

The Dispatch

Newspaper of the

CAPITAL DISTRICT CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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



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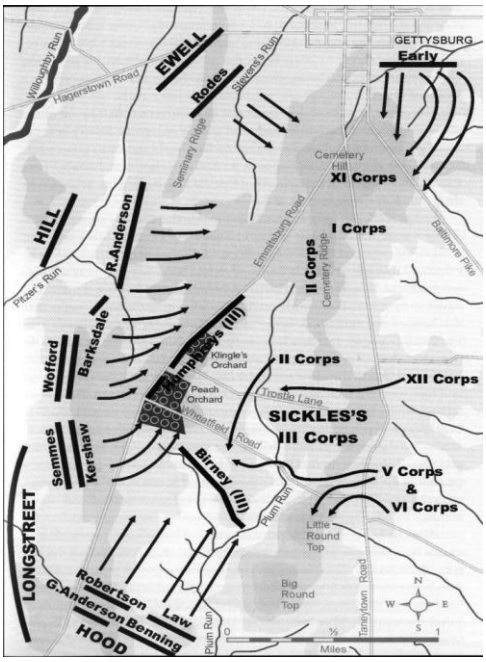
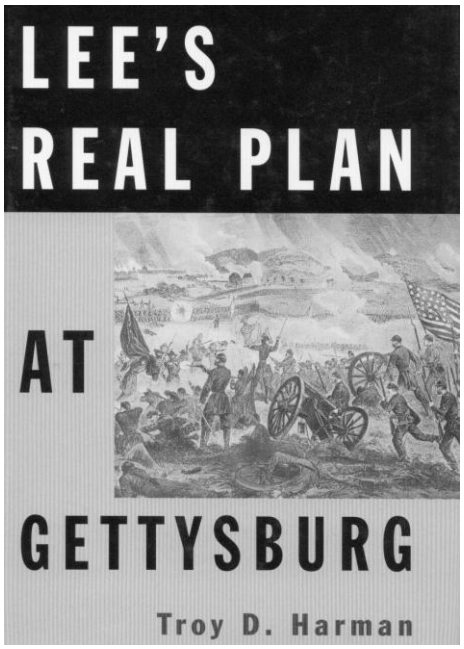
THE "RARELY WAS THE BATTLE PLAN FOUGHT" TOUR

THE PLAN FOR DAY 2



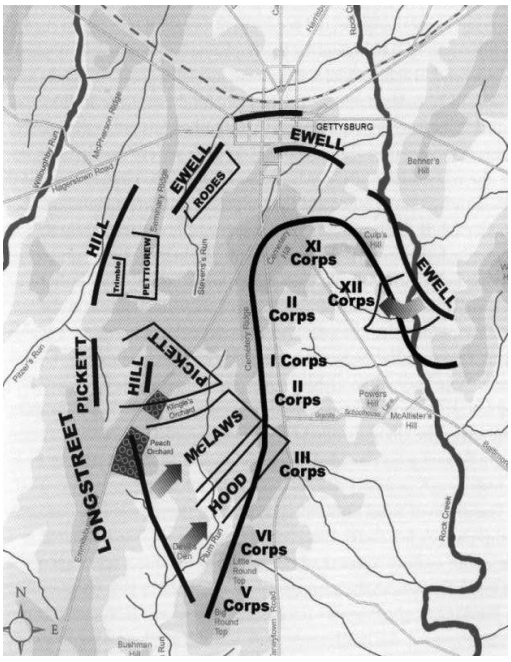
Lee's proposed plan of attack for day 2 was frustrated by Sickles' move to the peach orchard. Lee's lines had to be adjusted, and the change in the battle plan affected what was to happen on day 3. Was Lee's real plan unchanged? Was Lee's plan poorly executed by his commanders? These will be some of the issues discussed on our trip to Gettysburg.

THE PROPOSAL



In 2003 Gettysburg National Military Park historian, Troy D. Harman, published a new perspective of Lee's plan at Gettysburg that challenged the status quo. This book also shows why Gettysburg is the most studied battle in the history of mankind. New concepts in regards to old battles keep history fresh.

THE PLAN FOR DAY 3



As the newsletter goes to press, the weather forecast for Gettysburg is perfect for the first weekend in October. Our tour group will explore Longstreet's march and countermarch that delayed the Confederate attack. We will also explore the conflict among Union commanders as they received the Confederate charge on Day 2.

OCTBER MEETING
Friday October 12, 2007
Guilderland Library
2228 Western Ave.

THREE YEARS A SOLDIER

SOCIAL HOUR	**6:00-7:00 PM**
BUSINESS	**7:00-7:30 PM**
PRESENTATION	**7:30-8:30 PM**
DISCUSSION	**8:30 – 9:00 PM**

CDCWRT MEETING

The MONTHLY meeting of the CDCWRT will be held at the Guilderland Library on Friday, October 12, 2007. Our guest speaker will be author, Richard N. Griffin, and he will discuss his book, **"Three Years a Soldier."**

Griffin's book deals with actions of the Sixth New York Independent Battery during the Civil War. The 6th New York was organized in New York City in June 1861, and served with the Army of the Potomac in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. Griffin's talk will treat some of the most significant battles in which the battery participated, and will discuss the battery's transition from infantry support to functioning as horse artillery with the cavalry of the Army of the Potomac.

"Three Years a Soldier" ***was published by the University of Tennessee Press in April 2006, and was nominated for a distinguished book award from the Society of Military History. The book consists of the edited diary and correspondence of Private George Perkins of Woborn, Massachusetts. Perkins, the great-grandfather of the author, had been a student at Harvard before the war, and was a cannoneer and wagon driver in the battery.***

Griffin will also touch on some aspects of Private Perkins' character, particularly his role as a prolific correspondent, anti-slavery advocate, and essayist.

Dick Griffin is a 1965 graduate of Miami University in Oxford, Ohio (he claims the 'real' Miami) and was commissioned an Ensign from the NROTC program. He received his Masters degree in International Studies from Johns Hopkins University in 1977, and was forced to spend one year of that program in Bologna, Italy. He received a non-resident diploma from the Naval War College in 1981. He served on active duty for a total of 12 years as a surface warfare-qualified officer on ships in the Atlantic and Pacific fleets and on shore duty. He served in Vietnam as an advisor to the Vietnamese Navy in riverine and costal operations. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (two awards), the Navy Commendation Medal, and the Staff Service Honor Medal First Class (from the Republic of Vietnam). After active duty he served 18 years in the Naval Reserve, and retired from the Department of Defense in 2005.

MONTHLY MEETING

A crowd of 35-40 was on hand at the September meeting of the Round Table to hear author, Don Johnson. Several members of the RT noted that he was not his usual engaging self. Later he confided that he suffered a severe head injury this past year when felling a tree. The editor encourages everyone to bring a guest to the October meeting so we can greet our speaker with our usual full house.

BOARD MEETING

At the September Board Meeting events for the remainder of the year were discussed. The treasurer report was waived since the treasurer was in England, but not on Round Table funds. In any of the membership would like to address the board on pertinent topics, the next meeting will be Monday, October 15th, at Matt George's house.

UP-COMING EVENTS

On Wednesday, November 7th, the Hudson-Mohawk Industrial Gateway will hold its annual Gala at Busch Hall on the Russell Sage College campus. This is a fund-raiser for the Gateway, and the CDCWRT has managed the silent auction for the past two years. Volunteers are needed to assist in the setting up of the items and in helping match items to bidders after the event. Anyone interested should contact Rosemary Nichols at 273-8746.

The November meeting of the CDCWRT will be on Friday, November 9th. Round Table member, Mark Silo, will talk about the 115th NYSVI. He has been working on a book for sometime now, and it is being released in November. This is very exciting for everyone. Few round tables can boast two authors.

Our RT has John Hennessey, and now, Mark Silo.

November 17th and 18th mark Remembrance Day Weekend in Gettysburg. This marks the 144th anniversary of the Gettysburg Address. This weekend generally hosts the largest re-enactor crowd of the year. The RT has some motel rooms available but they go quickly. Contact Sue Knost.

MISCELLANEOUS

The following are excerpts from a letter from the desk of David N. Duncan, Director of Membership and Development, Civil War Preservation Trust.

Dear Capital District CWRT,
Once again I find myself writing to thank you for your extraordinary dedication, this time in response to our recent campaign to save nearly 188 acres associated with the "Third Day" at Bentonville, to which you so generously committed $500.

My deepest thanks to all of our friends at the ever-faithful Capital District CWRT!

OUTRAGEOUS!

An e-mail has been circulating that indicates that officials at Arlington National Cemetery plan to replace the original Tomb of the Unknown Soldier with a new replica, solely because of repairable cosmetic imperfections. The 48-ton marble block has two nonstructural cracks, which pose no threat to visitors or the historic structure. Federal bureaucrats want the replica carved from new stone that experts agree will likely crack again as marble does naturally when exposed to the elements. Repair and proper care of the Tomb would include re-grouting the cracks and using only gentle cleaning methods instead of high-pressure power-washing. Other monuments, including the Lincoln Monument have been repaired this way.

Once the National Trust learned about this ill-considered plan, it raised the alarm with Members of Congress, and tried unsuccessfully to consult with those who administer the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. A decision to determine the fate of the Tomb is expected by September 30th

ANOTHER TRUNK STORY!

There is another trunk story to follow-up on last months 2 trunk stories. In the October 2007 issue of the ***Civil War Times*** is a story of the recently discovered letters of Mary Todd Lincoln, written to friends when Mary was in the insane asylum. After the death of her husband in 1865, her youngest son, Tad, died of pleurisy in July 1871. She became a homeless wanderer, looking for physical healing. However she never found or accepted relief or solace. After her insanity trial in 1875, she was declared insane and was sent for at least one year to Bellevue Place Sanitarium, a private asylum. Her son, Robert, visited her every week. Historians have believed that old friends, Myra and James Bradwell, fomented and directed a plot to secure Mary's early release.

Due to the discovery of Mary's lost letters, we now know that Myra Bradwell was a willing and able accomplice, but Mary herself created and directed the plot for freedom. In March 2005, Jason Emerson came across two letters in the Lincoln mansion in Manchester, Vermont. The first was written by the Lincoln family attorney, Frederic N. Towers, to Katherine Helm, a Lincoln cousin involved in writing the only authorized biography of Mary. The letter stated that a granddaughter of Myra Bradwell owned numerous letters between Mary and Myra. The grand-daughter was preparing to write a book about the letters.

Robert Lincoln's wife threatened to sue over the book, then bought the Bradwell letters, the unpublished book, and the publishing contract. Emerson then contacted the defunct law firm of Frost and Towers in Washington, DC. After five months of research, he reached Frederic C. Towers, the son of Robert Lincoln's attorney. The son recently had discovered an old steamer trunk in his attic that had belonged to his father. There in the trunk were the granddaughter's manuscript, business and legal papers of Robert and Mary Harlan Lincoln, documents on Mary Todd's insanity case, and her no longer lost letters.

The article is well worth reading, and proves once again that history is not static, and is constantly changing as new evidence is discovered, or new ideas are put forth for consideration, or new interpretations are published.