



# 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](http://timesunion.com/communities/cdcwrt)

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*Abdominal wounds were almost always fatal during the Civil War. At the May meeting of the CDCWRT, Sgt. Rice Bull will personally describe his abdominal wounding and his miraculous survival that has many similarities to Gen. Barnum's.*

## **ARMY MEDICAL MUSEUM**

### ***Recovery after a penetrating gunshot wound of the abdomen***

Major H. A. Barnum, 12<sup>th</sup> New York, was wounded at Malvern Hill, July 1, 1862, by a conical musket ball, which entered midway between the umbilicus and the anterior superior spinous process of the left ilium (pelvic bone) and emerged posteriorly. The wound was regarded as fatal. On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, he was captured and was taken to Libby Prison, but was exchanged on July 17<sup>th</sup>. He was conveyed by water to Albany, where Dr. March dilated the anterior wound by an incision, and extracted several fragments of ilium, and directed that a tent should be worn. He was promoted to command of the 14<sup>th</sup> New York in January 1863 after the anterior wound healed. In mid-March a large abscess formed and evacuated itself at the site of the anterior wound. In April, Dr. March again operated, but no bone fragments were found. The Colonel returned to duty and commanded his regiment at Gettysburg. In January 1864 another large abscess formed and evacuated itself posteriorly. The opening of the wound was enlarged, and a braid of fiber was passed through the wound front to back. This was replaced by candlewick as the wound reduced in size, and was replaced finally by a single linen thread. The wound still drained slightly. Promoted to brigade command, General Barnum was in the field almost continuously for two years. The picture was taken in August 1865. He received a right forearm wound at Kenesaw Mountain, and a shell wound to the side at Peach Tree Creek.

## **May Meeting Friday 05/10/02**

**Guilderland Public Library  
2228 Western Ave.  
Guilderland, NY**

<b>SOCIAL HOUR</b>	<b>6:30 PM</b>
<b>BUSINESS MEETING</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
<b>PROGRAM</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>

### **CDCWRT MEETING**

*The May meeting of the CDCWRT will be held on Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, at the Guilderland Public Library. Our speaker will be our own military historian, Robert Mulligan. Bob has been a CDCWRT member since the beginning. He is noted for his first person portrayals of Civil War figures. For this presentation, Bob will portray Sgt. Rice C. Bull, 123<sup>rd</sup> New York Volunteer Infantry.*

*Bull was wounded twice in his first battle at Chancellorsville, and was held prisoner for nine days. His wounds were considered fatal, and he was left on the battlefield first by his own regiment. A Rebel soldier took pity on him and cared for him until the Confederate Army moved on. He was then recovered by Union forces.*

*Years later, in 1915, while a Troy bank official and railroad executive, he wrote his memoirs. These were later edited and published in 1977 by R.P.I. Prof. K. Jack Bauer in a book entitled, "Soldiering: The Civil War Diary of Rice C. Bull." Bull's unembellished account remains in print as one of the best veterans' memoirs of the Civil War.*

### **APRIL MEETING**

The Spring Banquet was a huge success with 100 in attendance. The guests heard a superb presentation by our noted speaker, William C. Davis, author of numerous books on the Civil War period. Mr. Davis spoke on the last days of the Confederacy, and autographed copies of his 2001 book, *An Honorable Defeat: The Last Days of the Confederate Government*. Unfortunately, copies of his newest book, *Look Away*, had not arrived from the publisher, although an autographed copy was the major raffle item.

A sampling of opinions indicated the buffet style dinner was well received, and we will probably continue this format for one of our annual banquets.

### **BOARD MEETING**

The April Board Meeting was held on Thursday, the 25<sup>th</sup>. The treasurer's report was postponed until the May meeting. The two bus trips, West Point and Antietam, were discussed and were felt to be very successful. The issue of 'no shows' at the departure time was discussed. In the case of the West Point trip there were security check-point issues at WP that required the bus to be at the gate at a specified time for the special activities of the day, namely the ceremony for the issuance of the new West Point coin and stamp. After waiting an additional ten minutes, the bus left without four members. As it turned out, three were sick and one was late. The Antietam trip had more leeway, but fortunately all were present at scheduled departure time.

As has been stated, there are no refunds in such circumstances, since the cost per individual is based on the number attending, especially in a day trip. It would be unfair to burden the remaining attendees with the transportation costs of the absentees. Moreover, at the time of departure, we have no way of knowing if a 'no show' is late but is just two minutes away, or if there has

been some personal or family event that arose suddenly, and the member has decided to cancel out completely.

The Board also voted to have the CDCWRT join the NYS Military Heritage Institute in Saratoga as a Charter Member (life membership) for \$500. Charter members will be recognized on a plaque to be displayed in the lobby of the museum. In another action, the Board voted to donate \$806 to the Civil War Preservation Trust to purchase one acre of land at School House Ridge at Harpers Ferry. Those who went on the Antietam trip looked at the ridge where Confederate artillery convinced Col. Dixon Miles to surrender. Through a unique partnership worked out by CWPT, a \$1.00 donation is leveraged into \$8.30, or \$6690 for our donation. Thus CWPT will need to raise only \$187,407 to purchase the 232 acres for over \$1.7million. A permanent bronze on-site marker on the property will read: CDCWRT (Albany, NY)

## UP-COMING EVENTS

**On April 25<sup>th</sup>, the George Washington exhibit opened in the Guilderland Library.** This exhibit will be there for several weeks.

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**On May 18<sup>th</sup>, Saturday, at Peebles Island, there will be an open house of the state historical preservation facilities.** This annual event allows the public to see how museum objects are cleaned and restored. Take 787 to Cohoes; turn right onto route 470 (Ontario St.); turn left onto Delaware Ave. just before the bridge; the labs are about one mile down the road.

**On June 8-9, Saturday and Sunday, Civil War Days will be held in Petersboro, NY.** This small town on route 20 between

Utica and Syracuse was a stop on the Underground Railroad. Each year reenactors, historians and vendors gather to celebrate the region's Civil War heritage. This has been a cancellation event for the CDCWRT for several years now. Volunteers are requested by our Program Chair, Sue.

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**Our June meeting will be held on Friday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, at Guilderland Library.**

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**The American Battlefield Protection Program will hold its 6<sup>th</sup> National Conference on Battlefield Preservation in Albany on August 16-18, 2002 at the Crowne Plaza.** This is the only national conference that brings together all professions involved in the many facets of battlefield protection to discuss, exchange, and present ideas that lead to the long-term protection of our nation's historic battlefields. This conference will attract 200-250 nationally known historians and preservationists, among others. A bus tour of Saratoga National Historic Park and other sites led by **Edwin C. Bearss, NPS Historian Emeritus**, will be offered on August 16<sup>th</sup>. The CDCWRT has been asked to participate in this event. More details will follow as they become available.

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Member Dave Wilcox answered the Purple Heart question. Originally known as the "Badge of Military Merit," it was initiated by George Washington during the Revolutionary War, and was awarded to only three soldiers. In 1931, Gen. Douglas MacArthur sought to have a new medal issued for the bicentennial of Washington's birth. On February 22, 1932 the War Department announced a new award, redefining the conditions for the award as being wounded in action against the enemy. A \$25 donation will be made to CDCWRT.