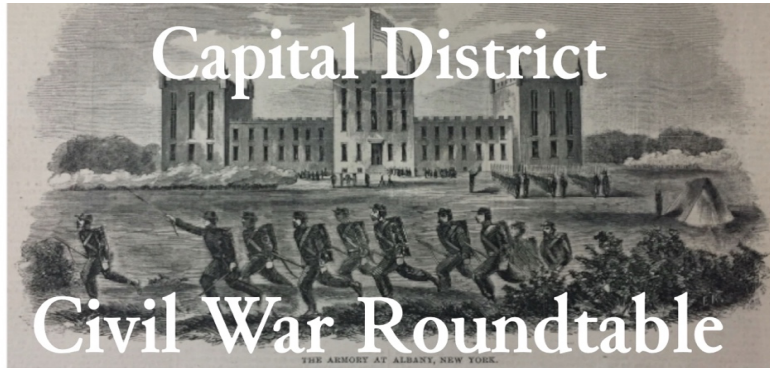


The Dispatch

Volume 43, Number 06

June 2026



P.O. Box 11493 Loudonville, New York 12211.

www.capitaldistrictcivilwar.com



Our June 13 guest speaker shall be Civil War historian Mark Dunkelman who will discuss the interesting history of "Gettysburg's Unknown Soldier Amos Humiston." Amos, a harness shop owner in Portville, N.Y. before the war, enlisted in 154th New York Infantry Regiment. His service and death for the Union army puts a very human face to a brutal war. Mark Dunkelman's second book, "Gettysburg's Unknown Soldier: The Life, Death, and Celebrity of Amos Humiston," has been lauded by leading historians as the definitive account of one of the Civil War's best-known human-interest stories—a story that upended the lives of the Humiston family. Originally published in 1999, the book came out in 2020 as a paperback by Gettysburg Publishing. In his talk, Mark will relate the amazing set of circumstances that enabled him to write the book. The meeting will be at the Watervliet Senior Center, with doors opening at 10:30 with a brief business meeting starting at 11 am.

GETTYSBURG'S UNKNOWN SOLDIER

The Life, Death & Celebrity of
Amos Humiston

presented by Mark Dunkelman

Saturday, June 13th 11am

Watervliet Senior Center

1501 Broadway Watervliet, N.Y.

From the President's Desk



Grant Cottage Community Day, Saturday, June 13

The roundtable will participate in the [Grant Cottage Community Day](#) on Saturday, June 13, where we shall be selling books, clothing, and artwork, with the proceeds going towards saving endangered battlefield lands.

History Fairs & Events

We will be sharing information about New York State community events which include Civil War elements, this summer. Please keep checking our website and Facebook page for new events and updates. Here are three upcoming history events:

Civil War "Clash in the Catskills"

June 27-28, 2026

Washington County History Festival

July 11-12, 2026

Civil War Reenactment at Lima, NY

July 18-19, 2026

(click on event for more info)

CDCWRT Future Meetings: Fridays or Saturdays

Unfortunately, the change of meeting days and times from Friday at 7 pm to Saturdays at 11 am has proven to be problematic. While the roundtable has a 100% guarantee of using the Watervliet Senior during the second Friday of the month, since September, the city has scheduled 3 events at the Senior Center on our meeting days. This led us to cancel one of our meetings, a second meeting moved from Saturday to Sunday, and the April meeting moved from a start time of 11 am to 4 pm. So, the board is considering returning the meetings to Friday nights at 7 pm beginning in January 2027. We want membership feedback on the idea. Please voice your opinions in person during meetings or email us at cdcwrt@hotmail.com.



Clara Barton Writes Letters

Imagine for a moment you are a father, mother, sibling, or other relative or friend of a Civil War soldier. You watched with pride and perhaps tears when your beloved became a soldier and marched off to a war which you did or did not support.

The weeks and months roll by. Your soldier may be illiterate, in which case another soldier writes his letters home. Or he may be highly literate and shares what he is experiencing with you and the other folks at home, sometimes with local newspapers.

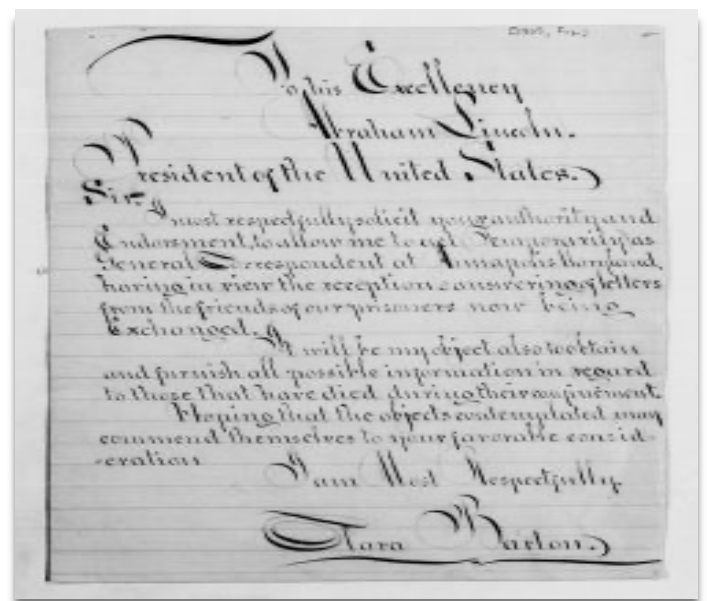
Then, after a major battle or a small skirmish, the mail stops. You, your family, your community wait to hear from your soldier or his comrades. Your family does not even receive one of the dreaded 'death letters' from an officer in your loved one's regiment. There is nothing, not even a minor report in your local newspaper.

What has happened to your soldier and his comrades? Is he safe? Is he even

alive? Who do you ask if the fragile chain of letters from the front and your home community has failed?

That's where Clara Barton stepped in. Even after all her amazing work nursing and supporting Union troops during the war, when the battles ended Clara did not view her work as finished. Barton discovered that thousands of letters from distraught relatives to the War Department were going unanswered because the soldiers they were asking about were buried in unmarked graves. Many of the soldiers were labeled as "missing."

Motivated to do more about the situation, Barton contacted President Lincoln in hopes that she would be allowed to respond officially to the unanswered inquiries. She was given permission, and "The Search for the Missing Men" began.



Letter to Pres Lincoln from Clara Barton, 1865

After the war, she ran the Office of Missing Soldiers, at 437½ Seventh Street Northwest, Washington, D.C. The office's purpose was to find or identify soldiers killed or missing in action. Barton and her assistants wrote 41,855 replies to inquiries and helped locate more than 22,000 missing men.



Clara Barton & Dorence Atwater, June 1965

Barton spent the summer of 1865 helping find, identify, and properly bury 13,000 individuals who died in the Andersonville prison camp in Georgia. She continued this task over the next four years, burying 20,000 more Union soldiers and marking their graves. Congress eventually appropriated \$15,000 (approximately \$314,000 in today's money) toward her project.

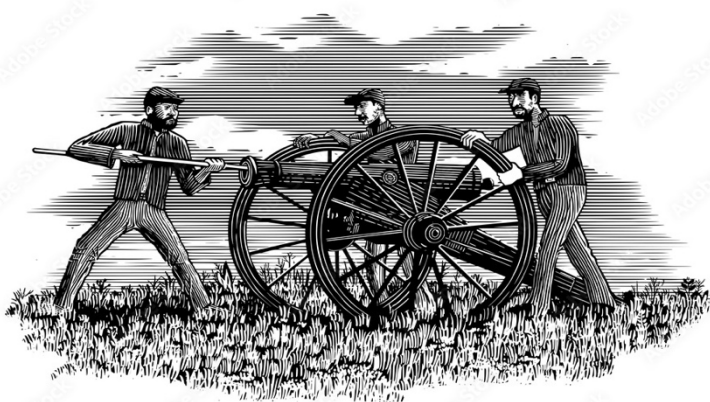
In 1869 Barton closed the Missing Soldiers Office and headed to Europe. The third floor of her old boardinghouse was boarded up in 1913, and the site forgotten. The site was "lost" in part because Washington, DC realigned its addressing system in

the 1870s. The boardinghouse became 437½ Seventh Street Northwest (formerly 488½ Seventh Street West). In 1997, the General Services Administration carpenter Richard Lyons was assigned to check out the building for its demolition. He found a treasure trove of Barton items in the attic, including signs, clothing, Civil War soldier's socks, an army tent, Civil War-era newspapers, and many documents relating to the Office of Missing Soldiers. This discovery led to the National Park Service saving the building from demolition. It took years, however, for the site to be restored.



Clara Barton's Missing Soldiers Museum, Washington, DC

The Clara Barton's Missing Soldiers Office Museum, run by the National Museum of Civil War Medicine, opened in 2015. Clara would have been pleased, if not satisfied, that the valiant work of the women in the Missing Soldiers Office was being honored in American memory.



**Capital District
Civil War
Roundtable
2026 Calendar**

June 13th

Gettysburg's Unknown Soldier:

The Life, Death, & Celebrity of Amos Humiston

Presented by Mark Dunkleman

September 12th

11th NY Light Artillery During the Civil War

Presented by Dennis Doyle

October 10th

117th NY Volunteer Infantry

Presented by Jim Pula

November 14th

Civil War Stereo Cards

Presented by Stu Lehman

December 12th

American Revolutionary War Swords

Presented by Daniel Flynn

CDCWRT
P.O. BOX 11493
LOUDONVILLE, NY 12211

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.

Contact the Capital District Civil War Round Table through
our website: www.capitaldistrictcivilwar.org
or email: cdcwrt@hotmail.com

THE OFFICERS

President	Mark Koziol	Vice-President	Bruce Reed
Treasurer	Steve Muller	Secretary	Shawn Connery
At-Large	Rosemary Nichols	At-Large	Leo McGuire

THE NONCOMS

Program	
Membership	Steve Muller
Refreshments	Dean Long and Luanne Whitbeck
Webmaster	Mark Koziol
Education	
Newsletter	Rosemary Nichols and Shawn Connery