also. It will be a perfect time to introduce students to living history just in time for back to school American history.

The weekend begins Friday night with our regular meeting. Our speaker will be Captain Richard E. Straight of the 125th New York Regimental Association. His topic is entitled, THE MARCH TO GETTYSBURG, the history of the 125th NYSVI from Harpers Ferry to Cemetery Ridge at Gettysburg. As many of you know, the 125th was recruited primarily from the Troy area. Members of the Association will also set up camp Friday night on the Pruyn House grounds.

Activities start 9:00 am Saturday and conclude with a candle light tour of the

camp at 8:30 pm. The following is the lecture series that runs throughout the day.

10:00am "Local Ladies Aid Societies" by Christine Robinson

10:30am Drill and Firing Demonstrations

11:00am "The Draft Riots of Troy, NY" by Michael Barrett

1:00pm "The Look of the Ladies: 1861-1865" by Kim Howe

2:00pm Drill and Firing Demonstrations

3:00pm "The Quartermaster Corps and the Civil War Wagon" by Robert Shuey

4:00pm Drill and Firing Demonstrations

6:30pm "Civil War Ballads and Letters" featuring Phyllis Gottung & Roger Mock

7:30pm Civil War music with Patterson Brothers and John Cromie

8:30-10:00pm Candle Light Tour

Sunday's activities begin with Sunday Service at 9:00am with Chaplain William Niffer. The camp opens at 10:00am and the lecture series is as follows:

10:00am "The Look of the Ladies"

11:00am Drill and Firing Demonstrations

1:00pm "The Consummate Politician – Major General Daniel E. Sickles" by Michael Russett

2:00pm "They Have Built Him an Altar in the Evening Dews and Damps" by William Niffer

2:30pm Drill and Firing Demonstrations

4:00pm Camp closes to the public

Other activities and participants include the following: 125th Regimental sutler, United States Sanitary Commission, Field Hospital, the rifled musket, special postal cancellation by the U.S. Postal Service on Saturday 10-4, stamp cachets, books and T-shirts by the CDCWRT, the Sons of Union Veterans, the GAR, and displays by the NYS Military Museum & Veterans Research Center and the Military Heritage Institute.

DIRECTIONS: From Albany, exit 5 on Northway; right at light onto route 155 West; take second left onto Old Niskayuna Rd before passing under Northway bridge; look for signs; Pruyne House 0.6 miles.

From the North, take exit 5; left at the light onto route 155 East; pass under Northway bridge; take first right onto Old Niskayuna Rd; look for sign; Pruyne House 0.6 miles.

BOARD MEETING

The August Board Meeting was held on Wednesday, August 29th. The treasurer's report indicated \$1707.97 in the general fund and \$10,739.50 in the Hennessy preservation fund. Included in this are deposits for the October trip. Cooperstown grossed \$2412 in cachet and T-shirt sales. The 140th Manassas Anniversary grossed \$2427 in cachet sales.

Since our RT is closely identified with saving Brandy Station (see following item by Bud Hall), Joe Strucuzzi proposed that the CDCWRT donate \$5000 to Brandy Station Foundation as a matching grant. The CDCWRT will match donations from other Round Tables up to \$5000. Thus, if all the grant is matched, a \$10,000 donation is made toward the purchase the rest of Fleetwood Hill. The proposal will be submitted to the Foundation. **Any members, who want to add to the challenge amount, may do so by sending checks, marked Brandy Station, to our treasurer.**

The Board also discussed the meeting schedule for the next 2 months, including our November conference on November 9th and 10th on the Capital District during the Civil War.

UP-COMING EVENTS

The **October** meeting will be at the Guilderland Public Library on Friday, October 12th. The speaker will be Eric A. Campbell. He will talk about Charles Wellington Reed, bugler

of the 9th Massachusetts Battery or Bigelow's Battery. Reed was an artist and made many sketches of war incidents. He won the Medal of Honor for saving Capt. Bigelow at Gettysburg. Mr. Campbell is a licensed Battlefield Guide and Park Ranger at Gettysburg NMP. His new book is entitled, "*A Grand Terrible Drama*": *From Gettysburg to Petersburg: The Civil War Letters of Charles Wellington Reed.*

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October is stamp-collecting month. The CDCWRT has been asked to present its collection of cachets and other postal ephemera to the public in the display cases at the library. See the collection that has served as our major fund-raiser. Any member who would like to contribute items for this display, should contact Matt Farina.

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The New York State Library will hold a Civil War workshop on Thursday, November 8th, from 10:45am to 3:00pm to show what the State Library and State Archives have in the way of resources to research an individual, a regimental unit, or the Civil War period of a community history. A \$10.00 registration fee includes handouts. Participants may bring their own lunch, or order a box lunch for \$10.00. Deadline for registration is October 25th.

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The **November** meeting will be our **Fall Conference** entitled *NEW YORK IN THE CIVIL WAR: PEOPLE AND REGIMENTS OF THE GREATER CAPITAL REGION*. The date will be Friday, November 9th and Saturday, November 10th, with the banquet Saturday night. Please mark you calendars now. More details will follow in next month's newsletter.

Friday night will again consist of a meet the authors night with presentations, signings, readings, and an opportunity to purchase books at discount prices.

Saturday will consist of conferences with a lunch break. A number of exhibitors and information booths will also be present. Our dinner speaker will be Tom Clemons who will talk about New York State troops at Antietam.

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THE POWERBALL RAFFLE

We want to take advantage of all the Powerball frenzy that has recently gripped the nation. Your odds of winning our raffle are vastly better than your winning Powerball. Moreover, you probably will not need to "donate" one-half of the prize to the IRS.

A generous benefactor has donated a limited edition cold-cast bronze statue to the Round Table for our November Conference Raffle. It is the Gettysburg Civil War Women's Memorial by our resident sculptor, Ron Tunison. This is a model of the statue that will be dedicated on November 16, 2002. The Special Edition sculpture is limited to 500, and includes a piece of brick from the Evergreen Cemetery gatehouse, the home of Elizabeth Thorn during the Battle of Gettysburg. With the help of her elderly father, and while six months pregnant, she buried 91 soldiers during the weeks after the battle. Her post-war reminiscence is one of the best-known civilian accounts of the battle.

Raffle tickets are available now at \$5.00 a ticket, and may be purchased right up to the drawing in November. The statue sells for \$400, but can be purchased through the RT for \$350. A Regular Edition, limited to 1500, and without a piece of the brick, lists for \$275, but can also be purchased through the RT for \$250. A **whole brick from the gatehouse**, can be purchased for \$200. These items and others relative the Evergreen Cemetery gatehouse will be on sale at the September Civil War Days.

MISCELLANEOUS

The July 2001 issue of *Gettysburg Magazine* is available from the Round Table for \$5.00. A supply will be present at the September meeting.

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When the Civil War Society re-organized, the Society also discontinued

their old magazine, and brought out a new official magazine, *North & South*. It is an excellent magazine, and in my humble opinion, exceeds the *Civil War Times Illustrated*. The photos and illustrations are both artistic and interesting. The maps of battles are computer generated and are very clear and helpful in understanding troop movements. The article are of excellent quality and are referenced! The most recent issue, Volume 4, Number 6, is a special infantry tactics issue. Subscriptions are \$30 for seven issues. You might want to check out an issue at the newsstand.

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This summer the number of hits on our website went over the 17,000 mark. Jon Olson, our Web Master, has done a masterful job. If you have not visited our site yet, please do yourself a favor. You will be pleasantly surprised.

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The following is excerpted from the September issue of *The Civil War News*. The Preservation News column, is entitled, Saving Brandy Station, and is written by Clark 'Bud' Hall. He is a founder and board member of the Brandy Station Foundation. Bud presents the history of the foundation in its efforts to rescue the land from various developers and preserve as a pristine CW battlefield. In the near future, roadside interpretive markers will be erected. More importantly, additional vital acreage on Fleetwood Hill, has become available.

Fleetwood Hill not only was Gen. Jeb Stuart's headquarters during the battle, but Fleetwood is also the most fought upon, marched upon, and camped upon piece of ground in American history. Stuart used the hill so often as a command post, that he

simply referred to the ridge in written orders as the "Fleetwood Front." Later, Meade established his headquarters atop Fleetwood during the Army of the Potomac's winter encampment in 1863-1864.

"About two years ago, the Brandy Station Foundation and its supporters (including the esteemed Capital District Civil War Round Table of Albany, N.Y.) acquired 14 acres located on Fleetwood's southern approach. This acquisition proved threshold in that we became instant neighbors to Fleetwood's owners thereby giving us a foot in the door toward a larger purchase of more critical ground on top of Fleetwood itself."

Now the entire Fleetwood Hill property is for sale, and has been offered to the Civil War Preservation Trust and the Foundation. If this can be secured, one of this country's longest-running preservation struggles will culminate in a great success. To this, your president can hope to add that your Round Table will be there. (see Board Meeting)

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If you believe there is no need to help preserve battlefields, and that the Park Service has all the land around important battlefields, read the following section. I recently received a several page letter regarding The Chancellorsville Memorial Garden. I guess I received the letter because I'm approaching 60 years and the author of the letter thinks I spend my weekends driving around, looking for a final resting place for myself. Or perhaps the author 'purchased' my address from one of my Civil War subscriptions. I hope it was NOT purchased from one of the preservation organizations to which I belong, since I feel this represents are conflict of interest.

I am being offered "the first and only such opportunity in our nation to connect our choice of a final resting place with our passionate interest in the War Between the States." The letter reminds me that the land which is today a part of the memorial garden, was passed over by Jackson's Corps as he strikes Hooker's 11th Corps and the dangling flank in the air. This Victorian style cemetery in which I can rest, is "destined to become a permanent national shrine dedicated to the preservation of this historic site of American tragedy and triumph." They are correct about the tragedy part. This is a tragedy and a disgrace.

This is a battlefield that is being made into a modern cemetery. This is the land over which Ramseur's and Lane's troops first struck Von Gilsa's 45th NY. An interpretive trail, punctuated by kiosks, audio recordings, photos, and historical markers will enhance the visitor's experience as they look for my grave. Actually, I can select a plot in the Union or Confederate sections!

We tell our children we must preserve these sites now, or else someday while interpreting a battlefield, a guide may say that the Yanks attacked from the Walmart and struck the Rebs right at the Exxon station. The 4th Georgia striking the 45th New York right where a former editor of the CDCWRT lies, is not much different.

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The RT would like to re-activate the video lending library. Please look on your shelves, under your couches, and behind your TV for videos you may have borrowed and return them at the next meeting. Thanks.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

One of the perks for being editor of the newsletter is the fact that I get to read all the complimentary newsletters sent to us by other Round Tables. The list is slowly growing, and we now receive newsletters from as far away as South Carolina and Florida. I peruse the articles, special events, programs and editorials. Sometimes there are such interesting items that I recycle them in our monthly publication. It's interesting to see what other Round Tables do, and how they do it.

Tuesday night, after the Board meeting, I was looking over the most recent crop. I plan to retire (at least in part) in a few years. Nan and I plan to spend most of the year in Albany, but the winters in Virginia. I could be active in the CDCWRT when in Albany, and I was planning to join the CWRT of Alexandria, VA, the third oldest Round Table in the country. I was stunned to read the following:

As we have been unable to identify officers to take the major leadership positions in the Round Table for next year, the following was determined by the 23 people in attendance at the June 18 meeting:

- 1. There will be no dues charged for the 2001-2002 season.*
- 2. There will be no monthly programs, Symposium or monthly newsletter for the 2001-2002 season.*
- 3. We will put out a call via newsletter in early February for officers for the 2002-2003 season.*
- 4. If an officer slate is determined by May 1, 2002, planning for a normal 2002-2003 season will commence.*
- 5. If an officer slate cannot be determined by May 1, 2002, the Round Table will be disbanded and any funds remaining in the Treasury*

will be donated to the Fort Ward Museum and Historical Site.

At a time when interest in the Civil War is perhaps at an all-time high since the centennial, the Alexandria CWRT cannot find leadership and commitment. In a city that is literally two hours away from Manassas, Chancellorsville, Brandy Station, the Wilderness, Fredericksburg, Antietam, Petersburg, Cold Harbor, Appomattox and Richmond, interest has waned to such a degree that no one can infuse the passion for History into its dwindling membership.

I look at our vibrant RT with its large membership, excellent programs, commitment to preservation, and spirit, and I am thankful to be part of it. But I have been a member long enough to realize that the faces of many earlier members have not been seen it quite a while. I know that a hard-working core of members comprise the engine of this organization, and that 'burn-out' can occur here also. When I first became president of the RT, I made a plea for volunteers and more active participation. There was a modest response to that request. As we stand at the start of a new program year, I make that request again. Bring a friend to a meeting; attend a conference or special event; buy a cachet or raffle ticket; volunteer to help with meetings; become more active. In up-coming newsletters there will be a host of activities for which we will need volunteers. There will be some special programs and events. There will be unique items to purchase or win in raffles. I never want to see a similar announcement in *The Dispatch*.

ODDS AND ENDS

John Ten Broeck enlisted in September 1861 in the 44th New York Infantry Regiment. He was later promoted to 1st lieutenant. He was believed killed by an air concussion, and was placed in a pit for burial. Fortunately he revived in time to escape being buried alive. (from "History of Saratoga County, New York")

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Thomas B. Bryan, the nephew of Robert E. Lee, purchased the copy of the Emancipation Proclamation for \$3000. Copies of the document were sold to help support the Soldier's Home in Chicago. It was later placed in the archives of the Chicago Historical Society, and burned during the Great Fire of 1871.

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Kelly Nolin, a 41 year old Vermont native, works in Row 28 of a state warehouse in Middlesex, a place that smells of cardboard and old paper. She uses a desk made of 2x4's and plywood, and a jury-rigged lighting system of bare bulbs and a long, heavy-duty extension cord. After work she drives to her one bedroom apartment in Montpelier.

However, three years ago she worked as a librarian at the Connecticut Historical Society. Kelly was looking for historical clothes to illustrate a lecture when she spied a wooden painted box behind protective curtains in a storage area. The top of the box was glass, and through it she saw fabric and the words, "*Presented to Treasury Guard Regiment by the ladies of the Treasury Department, 1864.*"

Nolin knew that one flag with that inscription had been on Lincoln's box in Ford's Theater the night of his assassination. John Wilkes Booth had

snagged his spur on that flag as he leapt to the stage. That flag is on display in Washington.

But there was a second Treasury flag on the box that fateful night, but it had been missing. It apparently had been given to a politically connected artifacts collector in Hartford, Connecticut by a Treasury Department official after the assassination. The collector gave it to his son, who in turn gave it to the Society in 1922. It had been stored ever since.

Nolin did the initial historical detective work while the flag was sent for restoration. The six -foot square flag with 35 stars and a painted eagle was displayed on July 5th, and is now part of the Society's *Civil War Treasures* exhibit through January 6, 2002. (exerpted from the Burlington *Free Press*, July 10,2001)

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I know there are many baseball fans in the RT. On June28, 2001, a ten stamp series of legendary baseball stadium was issued by the Postal Service. This is a highly desirable and collectible series, especially when combined with the Legends of Baseball set from last year. Set of the stadium stamps will be available at the September and October meetings at \$3.00 apiece, or 2 for \$5.00, or a complete set for \$25.00

Fleetwood Stamps and Coins is selling the 1995 Civil War pictorial postal card set (20 cards of the 20 stamps), cancelled First Day of Issue at Gettysburg, for \$35.00 This is the second set of cards ever issued by the Postal Service. There is a printing error on the Chancellorsville card with the date of the battle listed as **1883 instead of 1863**. The error was discovered too late, and the cards were never rescinded. However given the much smaller number of sets released, they are a unique oddity. Our price is **\$20 plain or \$25 cancelled**.

