The Camp Olden Gazette

News from the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table

Spring, 2011

President's Gavel.

Happy New Year! I hope everyone has had a safe winter but spring will be here very soon at least according to the premier famous groundhog in Pennsylvania "*PUNXSUTAWNEY PHIL*".

Spring is also the beginning of the reenactment season and 2011 is extra special because it the beginning of the sesquicentennial with the arrival of Abraham Lincoln in Trenton on his journey to be installed as President of the United States. It was an honor to portray Gov. Olden and President of the Senate Edmund Perry at this event. I am sure it will be an exciting next four years for all that have any interest in the Civil War.

Now for something new and different that I hope everyone will enjoy and participate in.

Meet Your Fellow Members:

This is something new I'd like to include in each newsletter as a way for members to get to know each other better. I will ask each member to provide a brief biography of themselves (a few paragraphs and photo) regarding their interests in the Civil War and Camp Olden. Below is my first 'victim' who agreed to start the ball rolling.

Kathy Porutski -

Hi, my name is Kathy Porutski and I have been a member of Camp Olden for three years. I was introduced to the organization through Bruce Sirak, whom my husband and I worked with in the Department of Environmental Protection since 1990. Over time, between Bruce, Barry Leilich and Joe Mognancki, I was eventually recruited and found my niche in running Camp Olden's Birthday Club. It was a way for me to contribute while at the same time, give Kim Daly a break from the monthly responsibility.

I have always had an interest in history and my

association with Bruce and the boys only served to spur my curiosity in the Civil War. I guess being a history buff runs in the family as my Dad served in the army during the Korean War, and my brother is a Revolutionary War re-enactor and battle fanatic. Though I enjoy the strategic and military aspects of the subject and have my most admired commanders, my first love is for the music of the era.

My second love is Gettysburg. It is my favorite place on earth and where I hope to retire one day. There is something about wandering the battlefield that puts one's life into perspective. I am never more at peace than when I'm retracing Confederate steps in Pickett's Charge or bowing at the marker where Brig. Gen. Lewis Armistead fell. I'll be going back again in May and, no matter how many times I visit, there is always, always, always something new and wonderful to experience.



Kathy at the Armistead Marker in Gettysburg.

Who wants to volunteer for the next issue of the Presidents Gavel? Submit your biography to the newsletter at: oldennewsletter@optonline.net!

Looking forward to seeing you at our March 3rd *Covered Dish Dinner and meeting!* (6:00 PM)

Your Obedient Servant, Bruce

Lincoln's Speech to New Jersey Legislature Re-Enacted

Contributed by Mike Mazzocchi

While traveling on his way to his inauguration in Washington, President-elect Abraham Lincoln stopped in Trenton and spoke to both houses of the New Jersey Legislature, On Thursday, February 17, this historic visit was commemorated with reenactments of the separate speeches to the Senate and Assembly.

Events began with a 1 p.m. ceremony at the Statehouse, where a commemorative plaque honoring the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birthday was unveiled outside the governor's office. The Hall Institute of Public Policy's Michael Riccards spoke on the significance of Lincoln's visit to New Jersey and Lincoln reenactor Bob Costello read the two speeches Lincoln delivered to state lawmakers. He was joined by Bruce Sirak of the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table portraying Governor Charles Olden.



Robert F Costello portrays President Lincoln marching with Bruce Sirak portraying Gov. Charles Olden.

Photo Courtesy of Ed Murry/The Star-Ledger.

Later that afternoon Costello again appeared as Lincoln in the State Museum. An honor guard and period musicians also appeared. Dr. David Martin, a Camp Olden member and President of the New Jersey Civil War Heritage Association spoke about the significance of Lincoln's visit. Mr. Costello again read the two speeches. Dr. Martin then conducted a tour of the Civil War Flags gallery at the museum. •

A Visit to the Springfield Armory

Contributed by Mario Florio

Last November I attended a college basketball tournament in Springfield Massachusetts. In between game, I was able to tour the National Basketball Hall of Fame and the Springfield Armory.

The Armory is a National Historic Site operated by the National Park Service. The Armory covers 20 acres of a 55 acre site. The remaining 35 acres belong to Springfield Technical Community College which uses many former Armory buildings for classrooms and offices. The college carries on the Armory's technological tradition teaching engineering technology including mechanical engineering.

First opened in 1794, the armory, located on a hill overlooking the Connecticut River, carried out the "manufacturing, storage, repair, testing and development functions assigned by the United States Army until it closed in 1968.

The visitor's Center and Museum houses archives, industrial exhibits and the "world's largest collection of historic American military firearms. The wall of machine guns and the organ of muskets are two must see exhibits. Numerous Civil War weapons are on display throughout the museum.



Organ of Muskets (Photo Courtesy of NPS)

Springfield is approximately 200 miles from Hamilton – a four hour drive. Springfield is also the home of Dr. Suess National Memorial Sculpture Garden. For more information visit http://www.nps.gov/spar/index.htm. ◆

Coming Events -

Friday, April 15 - Sunday, April 17

"War Begins", commemorating 150th anniversary of War Between The States in Charleston. Batteries firing from Fort Moultrie (Fort Mott, N.J.) & Fort Johnson (Fort Mott, Del.) against Fort Sumter (Fort Delaware). Civilian viewing in Charleston (Pennsville, N.J.) Sponsored by New Jersey State Parks, 1st N.C. Artillery, Battery C, General Lyon Camp #10 SUV & New Jersey Department SUV. For Information, Maj. Gen. John C. Houck, GeneralReb@comcast.net

Saturday, April 16

"Call to Arms!" Philadelphia Commemoration of the first volunteers to the front, 8-2. Parade of original route, Grand Review, living history, ceremonies, reception & tours at Union League. No fee. Advance registration required. Mounted cavalry encouraged. Sponsored by Civil War History Consortium & Union League of Philadelphia. For information, (215) 563-6500 ext. 6461, parade@civilwarphilly.net. Registration, www.civilwarphilly.net/parade/

Saturday, April 16 - Sunday, April 17

Civil War Encampment in the Colonial Industrial Ouarter, Bethlehem. 153rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry recruiting, mustering-in, training, drill. Civilian life. Parade down Main Street, medical & artillery demonstrations, lectures, music, fashion show. \$5 admission over age 18 includes encampment, admission to Kemerer and Moravian museums and Goundie House. For information, registration, Neil or Kathleen Coddington, 837-7403. (610)BethlehemCW150th@yahoo.com; www.historicbethlehem.org then "Civil War."

Saturday, April 16 - Sunday, April 17

Walking Fields of Glory two-day hike at Gettysburg National Military Park based on Boy Scout Heritage Trail: 10-mile Billy Yank Trail & 4-mile Johnny Reb Trail. Conducted by Licensed Battlefield Guide Gar Phillips. Water & lunch provided. Fee. For information, (717) 338-1243; www.gettysburgfoundation.org. (Editors note – I have hiked both of these trails. They cover the

three days and give a unique feel for the battle. Highly recommended! MM.)

Friday, April 29 - Sunday, May 01

22nd Annual Neshaminy Civil War Reenactment and living history at Neshaminy State Park, Bensalem. Portraying Battles of Bolivar Heights & Ball's Bluff — War on the Upper Potomac October 1861. Battles 2 p.m. Saturday, 1:30 Sunday. Living history & camp activities, period music. Free. Sponsored by 29th Pennsylvania Regiment, Army of Northern Virginia, Historical Society of Bensalem Township, the Grand Army of the Republic Civil War Museum & Library, Delaware Valley Civil War Round Table, Neshaminy State Park & Waste Management. For information, registration, (610) 809-6540, kgc28pvi@comcast.net; www.28pvi.org

Saturday, May 7

NJ State History Fair will be held from 11am - 5pm at the Historic Village at Allaire, Allaire State Park, Farmingdale, NJ. Admission is free. Allaire Village Inc. will be requesting a \$5 per car parking donation to help defray the costs of the Fair. For information (732)-919-3500. http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/historic/centennial/general_information.htm.

Saturday, May 7

Annual Memorial Service at Finn's Point National Cemetery, Salem. Meet at 10 a.m. for 10:30 march to Confederate & Union Memorials for ceremonies. Troops, bugler invited. Hosted by 12th Virginia Infantry, Co. C. For information, Rich Silvani Sr., (732) 938-4291, RR1863@aol.com

Saturday, May 14 - Sunday, May 15

School of the Soldier Encampment at Allaire State Park, Wall. Sponsored by New Jersey Civil War 150th Committee & New Jersey Civil War Heritage Assoc. For information, Tom Burke, (732) 778-4442, tomburke@njcivilwar150.org; www.njcivilwar150.org

Sunday, May 29

Annual Memorial Day observance recreating first G.A.R. Decoration Day Service of 1868 at

Historic Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia, 12 p.m. Marker dedications, speakers, pageant. Participants, music, wreaths welcome. Sponsored by General Meade Society of Philadelphia, Friends of Laurel Hill, American Legion Post #405, Post #1 Society Union League, Anna M. Camp #1, Sons of Union Veterans. For information, (215) 228-8200

Saturday, June 11

Civil War Monument Dedication in Cranbury, 11 a.m. Sponsored by the New Jersey Civil War History Association aka Co. H, 14th NJVI. For information, Bob Bisaccio, gettyspa@aol.com

Saturday, June 11 - Sunday, June 12

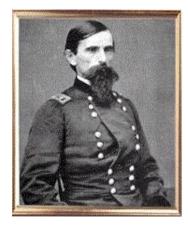
4th Annual Lehigh Valley Civil War Days at Whitehall Parkway (Camp Geiger, Whitehall. Battles both days, living history, fashion displays, children's games, artillery & cavalry demonstrations, period music, speakers, free Saturday evening meal for registered reenactors in period dress, Saturday evening concert followed by artillery night firing. Cavalry, sutlers by invitation artillerv & Registration fee \$7 until April 1, \$10 to May 14, after \$20. For information, Sheila Martin, rs.martin@rcn.com, www.campgeiger.org. \(\Dag{\psi}

Special Event -

JUNIOR CAMP OLDEN DAY XVII will be held at the *Civil War and Native American Museum*, 2202 Kuser Road Hamilton, NJ on Saturday, June 18th 2011, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.



Young persons 8 to 13 years of age can once again enlist as a Civil War soldier or participate as a lady of the Civil War period. Soldiers and ladies will join in military drills, camp life activities, music, games, songs, crafts and FUN! The fee is \$30 per participant. For information or reservations contact John Maleski − (609) 259-1428 or Bob Dumphy at 577-4813 or www.campolden.org and email webmaster. ◆



Who Am I?

Although I would have much preferred to be remembered as a highly successful military hero, I have been thwarted in this ambition and am best known as an author. Born in Indiana, I had worked as a clerk and early displayed a fascination for Mexico which would affect me in later years. During the Mexican War I served as a second lieutenant in the 1st Indiana but saw only minor action. In 1849 I was admitted to the bar in my native state and seven years later entered the state senate.

With the outbreak of the Civil War I offered my services, and was give many assignments during the war. My career got off to a promising start when I routed an inferior Confederate force at Romney, Virginia. Promoted to brigadier general, I was given charge of a newly organized division in the midst of the operations against Fort Donelson and was soon rewarded with a second star. However, that spring my reputation plummeted after the battle of Shiloh. On the first day my division was stationed north of the main army at Crump's Landing, and a series of contradictory orders from Grant forced me to countermarch my command and delayed my arrival on the main battlefield until the fighting was nearly over. I redeemed myself on the second day, but a scapegoat was needed for the near disaster the day before and this was me. Sent home to await further orders, I offered my services to Indiana Governor Oliver P. Morton and, despite my high rank, took temporary command of a regiment during the emergency posed by Kirby Smith's invasion of Kentucky. With Cincinnati threatened, I was placed in charge of a mostly civilian defense force. Through a show of tremendous energy I was able to save the city without a major fight. I was then head of the commission which examined Buell's handling of the invasion and other boards until placed in charge in Maryland in early 1864. There I bought valuable time for the defenders of Washington during Early's drive into the state when I made a stand at Monocacy with an inferior scratch force.

At the close of the war I sat on the court-martial which tried the Lincoln conspirators and presided over that which sent Andersonville chief Henry Wirz to the gallows. I then joined a movement to aid the Juarez forces against Maximilian in Mexico. I tried to raise money and troops and even accepted the title of major general from the Juarez group. On November 30, 1865, I resigned from the U.S. service, but my Mexican venture collapsed and I realized little of the money which I had hoped to gain from it. In later years I was governor of the New Mexico Territory and a diplomat to Turkey. As a prolific writer, who often drew upon my own experiences, I am best remembered for one of the most popular novels of the nineteenth century. •

Who Am I?

Bonus Question: What is the name of the novel?

(Answer on Page 8)

Source: "Who Was Who In The Civil War" by Stewart Sifakis

Audio History -

The **Virginia Historical Society** has a series of lectures available for downloading at:

http://www.vahistorical.org/news/bannerlectures. htm Topics include "Richmond's Hollywood Cemetery", "Robert E. Lee: Lessons in Leadership", "Lee and Grant" and many others related to the Civil War and other aspects of American History.

To help begin your sesquicentennial experience listen to "Reminiscences of Forts Sumter and Moultrie in 1860 - 1861" by Abner Doubleday which is available in audio and text at

http://librivox.org/reminiscences-of-fortssumter-and-moultrie-in-1860-61-by-abnerdoubleday/ ◆

The Origins of Women's History Month

March is Women's History Month. It is a good time to remember that throughout history, women have fought many special battles to overcome injustice.

The following is excerpted from a lecture given by *Cindy Saperstein*.

From early times in this country and throughout the world, women were considered second class citizens, subsets of their husbands. From birth they were property of their fathers, married, and then became property of their husbands. Women could not vote or own property. They could not earn or spend money without permission of their husbands. Women were not encouraged to follow their own pursuits or reach their intellectual potential. While providing a loving, nurturing home, they were expected to be unconcerned with outside political and financial worlds.

As women began to "escape" from this sphere, with the backing of forward thinking fathers and husbands they began to challenge the "status quo". After conquering the struggles barring employment acceptance and access to higher education, women proved to be capable factory workers, teachers, lawyers, doctors, engineers, scientists, jet pilots, politicians and you name it! How did women's history month develop? Why is there a need for a special month to celebrate women and recognize their contributions and achievements?

The roots of Women History Month can be traced to March 8, 1857. On that day in New York City women factory workers staged a protest over very poor working conditions and low wages. The protesters were attacked and dispersed by police. Two years later, they formed their first labor union. In subsequent years on March 8th, more protests followed. In 1908, 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding better pay, shorted hours and voting rights.

Spurred by the rapid rise of world industrialism and rapid economic expansion, the first International Women's Day was held in Copenhagen in 1910. Following years saw the day celebrated in Denmark, Austria, Germany and Switzerland. Due to lack of safety measures, the 1910 Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in New York City killed over 140 garment workers. Subsequent Women's Days were held in commemoration. On March 8th 1913, the eve of WWI, European women held peace rallies.

At the start of the Russian Revolution, Feminist Bolshevik Alexandra Kollantai persuaded Lenin to made International Women's Day an official holiday. A women's uprising on May 8th, 1917 is said to be responsible for the Czar's abdication.

During the economic depression of the 1930's and WWII, women's rights went out of fashion. During the 1950's, March 8th took on different meanings. Women began to organize against militarism and war. This led to anti-nuclear protests. The 1960's saw the emergence of the women's liberation movement. By the 1970's, March 8th became a day to honor the achievements of individual women and show broader purpose. In the United States, women became aware of the fact that history as taught in schools was incomplete. Women were invisible! Curriculums were expanded to include the contributions of Native Americans, black Americans and women. Universities began to offer courses in women's studies. In 1975, the UN began sponsoring International Women's Day, honoring working women.

The National Women's History Project was formed to design and distribute materials to schools to support the teaching and studying or women's history. In 1981, The Project successfully lobbied Congress to declare a National History Week. By a 1987 Presidential Decree this was expanded to National Women's History Month. From this, grew the National Museum of Women's History in Washington DC.

The purpose of Women's History Month is to increase knowledge of the historical contributions of both ordinary and noble women. In the future, hopefully, there will be no need for a special month set aside for this purpose. It will become impossible to teach history without "Herstory." ◆

Civil War Soldier Dies Near Las Vegas

Submitted by Tony Travaglione

I like to visit Civil War sites whenever we travel out of state. Therefore on a trip to Las Vegas in 2009 my wife Kathy said that this would be one vacation where she would not have to follow me around some historic area. She was wrong!

We were driving through Valley of Fire State Park near Las Vegas, a beautiful area filled with rock formations of many bright colors, especially red.



Valley of Fire State Park

I spotted an historic sign by the side of the road and instantly pulled over. Wow! A Civil War historic spot! The sign which briefly tells the sad story of Sergeant John J. Clark, a former Union soldier who died at that spot in 1915, reads as follows:



Historic Marker

"John J. Clark was born in Canada in 1844. He enlisted in Company F of the New York Infantry in 1862, serving actively in the Civil War. After being shot in the hand and contracting typhoid fever, he was honorably discharged 6 March 1863 as a sergeant in Company B of the New York Calvary (sic).

Following his discharge, Sergeant Clark immigrated to Southern California. While traveling from Bakersfield to Salt Lake City on a buckboard, he stopped near this spot, tied his hoarse to the back of the wagon and wandered around, possibly looking for water. Eventually, he crawled under his buckboard and died, presumably from thirst, several days before his body was found 30 June 1915."

It seems that former Sergeant Clark was traveling across the desert near Las Vegas, only a railroad watering stop at the time, on his way by horse and wagon from Bakersfield, California to Salt Lake City, Utah, a distance of over 700 miles. Something happened and he died here of thirst or other ailment. He was buried just off the road, where a small monument marks his grave today. The grave is in the background of the picture below.



Marker Near Gravesite.

After returning from Las Vegas, I tried to find out more information about John J. Clark. One website on the internet showed his unit as the 45th New York Infantry. However another website did not list him on the roster of that regiment. Another site gave his regiment as the 26th New York Cavalry. I found him on their roster. He only served six months in that regiment, ending in July, 1865. My guess is that he served three years with the 45th New York, was discharged, and reenlisted with the 26th New York.

I will try to find out more about John J. Clark, and. if I find something interesting, submit it for a future newsletter. Meanwhile, if you visit Las Vegas and the Valley of Fire, stop to see his memorial sign located on the main east-west road, Route 169 that goes through Valley of Fire, several miles east of the park Visitors' Center. •

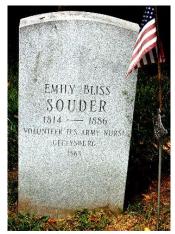
My Great Great Great Grandmother -Emily Bliss (Thacher) Souder

Submitted by Warren M. Spengler

Emily Bliss (Thacher) Souder was my great great great Grandmother. She was born in Kennebec, Maine in 1814 and was the daughter of Judge Stephen Thacher and his wife Harriet Preble. In 1834 she became the wife of Edmund Alphonso Souder of Philadelphia. Edmund was in the shipping business.

After the battle of Gettysburg in July 1863, Emily gave her gave up her vacation at the family retreat at Cape May, New Jersey and instead traveled with two friends to Gettysburg. They went by train and by carriage, arriving in Gettysburg about July 15th. They spent (roughly) the next three weeks tending the wounded as volunteer nurses. When not taking care of wounded men, she wrote a series of letters describing her experiences. The letters were to her husband, various friends and several relatives. These would later be put into a book called. "Leaves from the Battlefield Gettysburg." For her service at Gettysburg, Emily was made a member of the United States Sanitary Commission. Later that year, Emily, accompanied by Edmund returned to Gettysburg for the dedication of the National Cemetery. President Lincoln would be there to "deliver a few appropriate remarks." The day of the dedication, Emily and Edmund arrived well before the start of festivities. But Emily felt the seating reserved for the ladies was inadequate. Furthermore, she felt she could read the speeches in the newspaper. So, while the most famous speech in American history was being delivered, Emily and Edmund were far away picking flowers on a hillside. Sometime later, Edmund wrote a letter to President Lincoln urging him not to blockade Southern ports, but to capture them instead. Just what Abraham Lincoln needed: more advice!

Emily Bliss Souder died on December 22, 1886. On the website, Find-A-Grave, is Emily's gravesite. The tributes from total strangers to Emily makes this descendent feel very proud.



Grave of Emily Bliss Souder (Photo courtesy of Dan Silva)

Website: http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=10188910. ◆

Civil War Sesquicentennial -

This year is the beginning of the celebration of the Civil War Sesquicentennial. Future issues will list some of the major events which occurred 150 years ago. Here are some from March to May of 1861:

March 4 - Lincoln's Inauguration.

March 11 - Confederate Constitution.

April 12 - 13 - Attack on Fort Sumter.

April 17 - Virginia seceded from the Union.

April 20 - Robert E. Lee resigned his commission in the United States Army.

May 6 - Arkansas seceded from the Union.

May 18-19 - Sewell's Point

May 20 - North Carolina seceded from Union.

May 29 - June 1 - Aquia Creek. ◆



Bombardment of Fort Sumter

Next Meeting -

Remember our next meeting will be **March 3rd** at the Hamilton Public Library located at 1 Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. Drive; Hamilton, NJ. It will feature Jim Lamason discussing Major General (Union) Gouverneur K. Warren.



Bring a Dish!

Remember hospitality for the March 3rd meeting will be a covered dish. Bring your favorite last taste of winter or first taste of spring food to share. **Special start time is 6:00 PM.** ◆

Be a Gazette Contributor!

Explore a battlefield? See an interesting museum exhibit? Read a new Civil War book or reread a favorite one? Share your experiences with round table members. Don't forget our new feature – *Camp Olden Member Biographies*.

Jot down a couple of lines and send your photos and your thoughts to the Gazette email address: *oldennewsletter@optonline.net*. The mailing address is C&M Mazzocchi, 1430 18th Ave. Wall, NJ 07719.

For meeting and other information visit us on the Web: www.campolden.org. ◆



Answer to "*Who Am I?*" - Lewis Wallace (1827-1905) who wrote *Ben Hur: A Tale of the Christ.* ◆