

The Dispatch

Newspaper of the

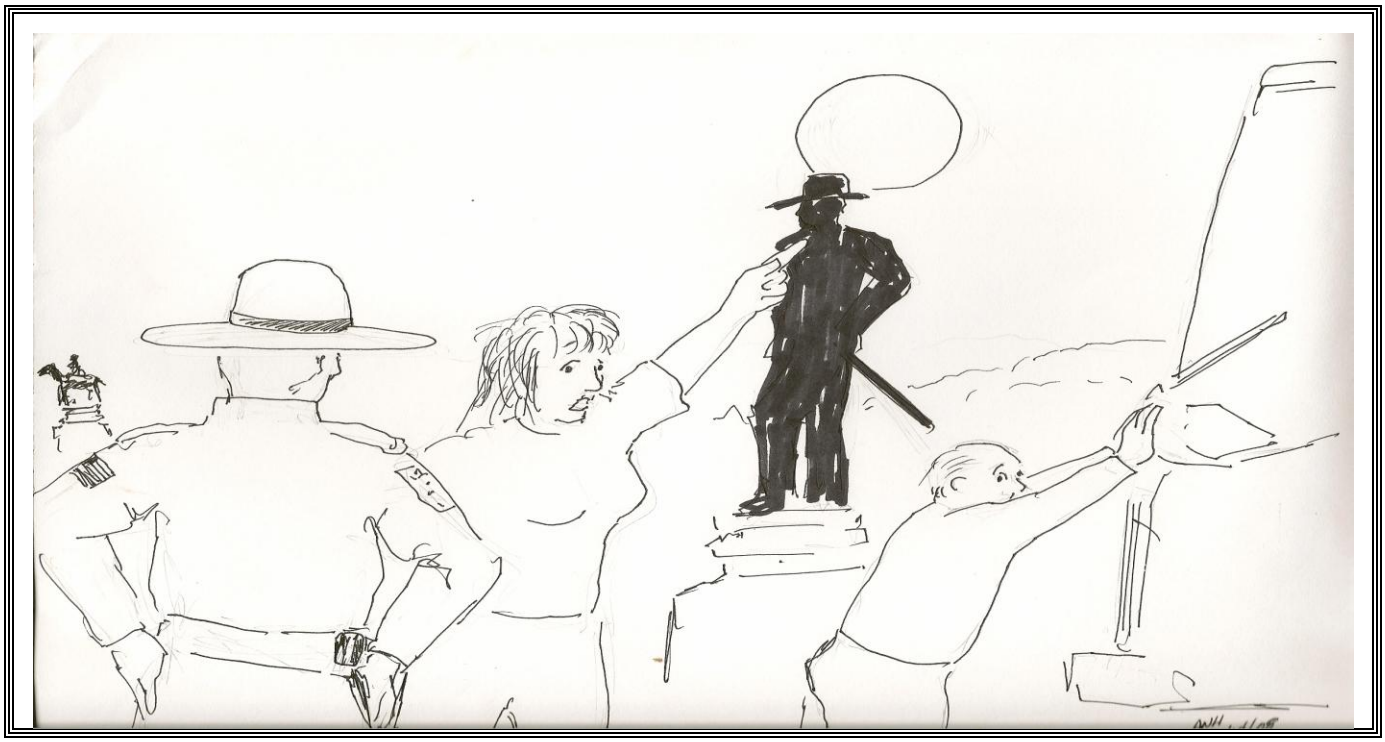
CAPITAL DISTRICT CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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



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BUS LOAD ALMOSTARRESTED ON BATTLEFIELD AFTER HOURS



On the CDCWRT Fall Tour of Gettysburg, a guide (who shall remain nameless) suggested to Sue Knost that the High Water Mark and the statue of Gen. Webb would be the place to visit under the full October moon. Our intrepid bus driver, Greg Moak, maneuvered the vehicle to the desired location, but after the park had closed. Officer Douglas Murphy appeared and demanded an explanation. Col. Knost attempted to explain the astronomical facts that required the group to be there after 10:00 p.m. Artist, Art Henningson, captured the event. No tickets were issued, but the Colonel was placed on the TSA watch list.

NOVEMBER MEETING
Friday, November 14, 2008

The Movie Gettysburg:
Grassroots Production and the Role of the Re-enactor

GUILDERLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY
WESTERN AVENUE
GUILDERLAND, NY

SOCIAL HOUR	**6:00-7:00 PM**
BUSINESS MEETING	**7:00-7:30 PM**
PRESENTATION	**7:30-8:30 PM**
Q&A AND SOCIAL	**8:30-9:30 PM**

CDCWRT MEETING

The next meeting of the CDCWRT will be on Friday, November 14, 2008 at the Guilderland Public Library. Our guest speaker will be our own Capital District Civil War Round Table member and Board member, Howard Young. Howie is a re-enactors and participated in the production of the movie, **GETTYSBURG.** ***He will talk about his experience in this historic production.***

Michael Shaara was a successful writer of award-winning science-fiction short stories. Reflecting on an extraordinary experience with his family visiting the Gettysburg battlefield, he became obsessed with vtelling the story of that event through the eyes of the main characters themselves. After seven years of teaching by day and writing by night, he completed the manuscript, **The Killer Angels,** ***in1974.***

The manuscript was rejected by the first fifteen publishers because it was a book about war during the period of intense anti-war feelings about Vietnam. Shaara finally found a small independent publisher, but just after the novel was released, the publisher was purchased by Random House. Shaara acquired boxes of books that he stored in his basement.

In 1975 Michael Shaara won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Suddenly the book was highly sought after, but there were few copies available. Jeff Shaara, Michael's son, related that people came to his house on Sunday afternoon's, inquiring about copies of the novel. His father sold them copies from his basement.

Michael Shaara suffered a fatal heart attack on the fifth of May 1988. Ron Maxwell, a movie director, became interested in the Civil War and was given a copy of the book to read. He liked the book and purchased the rights to make a movie based on the book from the Shaara family. It initially was to be a mini-series on TV for ABC, but ABC backed out. Maxwell was able to sell the project to Ted Turner, who also had become interested in the Civil War. As the project progressed, both men felt it should be made into a full length movie and not for TV.

Thousands of re-enactors participated in the film for no pay other than support for their preservation activities. This was the first time the National Park Service allowed the motion picture industry to film scenes on the battlefield, especially at Devil's Den and Little Round Top. After the movie was released, there was new interest in **The Killer Angels.** ***The novel was published again and rose to the top of the best seller list for fiction in the New York Times for a number of weeks.***

Howie will talk about his experience living and working in the field as the filming occurred. He will also talk about the emotional experience portraying a man on the actual fields in which the soldiers fought and died.

A short movie entitled, **The Making of Gettysburg,** ***will be shown after Howie's presentation.***

Along with the stars of the film, there were cameo roles for Ted Turner and Ken Burns. And Michael Shaara was there also. His son Jeff said that his father had written himself into the book as the fictitious solder, Buster Kilrain. Although Michael Shaara never knew of the belated success of his novel, it sparked the literary interest of his son. Writing in his father's style, Jeff has published the prequel and sequel to his father's book, thus completing a trilogy about the Civil War.

Jeff has also published two novels on the American

Revolution, one on the Mexican War and one on World War I. He is completing a trilogy on World War II, with the first two volumes already released.

OCTOBER MEETING

CDCWRT members gained insight into the background of the North's early industrialization through Janet Shideler's presentation *The Beginning of Northern Industrial Might: Textile Mills and Worker Life in New England* at our October 10th meeting. Great Britain's Industrial Revolution had already changed the face of that country and the lives of a large part of its population by the end of the 18th century. Recognizing that their industrial production had led to their superiority as a trading nation, export of industrial technology was forbidden.

However, Francis Cabot Lowell, an enterprising and brilliant Massachusetts entrepreneur, traveled to Britain where he visited textile mills, literally memorizing everything he saw. When he returned, he replicated British technology, inventing and improving as he went.

In 1814 Lowell and his Boston Associates erected the first textile mill in Waltham. One of their innovations, what then was a unique method of raising capital, was selling shares. A few years after Lowell's death, a community along the Merrimac River was named Lowell in his honor, becoming one of New England's largest mill towns. New England mills typically did total production from spinning thread to weaving cloth, and the New England mill towns rapidly began to diversify, manufacturing many other products in addition to textiles.

New England had the advantages of plentiful water power and a ready labor supply of young farm girls who eagerly sought jobs in the noisy, dangerous and unhealthy mills, willing to work 12 to 13 hours daily, receiving $3.50 for a six day work week. Now, instead of living in a rural setting marked by daylight hours and changing seasons, life was regulated by the factory bell that began clanging a wake-up call at 4:30 a.m. and ending with a 10 p.m. curfew warning.

At first the New England female work force was chaperoned, paying half their wages for room and board. Paternalistic mill owners provided opportunities for self-improvement, and girls even wrote for a publication called *The Lowell Offering,* voicing their sympathy for the plight of slaves and the need for labor unions. By the late 1840s the young women were replaced in the mills by immigrant labor, first the Irish, and then as years went by, French Canadians, Poles and Greeks.

Meanwhile, the South began to develop its own industry in Georgia and the Carolinas. Hampered by a shortage of investment capital, the earliest mills failed, but by the 1830s mill construction resumed on the edge of the Piedmont with its abundant water power. Even borrowing northern expertise, southern factories never reached the level of operations found in the North. By 1850 there were 20,000 spindles in the South compared to Lowell's 320,000 spindles and 10,000 looms.

Augusta became the "Lowell of the South," and the region slowly began to see the growth of a skilled work force. With the outbreak of the Civil War, factories turned to the war effort, often employing women to replace men who had gone to fight. Slaves were not employed in southern factories. Later in the war Sherman targeted southern factories such as Roswell and New Manchester destroying countless mills. In other southern areas mill machinery was worn out and impossible to replace. Southern industry was devastated just when it had begun to show promise.

The North's early and extensive industrialization as exemplified by the textile industry was a great strength in conducting and winning the Civil War.

This excellent summary was provided by the Round Table's secretary, Mary Ellen Johnson.

BOARD MEETING

The Board meeting was held on October 15, 2008. The treasurer's reported noted $1122.13 in the regular account and $8543.83 in the preservation account. There was $210 in sales of books and sweat shirts at the last meeting. Two donations were discussed and approved: $200 to the Adams County Historical Society in appreciation of guides for the bus trip, and $644 to the Civil War Preservation Trust in a match for purchase of land at Deep Bottom, Virginia.

The bus trip was successful with 31 attendees. The Cyclorama painting was described as spectacular. The CDCWRT will sponsor a postal cancellation at the Gettysburg Visitor Center on the 145th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address on Wednesday, November 19th. The Memorial Parade will occur on the weekend, and the RT will staff at least two sites for the sale of cachets and T-shirts. It was announced that RT member, Chris Kolakowski, has resigned his position at the Perryville Battlefield Association, and has accepted a position at the United States Military Museum at Ft. McPherson in Georgia. Chris' efforts at Perryville have been successful, and we wish him continued success at his new position.

Up-coming programs were discussed and a slate of candidates will be proposed for the elections at the December meeting. Raffle tickets will be included with the November and December newsletters. Tickets will be one dollar apiece, and the drawing will take place at the December meeting. The artwork for the raffle is described in this newsletter. Other artwork donated by Russ Denegar is again listed in this newsletter.

A MOST GENEROUS DONATION

Long-time Round Table member, Russ Denegar, has moved to Connecticut for health reasons. He has donated a number of framed prints, many by the notable Civil War artist, Don Troiani. One of the framed prints will be raffled-off at the December meeting (see below for details). However, the following is a list of the framed prints which can be purchased by members or friends. The listed prices are LESS than prices listed on the internet. IN ADDITION, if purchased locally, there will be no shipping charges. IN ADDITION, because we are tax-exempt, there is no sales tax.

Hampton's Duel has been sold.

The Red Devils
Battle of Gaines Mill, 27th June 1862
By Don Troiani - print no: 756/1000
Value $700 plus $150 frame
Yours for $500

First at Manassas
By Don Troiani - print no: 528/1250
Value $350 plus $150 frame
Yours for $400

12th Virginia Cavalry, 1864
By Don Troiani – print no: 623/750
Value $250 plus $100 frame
Yours for $250 **REDUCED**

Colonel of the Confederacy
By Don Troiani – print no: 287/1250
Value $320 plus $100 frame
Yours for $250 **REDUCED**

Kershaw's Brigade
By Don Prechtel – print no:228/400
Value $175 plus $75 frame
Yours for $175

Mortal Encounter at Beverly Ford
By Don Stivers
Value$200 plus $100 frame
Yours for $225

If you are interested in purchasing one of these prints, please contact Matt George at 355-2131. He can arrange to have you view the print or he will bring it to a meeting.

RAFFLE! RAFFLE! RAFFLE!

One of Rus Denegar's framed prints will be raffled-off at the December meeting of the CDCWRT. This is your opportunity to acquire a framed print for **ONE DOLLAR** if you are lucky. If you are unlucky, you should rest assured that the money you spend on tickets will all go to preservation of battlefield land. If you don't consider this a bargin, then the Grinch has taken your heart!

Ten tickets will be mailed to each member of the Round Table with the November and December newsletters. Tickets will be $1.00 apiece. Ticket stubs and money can be mailed to the CDCWRT or brought to the meeting. Do not mail cash. You may bring cash and your tickets to the meeting in November or December.

If additional tickets are desired, please contact any member of the Board. **Tickets will not be sold in the library since this violates library policy.** The drawing will occur after the election of officers.

The name of the print is:
We Have Got Them Started. Come On! Come On!
The Union breakthrough at Kernstown on the 23rd March,1862
By Keith Rocco, signed and numbered 256/500
Valued at $425

The long afternoon of March 23, 1862 was winding to a close. Federal forces were gathering for a final push as the Confederate forces were crumbling under the strain of fighting against superior numbers. A stone wall at the crest of Sandy Ridge separated the two forces.

The day had begun in promising fashion for Gen. Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson. After Bull Run the impetuous general exercised independent command over a small force of 3100 men in the Shenandoah Valley. Acting on sloppy intelligence from his cavalry commander, Turner Ashby, Jackson attacked what he believed to be a weak Union detachment in the vicinity of Kernstown. This seemed a golden opportunity to gobble up a small enemy force.

Union general, Games Shields, was wounded and turned command over to Col. Nathan Kimball of the 14th Indiana. Kimball posted his 6400 men on Prichard's Hill and they were supported by artillery and a brigade in reserve. Jackson arrived on the field and ordered an assault without verifying the accuracy of Ashby's report.

Jackson decided on a flank attack rather than directly assaulting the hill. He used a partially screened elevation, Sandy Ridge which ran parallel to the Union position and which had a heavy stone wall on its crest. Several disjointed attacks by the Confederates were unsuccessful, and they fled back to Sandy Ridge.

Jackson by now was aware that the enemy's strength was greater than he had believed, and he ordered Gen,. Richard Garnett to bring up the Stonewall Brigade. Garnett's deployment went awry, earning him Jackson's eternal wrath. Both sides advanced toward the stone wall but the Confederates reached it first and drove the Union forces back. Fighting now centered on the half-mile wall.

Kimball ordered his reserve brigade to assault the wall, and repeated attacks were repelled as the Confederate line thinned, and ammunition dwindled. Garrett, realizing the position could not be held, ordered a withdrawal. As Garrett retreated, the Federals attacked. Spurred on by a vigorous "Hoosier Yell" Corporal Seldon Allen Day of the 14th Indiana shouted, "We have got them started. Come on! Come on!" The retreat turned into a rout past an infuriated Jackson. **(They ran through the brambles and they ran through the bushes, they ran through the briers where a rabbit couldn't go!)**

The consequences of this action were far reaching. This day was to be Jackson's only defeat in his infamous Valley Campaign, but for this day at least, the Federals wore the laurels of victory.

(This is a modified version of the description on the back of the print by author, Robert I. Girardi. Keith Rocco is a renowned British military artist who has also painted a number of American Civil War pieces.)

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.

On Wednesday, November 19th, guest speaker Ken Burns will talk on the 145th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address on Remembrance Day. The CDCWRT will have a special postal cancellation in the new Visitor Center commemorating the event.

Saturday, November 22nd, marks the Remembrance Day Parade in Gettysburg. This is always a huge re-enactor event, and will be more so on a major anniversary year. Volunteers are needed to man possibly three different sites selling cachets and

T-shirts. If interested in helping, contact J.J. Jennings or Sue Knost.

Sunday, December 7th, marks the Troy Victorian Stroll, as well as the 67th anniversary of Pearl Harbor. This is another local event where the CDCWRT is present to promote our organization and raise funds for preservation. Volunteers are always needed.

On Friday, December 12th, the CDCWRT will hold its annual elections and holiday party at the last meeting of the 2008 year. Chris Kelly will be our speaker on the topic of Christmas during the Civil War. Chris' presentation is entitled "*We Were Marching Christmas Day."*

Friday, January 9th, 2009 will be the Potpourri Meeting of the CDCWRT. This meeting features presentations from our membership. If you have a story you would like to tell, or an item that you would like to show, or a Civil War relative that you would like to talk about, or a period letter that you would like to read, this is your opportunity. Presentations generally are 5-20 minutes. Please talk to Sue Knost if you would like to present. If you have items that you would just like to display, talk to Sue to have a table available for the meeting.

ELECTION 2008

This is not a rehash of the November 4th results, but rather the Round Table's election of officers and board members for the upcoming year. The Nominating Committee proposes the following slate.

President	**Matt George**
Vice-President	**A. Howard Young**
Secretary	**Mary Ellen Johnson**
Treasurer	**Fran McCashion**
At-Large	**Art Henningson**
At-Large	**Lew Warner**
At-Large	**open**

This is a proposed slate. Note that there is one At-Large position which is unfilled. If you are interested, please let any of the present officers know. Nominations for ANY position are also open from the floor at the December meeting. Candidates must be members in good standing and with dues paid to date. Likewise, a nomination from the floor and its seconding must also come from members in good standing and with dues paid to date.

As I worked on this newsletter, I was listening to the concession speech of John McCain and the victory speech of Barack Obama. If you are reading this newsletter, you are interested in the Civil War. Whether you voted for McCain or Obama, you participated in a historic election. I am reminded once again of one of my favorite and often referenced quotes.

THE CIVIL WAR IS THE CRUX OF OUR HISTORY.
YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND ANY PART OF OUR PAST,
FROM THE CONVENING OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION,
DOWN TO THIS MORNING,
WITHOUT EVENTUALLY ARRIVING AT THE CIVIL WAR.

BERNARD DE VOTO

Whenever some realizes I'm interested in the Civil War, they give me a puzzled look. It's old stuff. It's not pertinent to today. I respond with De Voto's quote. I explain that he was a Pulitzer Prize winning historian and author. And I explain how the Civil War is alive and with us every day. November 4,2008 is just the most recent example. I rest my case.

THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY CYCLE 1858 – 2008

The following is excerpted from an excellent new book by Bruce Chadwick entitled **1858: Abraham Lincoln, Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, Ulysses S. Grant and the War They Failed to See.**

In March 1857, the Supreme Court was ready to announce its decision in the Dred Scott Case. The five Southern justices were in favor of maintaining slavery's status quo. Republican justices, McLean (OH) and Curtis (MA) told Chief Justice Taney that they would not only vote for Scott's freedom but they would also publish a minority opinion denouncing slavery in the territories. Democrats Samuels (NY) and Grier (PA) were noncommittal. Many Southern

congressmen and President Buchanan felt that one of them had to be convinced to vote with the Southerners for a 6-3 decision to give the appearances that justices North and South were in favor of upholding the slave laws. A 5-4 decision would bolster Republican charges that a slave conspiracy ruled the capital.

Buchanan secretly wrote Grier who voted against Scott. Grier admitted his role in this impropriety in a letter to Buchanan, "We will not let any others of our brethren know anything about the cause of our anxiety to produce this result." The letter is fact, but Buchanan was rumored to also have seen an advance copy of Taney's decision. Samuels voted with the majority for the final 7-2 decision. Taney wrote a scathing majority opinion. He declared slaves were not humans and had no standing to file legal suits. He declared the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional.

Buchanan had been inaugurated two days before the decision, and he was pleased with the ruling. The ruling was criticized over the next year, especially by Lincoln (running for the Senate in 1858) and Seward (running for president in 1860). Buchanan continued to extol the decision at late as December 1859 in his annual message to Congress. But in March 1858, on the one year anniversary of Dred Scott, Buchanan and Jefferson Davis were acrimoniously defending the newly passed, proslavery Lecompton Constitution for Kansas. The Scott decision reminded Northerners that despite what the President said about national unity, he was in the Southern camp on slavery.

Stephen Douglas was a fellow Democrat, but he ran against Buchanan at the 1856 Democratic Convention. Douglas graciously stepped aside after it became apparent he did not have enough delegates. He urged all to support Buchanan and contributed $42,000 to the Buchanan Campaign. Douglas assumed Buchanan would be grateful for the support, but the president-elect was not. Buchanan let Douglas know that he would not play any role in the administration. Douglas was furious.

Earlier Douglas had introduced the Kansas-Nebraska bill which under his popular sovereignty theory would allow Kansas to be admitted as a free state since most of the Kansas farmers were free-state men. Douglas had gained enormous popularity with Southerners because the bill opened the territories to slavery if the resident desired it. Northerners and his neighbors in Illinois were furious with him and booed him when he tried to speak about his position. In November 1857, Buchanan made it known that he supported the pro-slavery Lecompton Constitution for Kansas. Despite the fact that two-thirds of Kansans were against slavery, pro-slavery forces managed to elect a majority to the state legislature and proposed Lecompton.

But Lecompton first had to go through the Senate Committee on Territories, chaired by Douglas. Douglas suggested the President work with him on the issue, but Buchanan heatedly reminded Douglas that he would suffer harsh consequences if he broke with the administration on Kansas. Douglas plunged into the work of defeating Lecompton as 1858 opened. By March 1858, Buchanan was blaming all his woes on the Douglas Democrats. The President continued to have a short-sighted view of the toll that slavery was taking on the nation. Buchanan believed that if Kansas entered the Union as a slave state, it would end the national debate over slavery and demoralize the Republican party.

Lecompton passed in the Senate but was defeated in the House. Kansans elected a new free-state legislature a year later, and entered as a free state in 1861. But Buchanan began to organize forces to expel Douglas from the Democratic party. The President cancelled lucrative printing contracts to Illinois newspapers in order to put pressure on Douglas Democrats. Then the feud began to get ugly! The efforts of Buchanan began to backfire and across the country there was support for Douglas and denunciation of the President. Even Buchanan's own vice president, John Breckinridge announced in October 1858 that he would support Douglas.

In July 1858 Douglas decided to forge ahead in the Illinois Senate race against Abraham Lincoln without White House support. He had growing public and press support for him across the country in his war with Buchanan. Southerners even supported him. He returned to Chicago in a well orchestrated arrival. His train was met with a 150 cannon salute, a huge parade, a speech to a crowd of 30,000 and a final fireworks display. If he could defeat Lincoln and the Buchaneers, the dual victory would make him invincible in the 1860 election.

(End part I of my summary of the book, **1858.**)