

The Dispatch

Newspaper of the

CAPITAL DISTRICT CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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



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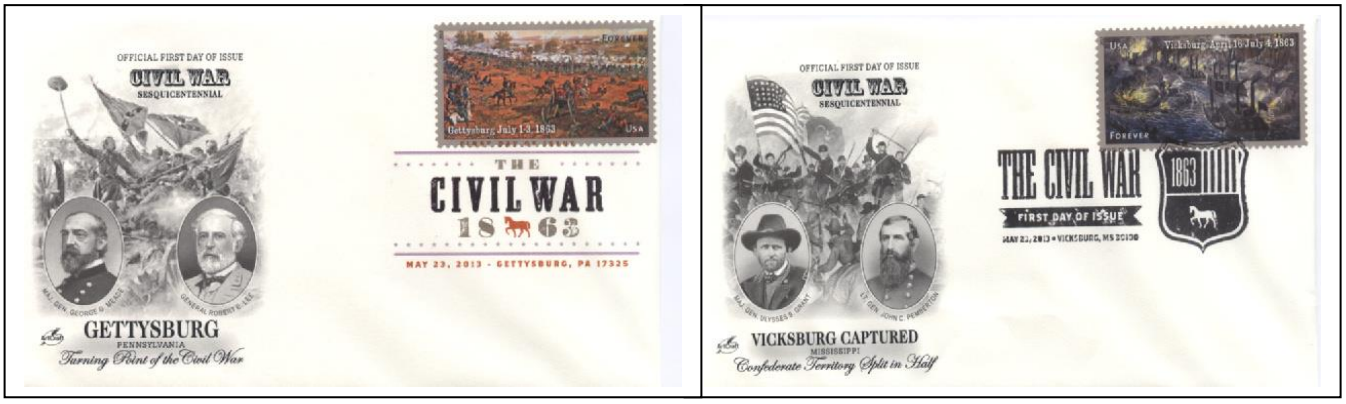
CDCWRT AT GETTYSBURG NATIONAL PARK AND REENACTMENT FOR 150TH ANNIVERSARY



Pictured above are two commemorative postal envelopes with the new Vicksburg stamp and the new Gettysburg stamp. Both stamps were released in their respective cities on May 23, 2913. The cancel stamps follow the same pattern used by the USPS since the beginning of the Sesquicentennial Commemoration of the Civil War in 2011. One is the traditional black ink cancel; the other is the newer color digital cancel. Gross sales of these at Gettysburg amounted to over $8100-during the week of July 1-7, 2013.

The CDCWRT sells the above envelopes for $5.00 each. A larger silk-screened envelope is available for $10.00 each. A limited selection of envelopes that were cancelled at Gettysburg on July 1, 2 and 3, commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the battle, will be available at the Schuyler Flatts Civil War Event. Or call Matt Farina at 439-8583 for an earlier selection. Support your Round Table.

AUGUST MEETING
FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 2013

SCHUYLER FLATTS
ANNUAL PICNIC
Start socializing: 4:00pm
Dinner with the troops: 6:00pm

SATURDAY-SUNDAY 17-18TH
CIVIL WAR WEEKEND
Saturday: 10:00am to 5:00pm
Sunday: 10:00am to 4:00 pm

CDCWRT MEETING

Our annual picnic will be held on Friday evening at 6:00 p.m. on August 16th. Socializing begins at 4:00 p.m. It will be held at Schuyler Flatts as part of a Civil War Weekend at the Flatts on Saturday, August 17th from 10:00a.m.to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday, August 18th from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Schuyler Flatts Park is located off Route 32 {Broadway) just north of Menands and south of Watervliet.

The picnic is FREE. Our guests will be the various groups of re-enactors who will be setting up their tents for the activities on the weekend. The Round Table will provide hamburgers, hot dogs, rolls and bread, drinks and condiments.

Members are asked to bring their families and a salad, covered dish or dessert to share. Please call Noreen Underhill at 371-4312 by August 14th to confirm how many will be in your party and what dish you are bringing so that we don't wind up with 15 bowls of potato salad. Don't worry about the weather because there is a covered structure on site AND a tent with 80 chairs! Bring a flashlight or lantern.

There will be singing and a group sing-along after dinner. A new supply of Civil War books will be available for members to peruse before the general public gets their opportunity the next day. T-shirts and sweatshirts will be available in our baseball and Irish Brigade themes. New cachets from Gettysburg 2013 and first day covers for the Civil War Sesquicentennial will also be available (Battle of Vicksburg and the Battle of Gettysburg).

This is the 200th anniversary of the Watervliet Arsenal, and Robert Pfeil, curator of the Watervliet "Museum of the Big Guns," will speak at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday about the role Arsenal in the Civil War. There will be re-enactors, sutlers, singers, and vendors. In addition to the encampment, there will be drills and skirmishes, along with 5 cannon. There will be a Soldier School for kids, and another one for teens.

We encourage you to attend the activities and bring along your neighbors, children and grandchildren. Remember this is the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War.

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 July 27, 2013, Saturday, the NYS Military Museum in Saratoga will unveil its Sesquicentennial Civil War Exhibit. A brief ceremony and ribbon cutting will occur at 11:00 a.m. followed by tours. Check our website for more details.

On September 13, 2013, Katherine Hawkins will present "We Done Our Part: The History of the 3rd U.S. Colored Troops."

On September 15, 2013, Sunday, there will be a Sojourner Truth Celebration at the junction of route 9W and One River Road in Ulster Park, NY. There will be an unveiling and dedication of an historical marker, music, a living history program and a car pool deriving tour of Soujourner sites. More detail will follow next month.

On October 11, 2013, Wayne Mahood will talk about the 126th NYVI, in a presentation entitled "Fight All Day, March All Night."

On October 12, 2013 Alvin Parker will provide a living history program about Ely Parker, a Seneca Indian who was U.S. Grant's secretary. The program will be at Grant's Cottage in Wilton at 1:00 p.m.

On November 1-3, 2013, the CDCWRT will sponsor the 1863 Sesquicentennial Conference at the NYS Museum.

On December 13, 2013, the CDCWRT will again meet at Siena College to see a movie, inspired by Stephen Crane, and produced locally in Albany. It is entitled: *Thirst: A Civil War Story.* It is about two Union soldiers who deserted. They are driven by thirst, but the well they discover is guarded by Confederate soldiers.

JUNE MEETING SUMMARY

The Remaking of the Gettysburg Battlefield
Five Times Over-By Dr. Ben Dixon

Dr. Dixon grew up in Gettysburg, hearing stories of how the appearance and interpretation of the 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.

A tour of Gettysburg in 1883 would have been run by local and regional veterans clubs, focusing on where specific generals died. The five hundred acres of preserved battlefield focused on the Union fishhook and basically 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.

The top attraction of an 1883 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 in an 1883 tour.

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", a battlefield that looked more like a museum than a battlefield. People were more concerned with beautifying the field than with authenticity, so springs had grand stone surrounds built over them and more towers were built so that people could see the landscape and monuments.

Sites that had been 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 dismantled to have extra sections added to give the monument more height.

More African Americans visited would have visited Gettysburg on a 1904 tour than do today as slavery was openly acknowledged by veterans and guides as the cause of the war. President Lincoln's popularity was growing with 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. The Peace Light memorial was the newest monument on the field.

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 that was the equal of Union 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, since 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 hear stories of the Confederate sharpshooter in Devil's Den and be encouraged to look for the still-living one hundred twenty 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 have 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.

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 not be in chronological order, but 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. The first day's battlefield was ignored.

By the 2000s, Lee is no longer the great hero; he has 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 spend less time at the Angle or Virginia monument because of the extra time spent on Little Round Top. Guides now even find themselves needing to defend Lee's orders for Pickett's charge.

Today, tours of Gettysburg are attempting 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.

This excellent summary was provided by board member Erin Baillargeon.

LEE'S REAL PLAN AT GETTYSBURG – V

Col. Fry commanded the brigade that was the right flank of Pettigrew's division, and he claimed that his brigade was the guiding unit for the charge. Lee tore up Pickett's initial post-action report and a revised one was never submitted. There were no reports from Pettigrew, Garnett, Kemper, Armistead, and numerous colonels in the charge. Fry was severely wounded and his report was made 15 years later at the request of the Southern Historical Society. Because Fry's brigade struck just to the left of Webb's angle (Union) and Pickett's came upon the position from the right, it has been presumed the small angle in the stone wall with a 68 yard salient, was the objective of the charge.

Instead, Harmon feels that the real salient was at the gap created by Hancock's dangling right flank and the Taneytown Road, 250 yards east of Ziegler's Grove. Howard's 11th Corps faced northwest on Cemetery Hill. On the evening of July 2, three Union brigades were moved out of this area to other contested areas. From his headquarters just adjacent to the Seminary, Lee looked directly across into Ziegler's Grove. Lee must have felt that Hancock's line was vulnerable to a concerted action.

Pettigrew and Trimble constituted the Confederate "left jab" while Pickett represented the "right hook." Brocken-brough's brigade was on course to attack the salient point formed by the unsecured right flank of 2nd Corps and Ziegler's Grove. The officers of Rode's division were looking for the favorable opportunity (according to their orders) to come up on Brockenbrough's left. Pickett's division initially moved perpendicular

to the Emmitsburg Road, the oblique to the left moving parallel to the road. His right was to have been closely supported by the brigades of Wilcox and Lang. In turn their right was to be followed and protected by a mass of Confederate artillery. As designed, Pickett's division should have flanked Stannard's Vermont brigade on Cemetery ridge.

Then what happened? A Union preemptive strike, forced Ewell to fight at Culp's Hill during the morning of July 3 before Longstreet was in position to attack the western side of Cemetery Hill. The artillery barrage was longer than anticipated and depleted ammunition. On the left, the lack of Hill's artillery support allowed the flanking of Brockenbrough's brigade and pressing Trimble and Pettigrew to their right. Similarly on the right, Union artillery was uncontested and decimated Kemper's flank. In the smoke, Wilcox and Lang continued southeasterly and moved away from the Virginians. This allowed Stannard's brigade to flank the Virginians who crowded more to their left.

The post-war severe criticism of Sickles and Longstreet focused on their roles at the south end of the battlefield on July 2. The battle's historiography shifted to a disproportionate emphasis on the importance of Little Round Top. The 1880s trolley brought visitors to the sound end of the field and excluded Culp's Hill. Ziegler's Grove was cut down in the late 1870s, significantly altering the landscape. In the 20th-Century, commercial development on Steinwehr Ave., the Cyclorama Center and the National Visitor Center further obscured the significance of the area. Likewise the post-war emphasis on the Lee-Longstreet controversy detracted from understanding that Lee had a real plan other than "on July 2 he (Union) was strong on the flanks, so on July 3 he (Union) must be weak in the middle."

The western edge of Cemetery Hill eventually will be partially restored to Ziegler's Grove now that the old Visitor Center and the Cyclorama are gone. Hamon's book offers a different perspective of the battle, and provides answers to questions about the "affirmed" version. What would have been accomplished if breaking Webb's Union position was the goal of the charge? If Culp's Hill was a sideshow for July 3, why did Ewell fight for 7 hours there all day? Why did he bolster his forces there with an additional 6000 infantry? Why did Lee further bolster that position with 8000 cavalry?

Until it is understood that Cemetery Hill was the bull's-eye in Lee's general plan, from at least the evening of July 1 through the remainder of the battle, the pieces of the puzzle of Gettysburg will never come together.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM FOR NOVEMBER CONFEERENCE

Pricing will be similar to last year's.

Friday, November 1st, there will be a Reception and Dinner at the NYS Museum in the Elk Room.

Welcome by Robert Weible, State Historian and Chief Curator

President Abraham Lincoln, accompanied by an Honor Guard, will recite the Gettysburg Address.

Dinner provided by Nicole's Restaurant

The Keynote Speaker will be historian, Clark "Bud" Hall, and his presentation is entitled "New York at Brandy Station on June 9, 1863: The Empire State's Distinguished Role in the Opening Battle of the Gettysburg Campaign"

Saturday, November 2nd, NYS Museum, Huxley Hall.

Juanita Leisch Jensen will discuss the role of women in the Civil War.

Dr. Matt Farina will present "Dr. Mary Walker: The Little Lady in Pants," who was the only female physician in the Union Army and the only woman to be awarded the Medal of Honor.

R.L. Murray whose Power Point presentation last year was well received, will discuss New York's Soldiers in 1863: Their Attitudes and Actions.

Lunch provided by Nicole's Restaurant

J.D. Petruzzi – "New York Cavalryman, Tom C. Devin"

Troy Harman, NPS Guide at Gettysburg, author and historian will present "New York at Gettysburg." You have been reading his book about Lee's Real Plan at Gettysburg.

Sunday, November 3rd, NYS Museum, Huxley Hall

Dave Hubbard – "Baseball and the Civil War"

Chris Kolakowski will discuss an analysis of the war in the West in 1863.

Lunch provided by Nicole's Restaurant

A Guided tour of the Civil War Exhibit at the Museum will be provided by Robert Weible, NYS historian and Chief Curator.

CHRISTMAS CLUBS

If you started your conference "Christmas Club" with $30 last month, you would need to add $30 for July and $30 for August. I'll remind you again in September. At a dollar a day, you will have your full conference paid for in October. That's less than the McDonald's Dollar Meals which are taxed in NYS. So no excuses about the conference being too expensive!

THE CIVIL WAR AT THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

The CDCWRT is sponsoring a trip to the Met to view an exhibition of how American artists responded to the Civil War and its aftermath. Some 60 paintings by such artists as Frederic E. Church, Sanford R. Gifford, Winslow Homer and Eastman Johnson are included. There will also be 18 photographs by Timothy O'Sullivan and George M. Barnard.

The works of art trace the trajectory of the conflict and express the intense emotions that it provoked: unease as war became inevitable, optimism that a single battle might end the struggle, growing realization that fighting would be prolonged, enthusiasm and worries alike surrounding emancipation, and concerns about how to reunify the nation after a period of grievous division. The exhibit ends September 2, 2013.

The trip is planned for Wednesday, August 21st, and is limited to the **first 19 paid travelers. The cost of $70 each** includes van ride from Albany to the museum and back, entrance fees to the exhibit and docent-led tour. The two vans will leave Crossgates at 06:30 a.m. There will be a quick breakfast stop on the Thruway. Lunch is on your own tab. Departure from the museum will be at 4:00 p.m. and arriving in Albany around 7:00 p.m. **Absolute deadline is August 7th. Call Fran at 459-4209.**

IN MEMORIUM

Terry Miller, member of the CDCWRT and the Troy Stamp Club, died several weeks ago. In the past he has supported the Round Table with donations of Civil War books.

KUDOS & SPECIAL THANKS

The Board wishes to recognize the following volunteers who sold cachets at the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg.
Erin Baillargeon, Regina Daly, Matt Farina, Matt George, Mike Spaulding
Full details next month.