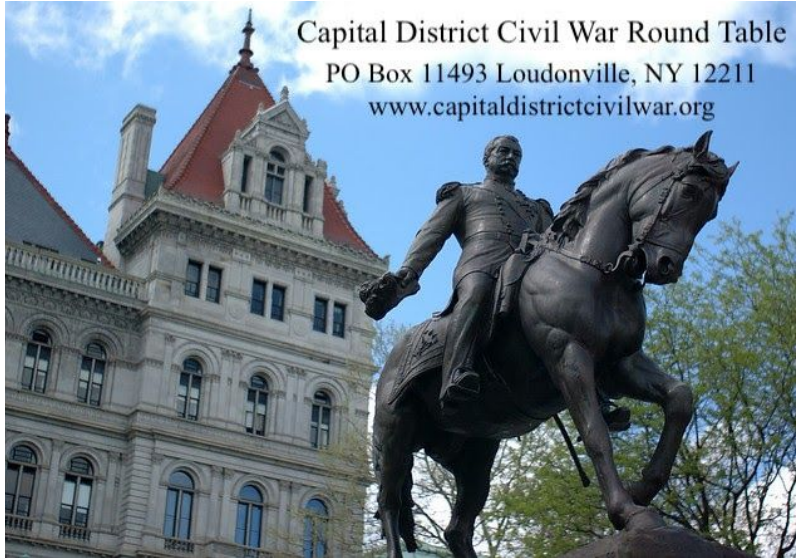


The Dispatch



Volume 37, Number 3

March 2020

REMEMBERING GETTYSBURG



**Union and Confederate Veterans Shaking Hands Across the Stone Wall at the 1938
"Blue and Gray Reunion" at Gettysburg, 1938.
Credit: National Archives**

MARCH MEETING

Friday, March 13, 2020

WATERVLIET SENIOR CENTER

1541 BROADWAY

WATERVLIET, NY

CHRIS GWINN

“What Gettysburg Meant”

Union and Confederate

Veterans Reflect on

America’s Most Famous

Battle

Social Hour 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Business Meeting 7:00 p.m.

Presentation 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Questions & Answers 8:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Our speaker is Chris Gwinn. In 2014 Gwinn was selected as the new Supervisory Park Ranger for the division of Interpretation and Education at Gettysburg National Military Park. Gwinn has served as an Interpretive Park Ranger at Gettysburg National Military Park since April 2012.

Gwinn, a 2006 graduate of Gettysburg College, began working at Gettysburg as an intern in 2003 and has served the park in a variety of capacities. In addition to his service at Gettysburg, Gwinn, who holds a Master’s Degree in Public History, served in interpretation and education positions at a variety of parks over the past eleven years including Antietam National Battlefield, Boston National Historical Park, and

the National Mall and Memorial Parks.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 10: Ralph Siegal will discuss controversies surrounding the Peach Orchard.

May 8: Phil Vitiello will present a program on the *CSS Hunley*.

June 12: Brandan Mills will talk about John Brown.

DUES ARE DUE

If the outside of your newsletter is marked, we have not received your dues for the year. Please mail \$35 to the Round Table to continue receiving the newsletter.

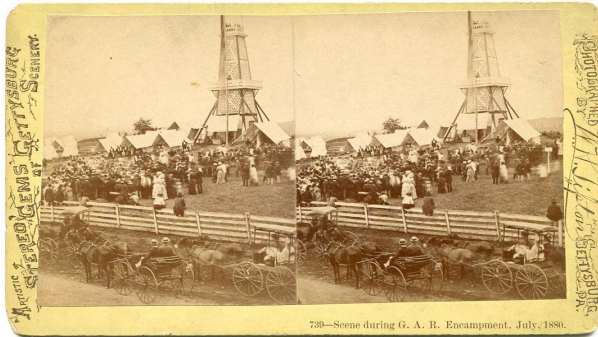
FIVE VERSIONS OF GETTYSBURG

by Erin Baillargeon

In 2015 Dr. Ben Dixon spoke to our Round Table about how the appearance and interpretation of the Gettysburg battlefield changed over time. Using his collection of over five thousand photographs, he presented five tours of the battlefields from the 1880s to the present. This is a summary of his presentation.

A tour of Gettysburg in the 1880s would have been run by local and regional veterans’ clubs. The five hundred acres of preserved battlefield focused on the Union fishhook and generally ignored the first day’s battle, with the exception of the location where General Reynolds died. Two

wooden towers were erected on the battlefield to allow visitors to see the grounds, but they did not tell the story of the battle. The few signs on the battlefield were generally inaccurate, both in terms of spelling and location.



Artistic Stereo Gems of Gettysburg Scenery from the 1880 G.A.R. encampment.

The top attraction of an 1880s tour would have been the Gatehouse and cemetery, where the first monument to Reynolds was located due to the popularity of the cemetery. Visitors were discouraged from walking amongst the graves. Culp’s Hill was another popular spot since visitors wanted to see the trees shot during the battle. Pickett’s Charge, referred to as Longstreet’s Assault by the guides, and Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain were both generally ignored.

A 1904 tour of Gettysburg would show a grand memorial park. The War Department, which ran the battlefield, had put in new trails and avenues. Fences were everywhere, especially around the monuments, as visitors were expected to look, but not touch. Visitors could take a trolley tour of the battlefield and see what some referred to as “the greatest collection of outdoor sculpture.” People were more concerned with beautifying the field than with authenticity. Springs had grand stone surrounds built over them

and more towers were built so that people could see the landscape and monuments.

Sites marked by wooden stakes in the 1870s now had iron posts with signs or decorative monuments. Ninety percent of the monuments were placed on the field in the 1880s and 1890s, with regiments redesigning their monuments to be bigger and better than the surrounding ones. Smaller monuments were relocated or had extra sections added to give the monument more height.



Marker for the 134 Regiment of New York Infantry.

Many African Americans visited Gettysburg on a 1904 tour as slavery was openly acknowledged by veterans and guides as the cause of the war. President Lincoln’s popularity was growing as people and newspapers remembered the Gettysburg Address. A popular spot for visitors was the Soldiers National Monument where people thought Lincoln delivered the Address. General Hancock was another popular hero, and many people wanted to see where he was wounded at the Angle. People in 1904 also saw an increasing number of Confederate veterans visiting the battlefield. Confederate Avenue and the High Water Mark monument were added as

Southern interpretations of Gettysburg shifted away from being seen as a loss. 1904 is also when General Sickles introduced a bill for Gettysburg to become a National Military Park.

Visitors to Gettysburg in 1940 would see a very different battlefield. By this time there were hardly any veterans of the Civil War left, so it was no longer seen in the same deferential light. Fencing was removed and visitors were encouraged to walk the fields. A comprehensive automobile tour was developed and the first day's field was finally preserved. There was also a Gettysburg airport so that visitors could take an aerial tour.



Helpful Boy Scouts greet veterans to the 1938 reunion.

But, by 1940 African American visitors to Gettysburg were rare. The acknowledged cause of the war had shifted from slavery to states' rights, and Robert E. Lee's popularity was rising. Grand Confederate statues had been erected, and guides would take visitors to see these reminders of Confederate bravery and heroism. Myths of temporary truces became popular as they fit the idea of reconciliation and reunification.

A visit to Gettysburg in the 1970s

would be a visit to a nature park. People went to see the trees and deer as much as to see the monuments. Places were getting overgrown because the Park Service did not have the funds to cut back trees. To encourage more visitors to the Park, and thus acquire more funds, providing an entertaining experience became more important than maintaining authenticity. Visitors would be encouraged to look for the still-living 120 year old buzzards that may have eaten the casualties of the battle. This is also when people widely spread the myth that the horses' hooves on statues had meanings. There were also many businesses on islands of privately-owned land within the park. These restaurants, cabins, and souvenir shops, along with casually costumed interpreters, also helped to entice visitors to the park. This commercialism exploded when President Eisenhower announced he would retire to Gettysburg.



Gettysburg Observation Tower, built in the 1970s.

Lee was the hero of Gettysburg in the 1970s with most crowds going to see the Virginia monument and Pickett's Charge. General Meade's headquarters was even left off the official park maps. A typical 1970s tour would be a climatic tour starting at the High Water

mark. People would then tour Devil's Den, Little Round Top, and go to Confederate Avenue to see where Pickett's Charge began.

By the 2000s, Lee was no longer the great hero; he had been replaced by Chamberlain due to the popularity of Michael Shaara's The Killer Angels, the movie *Gettysburg*, and Ken Burn's series *The Civil War*. Visitors spent less time at the Angle or Virginia monument because of the extra time spent on Little Round Top. Guides even found themselves needing to defend Lee's orders for Pickett's charge.



Gouverneur Warren atop Little Round Top.

Today, tours of Gettysburg attempt to regain some of the authenticity lost in recent decades. Myths are being corrected. Living historians have replaced costumed interpreters to more accurately tell the stories of the men who fought at Gettysburg. The landscape is becoming more accurate as the Park Service removes overgrowth, non-historical structures, replants orchards, and reproduces the fences that existed at the time of the battle.

The changes to the Gettysburg battlefield clearly reflect the changing

interests and interpretations of the American public. Early tours of the battlefield would likely involve many Civil War veterans who treated the place very respectfully and reverently and who expected the same from the general public. As the causes of the Civil War were reshaped to focus more on states' rights than slavery, more Confederate monuments were constructed and fewer African Americans visited. As new research has come to light and become more popular with the general public, Gettysburg battlefield has become a more accurate representation of what it was like to be there one hundred fifty years ago.

SAD NEWS

Longtime Civil War Round Table member Gene Gore, 83, passed away February 16, 2020, following complications with heart disease. He

will be loved and missed by his wife of thirty-three years, Alice Turcotte, his children, Bill (Elle) Aal, Julie Hauptman, Brenda (Brian) Hatch, and Bill (Jen) Turcotte, and by numerous grandchildren and friends. Gene was predeceased by his first wife, Helen Hauptman Gore; his parents, Raymond and Evelyn Gore; and his brothers, Raymond and Robert Gore.

Born, raised and educated in western Massachusetts, he had a long career in educational psychology. He retired from Mechanicville C.S.D. He was also a life-long history buff. Gene was active



in Capital District Civil War Round Table and Da Buffs groups and was the author of two historical novels based on his family's history during the Revolutionary War (*Caleb*, 2017) and Civil War (*Zachariah Tufts*, 2019). At Gene's request, no services will be held. Condolences may be made at meyersfuneralhome.com

CDCWRT donations received in Gene's name will be donated in his memory.

CIVIL WAR GRAVESTONE RESTORATION

The Albany Diocesan Cemeteries has dozens of Civil War veterans' gravestones in Calvary Cemetery, Glenmont. Many of them have inscriptions that are difficult to read because they are covered with lichen and black stains from pollutants.

They are asking for volunteers to join them in Calvary Cemetery on Friday, May 22nd between 10 AM and 2 PM.

Kelly Grimaldi will show volunteers how to properly and safely clean gravestones. They will have water pumps, nylon brushes, wooden picks and a specially formulated, non-toxic cleaning agent called D2 Biological Solution available to use to properly clean veterans' gravestones.

Contact Kelly to sign up: (518) 350-7679 or Kelly@ADCemeteries.org.

Calvary Cemetery is located at 481 Rt. 9W, Glenmont, NY 12077

BOARD UPDATES

The Executive Board met on Monday, February 17, to discuss the business of the Round Table.

The Operating Account has \$2,821.42 after receiving four membership renewals and paying for printing the newsletter. The Preservation Account has \$2,650.42.

Program Chair Matt George has speakers scheduled through June, 2021 with very few openings. Matt is also involved with the Underground Railroad History Project's annual conference in June. Details will be shared closer to the event.

Mark Koziol and Nick Thony have been actively promoting the Round Table on social media. Mark runs the Round Table's Facebook page, and Nick produces our podcasts.

The next meeting of the Executive Board is Monday, March 16. If you wish for more information, please contact any board member.

BUFORD'S VIEW

by Matt George

Except for the second half of the train trip to Savannah, the American Battlefield Trust Conference was quite enjoyable. A number of unfortunate events occurred after leaving D.C. that caused the train to be five hours late (including twice clearing trees that had fallen on the tracks). However, Savannah is a remarkably beautiful city.

The Saturday tour was the highlight of the Conference. The tour guide was A. Wilson Greene, who spoke to us a few months ago. Will, formerly the director at Pamplin Park, now lives in Waldon, Tennessee. We traveled to both Fort McAllister and Fort Pulaski.

Fort Pulaski was of particular interest to me. As many of you know, baseball was a major amateur sport in this country even before the Civil War began. In the 1850s it was already being called America's pastime. The first and very rare photograph of soldiers playing baseball was taken at Fort Pulaski in 1862. The gift shop has that picture on, of all things, a refrigerator magnet. I asked Will about it, and he told me the soldiers were from the 48th New York Regiment. This was a regiment from Brooklyn. I wondered if a few of these men were Dodger fans twenty or thirty years later (in the 1880s). I asked the staff at the Visitors Center if they would send me a copy of the original picture. They said they would, but I have not yet received anything.

The tour of Fort McAllister was also quite interesting. The Navy tried unsuccessfully nine times to reduce this fort with the newest gunboats and ironclads. However, it was a dirt fort, not brick. And so, after each attack the Confederates would bring in slaves and repair the fort as good as new. The most famous of the gunboats that pounded the fort in several futile attacks was the *Montauk*. The captain was John Worden who had been the captain of the *Monitor* in the duel with

the *CSS Virginia*. The fort was eventually taken by land assault.

The Sunday morning tour of historic Savannah included a scenic park on almost every other block, with a beautiful church near each one. Since Georgia was founded by James Oglethorpe who willingly accepted colonists of many faiths, the churches of Savannah represent a wide variety of denominations. The guide said if we had waited a couple of weeks the flowers would have been in bloom. This would have made this tour even more impressive.

Each park featured fountains and/or monuments. One park had a statue of the founder of the Methodist Church, John Wesley. Wesley was a minister there for a few years.

The train ride back was uneventful and on time. I was able, during the course of the trip, to finish reading two books and half of a third. My travel funds are now somewhat depleted, so the next long trip won't probably happen until early summer.

Our next speaker is Chris Gwinn, a tour guide at Gettysburg. His talk is entitled "Why We Fought" – Union and Confederate Veterans Remember Gettysburg. One of the officers he mentioned when I took his tour last summer is Colonel Rice, who is buried in Albany's Rural Cemetery.

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

_____ If marked, we have not received your dues for this year.

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.

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			
Refreshments	Dean Long and Luanne Whitbeck		
Webmaster			
Historian			
Education	Matt George		
Newsletter	Rosemary Nichols and Erin Baillargeon		