# The Camp Olden Gazette

### News from the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table

Summer, 2011

#### President's Gavel.

On May 23, 2011 I had the honor to participate in a Memorial Service by the Sons of Union Veterans, Garfield Camp 4 for Sergeant John Beech in Mercer Cemetery, Trenton, NJ



John Beech was born in Stratfordshire, England on May 1, 1844. He joined Company B; also know as the Potters Company, 4th New Jersey Infantry Regiment in Trenton, NJ on August 9, 1861 to fight for the Union in the Civil War. He was promoted to Corporal on September 1, 1864, and was made Sergeant on February 1, 1865. The Battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse was the second ferocious battle in the 1864 campaign launched by General Grant to defeat the Confederate Army under Robert E. Lee. After fighting to a bloody draw in the Wilderness, Grant turned his Army south towards Richmond only to be stopped again by Lee's men at Spotsylvania Courthouse. On May 12, 1864, during the fighting at Spotsylvania Courthouse, a section of an artillery battery was deployed in front of then-Corporal Beech's 4th NJ. In minutes, enemy fire cut down most of the battery's men. Corporal Beech sprang forward and assisted the remaining cannoneers in working their guns, despite being under severe fire the entire time. Sergeant John Beech was awarded Medal of Honor on June 1, 1894, for valor at the Battle of Spotsylvania Courthouse while serving as Corporal, Company B, 4th New Jersey Infantry Regiment. John Beech was a member of Aaron Wilkes Post Number 23, Grand Army of the Republic located in Trenton, New Jersey. He died on November 27, 1926 and

is buried here in Mercer Cemetery.

I spoke as Governor Charles Smith Olden (1860-1863) I read a poem I felt was extremely appropriate not only for Sergeant Beech but for all Union soldiers of the Civil War.

#### "When the Boys in Blue Are Gone"

When the comrades have departed, When the veterans are no more, When the bugle call is sounded On that everlasting shore. When life's weary march is ended, When campfires slumber long; Who will tell the world the story, When the boys in Blue are gone? Who will tell about their marching, From Atlanta to the Sea? Who will halt, and wait, and listen. When they hear the reveille? Who will join to swell the chorus, Of some old, Grand Army song? Who will tell the world the story, When the boys in Blue are gone? Sons and daughters of this nation, You must tell of triumphs won; When on earth our work is ended, And the Veteran claims his own. You must all cherish Old Glory, And its teachings pass along. You must tell the world the story, When the boys in Blue are gone. To that flag, our country's emblem, You must pledge allegiance, too. To that flag, our nation's emblem, May your hearts be ever true. That the nation be protected, 'Gainst injustice, and all wrong: You must tell the world the story, When the boys in Blue are gone.

Presidents Gavel continues on page 8.

## The Civilian Experience - A Tour of the George & Hettie Shriver House

Contributed by Leslie Peck and Terri Paglione

The George & Hettie Shriver House in Gettysburg, PA, shows what everyday life was like in the mid-19th century and how one family became affected by the Battle of Gettysburg and the Civil War. This house was occupied by the Confederates and there is an exhibit of hundreds of artifacts found inside the house during the restoration including live Civil War bullet cartridges, period medical supplies, and a child's shoe believed to belong to one of the Shriver's children. Authentic bullet holes on the side of the house stand as a silent reminder to the events that took place in 1863. More information, at http://shriverhouse.org/. ◆



Mr. Shriver's Workroom



Holes used by Sharpshooters to pick off Union soldiers









Some views showing the civilian experience.

#### Meet Your Fellow Members:

Here's another entry in our biography series initiated as a way for members to get to know each other better.

Hi! I'm Connie Davis and have been a member of Camp Olden since 1992. I was introduced to the organization by Larry and Diana Dromboski. (Larry was a founding father of the Round Table, as were Bruce Sirak, Mark Sirak, Bob Butera, Joe Tomlin, Rock Poinsett and Charles Webster.) Rick worked at GM and was moving out of the area and could not run for a second term as treasurer. My name was entered and I ran for election and won. I have been club treasurer since 1993.

I have volunteered at all the reenactments from 1992 to our last one in 2008, serving as co-coordinator the last several years. I've served on the education committee and the Camp Olden Park Parade committee and worked at Jr. Camp Olden and history nights.



Photo at Gettysburg NHP on a Camp Olden bus trip. L-R: Connie Davis, Al and Nancy Quick, and Danny Davis. Al, who also follows the Sickles bloodline, was Danny's uncle.

Growing up I always had an interest in the Revolutionary War as well as the Civil War. Lucky for me, my late husband Danny had the same interests. In 1985, our son Tim left for basic training at Ft. Lawton, Oklahoma. Danny and I with our daughter Lisa went on our first trip to Gettysburg. As we walked around the battlefield we kept hearing the name Sickles. Bells went off in my head as I remembered Danny's Uncle Bill telling stories of his ancestors and Daniel Sickles was one of them. Love him or hate him, that is a personal decision, but you must admit, Dan Sickles led a colorful life. Now our interest was turned up several

notches and we picked up every article and book we could find about him.



Dan Sickles

When we heard about, and joined Camp Olden Civil War Round Table it just opened the door to so much - history of the Civil War, wonderful guest speakers, meeting people and making many friendships.

Now I enjoy that my oldest granddaughter, Melissa Emley is also interested in the Civil War. ◆

## Civil War Symposium While Wearing Bunny Slippers

Contributed by Gary DeSiver

You can attend a civil War symposium wearing your bunny slippers. At least you can do it virtually through C-SPAN3. Every weekend, C-SPAN3 offers about 30 historically oriented speakers of about an hour each. Usually these include several Civil War related topics. For example, one recent weekend included the following;

#### "The Origins of the Secession Crisis and the Civil War" hosted by the Organization of American Historians

On the 150th anniversary of the secession winter, this session takes a new look at an old question: what were the causes of the Civil War? Each of the three presenters has recently authored a book on the causes of the conflict, and each work takes a different approach. The conversation will examine the role of slavery, economics, political parties, discourse, and irrational motives. The session will explore whether it is possible to integrate the differing interpretations of the war's origins or whether the various schools of thought remain irreconcilable. Finally, the session touched on how new sources, questions, viewpoints, and methods might move the study of the Civil War forward in the new decade.

#### "Civil War Contraband Camps" hosted by the Organization of American Historians

Emancipation and War: Life inside the Civil War's Contraband Camps

#### "The Reputation of Abraham Lincoln" hosted by the Lincoln Association

Allen Guelzo delivered the keynote address of the Abraham Lincoln Association's celebration on the 202nd birthday of Abraham Lincoln. Professor Guelzo gave an assessment of the rise, decline--and rise again--of the reputation of the sixteenth president.

### **Southern Conservatives after the Civil War at the University of Richmond**

Professor Robert Kenzer teaches a history course on the Civil War's impact on the American South. In the day's class he focused on the rise of the Southern conservative response and the Ku Klux Klan.

### Tribute to Senator Hiram Rhodes Revels at the U.S. Capitol Historical Society

The U.S. Capitol Historical Society hosts historian Laura Turner O'Hara for a lecture on former Senator Hiram Rhodes Revels, the first African American elected to Congress. He was elected to the United States Senate in 1870.

C-SPAN3 also has short (5-7 minute) segments about various places. A recent included one about the Ulysses S. Grant Memorial on the U.S. Capitol West Front in Washington, DC; and another about Monument Avenue in Richmond.

C-SPAN2 has Book-TV all weekend during which authors speak about their books. Many of these are history-related books. One recent weekend included the following; "Washington: A Life." by Ron Chernow (the winner of the 2011 Pulitzer Prize in Biography); "Black Gotham: A Family History of African Americans in Nineteenth-Century New York City" by Carla Peterson; "Inventing George Washington" by Edward Lengel; and "American Tempest: How the Boston Tea Party Sparked A Revolution" by Harlow Unger.

The schedules for CSPAN-2 and CSPAN-3, are at <a href="http://www.c-spanvideo.org/schedule">http://www.c-spanvideo.org/schedule</a>

The Book TV (CSPAN-2) descriptions are at <a href="http://www.booktv.org/Schedule.aspx">http://www.booktv.org/Schedule.aspx</a>. ◆

#### Coming Events -

#### June 11

Civil War Monument Dedication in Cranbury, NJ. Civil War Monument Dedication in Cranbury, 11:00 AM. Sponsored by the New Jersey Civil War History Association aka Co. H, 14th NJVI. For information - <a href="http://www.14njvols.com">http://www.14njvols.com</a>.

#### June 17 - Sunday, June 19

Living History Event for Milford's 100th anniversary. Milford, NJ. Sunday skirmish, forces led by Gens. Francis C. Barlow & James Longstreet. Military & civilian demonstrations, historical discussions, fireworks, parade, period baseball, exhibits, carnival, music. Free. For information - www.milfordnjhistory.org.

#### **June 18**

Junior Camp Olden, at the Civil War and Native American Museum in Hamilton, NJ, from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

#### **July 8 - July 10**

Cooper Mill Military Timeline Living History in Chester, NJ. French & Indian War through the Civil War. Wet plate photographer, civilian tea, military demonstrations, music. Information at www.27thnewjerseycompanyf.org.

#### August 5 - August 7

15th Annual Parker Press Civil War Living History Weekend in Woodbridge, NJ, 10-4,. Saturday evening candlelight tour. Living history, displays, skirmishes. All period impressions, military & civilian. Free admission & parking. Sponsored by Robert E. Lee Civil War Round Table of Central New Jersey. For information, Mira Form, (732) 846-5725, mform@optonline.net; Karen Kulaga, (732) 826-6880, kkulaga@att.net.

#### August 6 - August 7

11th Annual Civil War Living History Weekend at Holcombe Jimison Farmstead, Lambertville, NJ. Daily battles, demonstrations, period music. Proceeds benefit historic preservation & education. Weekend admission \$10 over age 12. Sponsored by Lambertville Living History Assn. More information can be found at www.lambertvillecivilwarreenactment.com. ◆

#### 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 June to August of 1861:

May 29-June 1, 1861 Aquia Creek

June 1861 - West Virginia Is Born. Residents of the western counties of Virginia did not wish to secede along with the rest of the state. This section of Virginia was admitted into the Union as the state of West Virginia on June 20, 1863.

June 1861 - Four Slave States Stay in the Union. Despite their acceptance of slavery, Delaware, Kentucky, Maryland, and Missouri did not join the Confederacy. Although divided in their loyalties, a combination of political maneuvering and Union military pressure kept these states from seceding.

June 3, 1861 Philippi / Philippi Races

June 10, 1861 Big Bethel / Bethel Church

June 17, 1861 Boonville

July 2, 1861 Hoke's Run / Falling Waters / Hainesville

July 5, 1861 Carthage

July 11, 1861 Rich Mountain

July 18, 1861 Bull Run / Blackburn's Ford

July 21, 1861 First Manassas / First Bull Run. - Public demand pushed General-in-Chief Winfield Scott to advance on the South before adequately training his untried troops. Scott ordered General Irvin McDowell to advance on Confederate troops stationed at Manassas Junction, Virginia. McDowell attacked on July 21, and was initially successful, but the introduction of Confederate reinforcements resulted in a Southern victory and a chaotic retreat toward Washington by federal troops.

July 1861 - General McDowell Is Replaced. Suddenly aware of the threat of a protracted war and the army's need for organization and training, Lincoln replaced McDowell with General George B. McClellan.

July - November - A Blockade of the South. To blockade the coast of the Confederacy effectively, the federal navy had to be improved. By July, the effort at improvement had made a difference and an effective blockade had begun. The South responded by building small, fast ships that could outmaneuver Union vessels. On November 7, 1861, Captain Samuel F. Dupont's warships silenced Confederate guns in Fort Walker and Fort Beauregard. This victory enabled General Thomas W. Sherman's troops to occupy first Port Royal and then all the famous Sea Islands of South Carolina.

August 10, 1861 Wilson's Creek / Oak Hills

August 21 - Confederate Assignments - Brig General Roswell S. Ripley CS Army assigned to command of the Dept. South Carolina. Brig General John B. Grayson CS Army assigned to command of Dept of Middle and East Florida

August 26, 1861 Kessler's Cross Lanes

August 28-29, 1861 Hatteras Inlet Batteries / Fort Clark / Fort Hatteras. ♦

The following appeared in **Parade Magazine** and was suggested by Mario Florio.

#### My Top Five Civil War Films

**Robert Osborne**, host of Turner Classic Movies, lists his favorites.



- 1. *The General* (1927) This Buster Keaton comedy is one of the most accurate re-creations of the era. The story is based on fact in 1862, Union spies stole the General, a Confederate train and it always makes me laugh.
- 2. Gone with the Wind (1939) Not a single scene occurs on a battlefield per se, but no other film so fully captures what's at stake on a personal and social level during war and how much devastation it can cause. Even after 72 years, the movie impresses and overwhelms.
- 3. *The Red Badge of Courage* (1951) Director John Huston, working from a screenplay he adapted from the novel, knew of the damage war can inflict on a person. This film depicts the

inner stories of young soldiers and their days of tedium and moments of sheer terror.

- 4. *Friendly Persuasion* (1956) Thanks to producer/director William Wyler and his cast, this beautifully shows the war's impact on a Quaker family. It's the best film from the third act of Gary Cooper's career, with a superb Tony Perkins in his first act.
- 5. *Glory* (1989) A moving tribute to the little-recognized freed slaves who served in the Union army. Impressively directed by Edward Zwick, it's filled with exceptional performances, especially those from Morgan Freeman and Denzel Washington (below), who won an Oscar.

#### My Top Four Civil War Books

James McPherson, Princeton University professor and author of Battle Cry of Freedom, recommends these books.



### 1. The War for the Union (4 vols.) by Allan Nevins

Written from a national perspective, it's the most comprehensive account of the war.

- 2. *The Civil War* (3 vols.) by Shelby Foote A masterful, flowing history, with a Southern point of view.
- 3. *The Killer Angels* by Michael Shaara A striking novel about Gettysburg that employs characters from both sides to show some of the reasons the war was fought.
- 4. *The Confederate War* by Gary W. Gallagher A brief but powerful analysis of what the war meant for the Confederate Rebels and for the nation. ◆

**Camp Olden Members** - If you have any particular favorite movie or book, send the title(s) to the **Camp Olden Gazette** and our Round Table will have it's own list of favorites. Email to **oldennewsletter@optonline.net**.

#### Who Am I?



I was born in Washington on July 21st, 1802 and graduated from the Military Academy at West Point in 1822. I saw action in the Seminole War (1838-42) and the Mexican War (1846-48).

A strong opponent of slavery I corresponded with Abraham Lincoln on the subject and was invited to Washington in January, 1861. On the outbreak of the American Civil War I joined the Union Army and became colonel of the 3rd United States Cavalry and was severely wounded at Bull Run (July, 1861). After I recovered from my wounds I replaced Major General John C. Fremont as commander of the Western Department.

In March, 1862, I was appointed Commander of the Department of the South. After the successful campaign at Fort Pulaski I began enlisting black soldiers in the occupied districts of South Carolina. I was ordered to disband the 1st South Carolina (African Descent) but eventually got approval from Congress for my action.

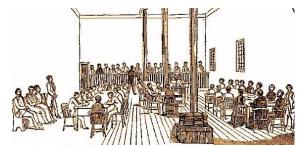
I also issued a statement that: "The persons in these three States - Georgia, Florida and South Carolina - heretofore held as slaves, are therefore declared forever free." Abraham Lincoln quickly ordered me to retract his proclamation as he still feared that this action would force slave-owners in border states to join the Confederates. President Jefferson Davis and the he leaders of the Confederate Army were furious when they heard of my actions and orders were given that I was a "felon to be executed if captured."

Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*, wrote an open letter to Abraham Lincoln defending me and criticizing the president for failing to make slavery the dominant issue of the

war and compromising moral principles for political motives. Lincoln famously replied: "My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves, I would do it."

I served on the court-martial of Fitz-John Porter and the committee that looked into the loss of Harpers Ferry. I also served on several other boards and commissions before replacing Major General Franz Sigel during his Shenandoah Valley campaign in May, 1864. I fared little better than Sigel and was defeated by Major General Jubal Early at Lynchburg in June. I resigned my commission and was replaced by Philip Sheridan.

I accompanied the body of Abraham Lincoln to Springfield and afterwards was invited by President Andrew Johnson to be a member of the nine-man military commission to try the conspirators to assassinate President Lincoln. It was argued by Edwin M. Stanton, the Secretary of War, that the men should be tried by a military court as Lincoln had been Commander in Chief of the army. Several members of the cabinet preferred a civil trial. However, James Speed, the Attorney General, agreed with Stanton and therefore the defendants did not enjoy the advantages of a jury trial.



**Trial of the Lincoln Conspirators** 

I died in Washington on 2nd February, 1886, and am buried in the Princeton Cemetery, Princeton, New Jersey, along with Aaron Burr and Grover Cleveland. ◆

Biography courtesy of John Simkin, Spartacus Educational. For Princeton Cemetery information go to <a href="http://www.findagrave.com/php/famous.php?page=cem&F">http://www.findagrave.com/php/famous.php?page=cem&F</a> Scemeteryid=100174.

Answer to "Who Am I" is on page 8

Below is an interesting slant on a famous poem.

## Paul Revere's Ride Against Slavery

By JILL LEPORE Op-Ed Contributor, New York Times

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow published his best-known poem, "Paul Revere's Ride," on the same day that South Carolina seceded from the United States.

"Listen, my children, and you shall hear/ Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere." Before Longfellow published those lines, Revere was never known for his ride, and Longfellow got almost every detail of what happened in 1775 wrong. But Longfellow didn't care: he was writing as much about the coming war as about the one that had come before. "Paul Revere's Ride" is less a poem about the Revolutionary War than about the impending Civil War — and about the conflict over slavery that caused it. That meaning, though, has been almost entirely forgotten.

Longfellow, a passionately private man, was, just as passionately and privately, an abolitionist. His best friend was Charles Sumner, for whom he wrote, in 1842, a slim volume called "Poems on Slavery." Sumner, a brash and aggressive politician, delivered stirring speeches attacking slave owners; Longfellow, a gentler soul, wrote verses mourning the plight of slaves, poems "so mild," he wrote, "that even a slaveholder might read them without losing his appetite for breakfast."

Still, publishing those poems cost Longfellow something: a piece of his privacy, with pressure from fellow abolitionists to enter politics. "I should be found but a weak and unworthy champion in public debate," he demurred. Asked to write once more about slavery, he refused: "I think no one who cares about the matter will be at any loss to discover my opinion on that subject."

Yet Longfellow's abolitionist zeal didn't abate. He secretly spent money he earned from his best-selling poems, like "The Song of Hiawatha," to buy slaves their freedom. In 1856, when Sumner gave his famous "Crime Against Kansas" speech in the Senate, Longfellow congratulated him: "At

last the spirit of the North is aroused." That speech nearly cost Sumner his life — it so incensed a South Carolina representative, Preston Brooks, that he beat Sumner with a cane on the Senate floor.

The next year, Longfellow wrote to Sumner calling the Dred Scott decision heart-breaking, and wishing he could find a way to write about it: "I long to say some vibrant word, that should have vitality in it, and force. Be sure if it comes to me I will not be slow in uttering it." On Dec. 2, 1859, the day John Brown was hanged, Longfellow wrote in his diary, "This will be a great day in our history, the date of a new Revolution quite as much needed as the old one."

Pondering that new Revolution, Longfellow got to thinking about the old one. In April 1860, he began writing "Paul Revere's Ride." While he worked on the poem, he worried about the fate of the nation. Around the same time he went to see Frederick Douglass speak and read Sumner's latest speech, which predicted that "the sacred animosity between Freedom and Slavery can end only with the triumph of Freedom." In November, weeks after finishing "Paul Revere's Ride," Longfellow rejoiced in his diary that Lincoln had won the presidency; echoing Sumner, he wrote: "Freedom is triumphant."

"Paul Revere's Ride" was published in the January 1861 issue of The Atlantic, which appeared on newsstands on Dec. 20. It was read as a rallying cry for the Union. It is a poem about waking the sleeping, and waking the dead: "Beneath, in the churchyard, lay the dead, In their night encampment on the hill." The dead are Northerners, awakened, at last aroused. But the dead are also the enslaved, entombed in slavery — an image that was, at the time, a common conceit: Douglass called his escape "a resurrection from the dark and pestiferous tomb of slavery."

Thanks to poems like "Paul Revere's Ride," Longfellow was once the country's most respected and beloved poet. But, beginning with the rise of New Criticism in the early 20th century, literary scholars have dismissed his poetry as cloying, drippy and even childish. Generations of schoolchildren have memorized

"Paul Revere's Ride"; critics have barely read it.

Yet neglecting Longfellow, taking the politics out of Longfellow, thinking of Longfellow as childish, have both occluded the poem's meaning and made it exceptionally serviceable as a piece of political propaganda. It is, after all, a rousing call to action:

In the hour of darkness and peril and need, The people will waken and listen to hear The hurrying hoof beats of that steed, And the midnight message of Paul Revere.

With the history of the poem forgotten, this became all-purpose stuff. "We still need some Paul Revere of conscience to alert every hamlet and every village of America that revolution is still at hand," the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said in 1967. In 1971, the Vietnam Veterans against the War marched Revere's ride in reverse; four years later, Gerald Ford quoted Longfellow to call for renewed pride in America.

A century and a half ago, there was quite a bit more at stake. "The dissolution of the Union goes slowly on," Longfellow wrote in his diary in January 1861. "Behind it all I hear the low murmur of the slaves, like the chorus in a Greek tragedy." They cry, from the abyss. •

Jill Lepore is a professor of history at Harvard and the author, of "The Whites of Their Eyes: The Tea Party's Revolution and the Battle Over American History."

#### **Presidents Gavel** continued from page 1.

You must keep your country's honor, From each stripe withhold all stain; You must take the Veteran's places, And repeat the roll of fame. You must keep your country's honor, And your flag above all wrong, Then we'll trust you with the story, When the boys in Blue are gone.

My thanks to Jane Peters Estes for bringing this poem to my attention!

On Memorial Day we must always remember the ones who gave their all. I am confident that you did.

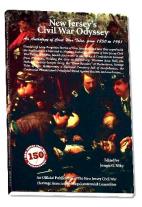
Your obedient servant,

Bruce. ♦

### Upcoming Meetings -

Our next meeting will be **June 2**, 2011 at 7 PM at the Hamilton Public Library located at 1 Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. Drive; Hamilton, NJ. It will feature Dr. David Martin discussing the "Swamp Angel"

The following meeting will be **July 7**, 2011. It will feature Joseph Bilby discussing an official publication of the New Jersey Civil War Heritage Association Sesquicentennial Committee: *New Jersey's Civil War Odyssey: An Anthology of Civil War Tales from 1861-1961.* ◆



#### 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** – the *Meet Your Fellow Members* series. Send a brief biography relating how you became interested in the Civil War and became a member of Camp Olden CWRT. Please send a photograph so other members will know who you are.

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

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

Answer to "**Who Am I?**"
Major General David Hunter (1802-1886). ◆