

The Camp Olden Gazette

News from the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table

Winter, 2011

President's Gavel.

Returning from Gettysburg Remembrance Day Weekend I thought of Thanksgiving being only a few days away. I hope everyone did have a happy one and enjoyed time with family and friends. As Thanksgiving has passed, Christmas will be on everybody's mind. From time to time we get inquiries sent to our website and recently we received one regarding Christmas and I felt that the best person to answer it was our friend Kevin Rawlings who portrays Thomas Nast's Patriotic Santa and is also the author of *We Were Marching On Christmas Day - A History & Chronicle of Christmas During the Civil War*. I found his answer to be very informative and thought you would also. The question and excerpts from Kevin's response follow.

I work at a small historic site in New Jersey. We are putting together a Civil War Christmas program and I had a question. Do you know if families on the home front sent "care packages" to soldiers away on the front?

Soldiers on both side of the conflict requested Christmas boxes from home throughout the war. Those that fought for the Confederacy saw the contents of their boxes grow thin by the end of the war if they received any at all. The Adams Express Company was probably the most famous name that shipped boxes to the soldiers. It was this company that slave "Box" Brown shipped himself to freedom from Richmond to Philadelphia prior to the start of the war.

Christmas boxes contained the wealth of the home front pantry as well as the industrious production of the women at home. Wives, sisters, mothers and sweethearts knitted and sewed clothing and military accessories that included shirts, socks, underwear, trousers, havelocks, ditty bags, mittens, scarves, and overcoats among other articles. The food packed into boxes included turkeys, smoked ham,

sausages, jams and jellies, pickles, relish, cakes, cookies, muffins, and an amazing assortment of homemade and commercial condiments. Often, in the cavities of chickens and turkeys, secreted bottles of whiskey were sent for the making of egg nog for Christmas celebrations. Those soldiers that did not receive boxes were allowed to share in the plenty coming into camps, and many company messes merged the contents of soldier's boxes for company parties that might last several days at Christmas. Many letters written by both Union and Confederate soldiers talk about these holiday boxes and their anticipated arrivals in camp at Christmas time. Prisoners of war also received Christmas boxes at the less harsh prisoner of war camps north and south.

Two of the most famous Christmas illustrations from the Civil War graced the front pages of *Harper's Weekly*. Winslow Homer's illustration from January 4th, 1862 (Christmas of 1861), showed soldiers gleefully opening and Adams Express box containing clothing, food and books. In the background, a sutler, who normally sells exorbitantly priced goods to regimental customers, peers dolefully over a clothes line at the merrymaking soldiers. He does no business this day as all the good things entering camp are free. The second illustration was Thomas Nast's first published Santa Claus image on the January 3rd, 1863, cover of *Harper's Weekly* (Christmas of 1862). It was a propaganda piece showing the South that Santa was aligned with the North. Santa sat on a sleigh handing out Christmas boxes to soldiers running to see him. On the inside pages in the center of the newspaper is another Nast illustration called *Christmas Eve*, which invokes the loneliness of civilians left at home and soldiers in the cold picket camp wishing they were reunited for the holiday. But

President's Gavel continued on page 12.

Go West, Young Confederacy

By Richard Parker and Natalie Posgate

In the blistering August heat of 1861, an ambitious 45-year-old officer arrived in the dusty streets of San Antonio to organize one of the most daring Confederate offensives of the Civil War.

Freshly promoted to brigadier general by President Jefferson Davis, Henry Hopkins Sibley was a distinguished soldier who had spent 22 years in the West. And Davis was suitably impressed with his plan: to cross 1,300 miles of forbidding desert, capturing New Mexico, present-day Arizona, the California gold fields, and the ports of San Francisco and San Diego.



Brig. Gen. Henry Hopkins Sibley

If it succeeded, Davis and the Confederate leadership reasoned, the invasion could change the war overnight. Instead of a small number of states along the East and Gulf Coasts, hemmed in by the Union Navy's increasingly effective blockade, the Confederacy would at once be transformed into a Pacific power. The shackles of the blockade smashed, the South would trade with the world at will as gold poured into its coffers. A Confederate dream shimmered in that desert. Yet it would turn out to be a disastrous mirage.

Sibley was no homegrown Texas Ranger or state militia officer; when war called, increasingly in the West, Sibley answered. A Louisianan born to the influential physician and western explorer Samuel Hopkins Sibley, Henry was an 1838 graduate of West Point. He fought the Seminole in Florida. In Mexico, he fought bravely near Veracruz. After the Mexican War Sibley fought the Comanche in Texas and the Navajo in the New Mexico Territory. He pursued Mormons in the Utah Territory and quelled violence over slavery in Kansas.

When war broke out, Sibley was at Fort Union,

in the New Mexico Territory. He knew where his loyalties lay, and he immediately resigned his Union commission. He then headed across the continent to see the Confederate president with his plan to strike west.

In hindsight, many would see the invasion of New Mexico as Sibley's grandiose vision. But in reality, Davis had seized upon a big Western offensive even before Sibley set foot in Richmond. A West Point graduate himself, Davis appears to have been influenced at the academy by the writings of Antoine Henri Jomini, a Swiss officer under Napoleon who coined the phrase "the offensive-defensive": a curious combination of a generally defensive posture that didn't wait on the enemy to seize the initiative. And Davis clearly had an appreciation for the riches on the frontier: in the Senate he had proposed that slave labor be imported for both mining and agriculture in the West.

As president of the Confederacy, Davis had at first said there was no Confederate interest in invading the West. But there were Confederate sympathizers in both Arizona and California, and they proved a handy excuse. Even the Union commander there reported that there were at least 20,000 sympathizers in California, and if the Confederacy "should ever get an organized force into this State, as a rallying point for all the secession element, it would inevitably inaugurate a civil war here immediately."

At his inauguration in Washington in March, President Lincoln seemed to anticipate the Confederate designs on the West, noting that the Constitution still applied to all states – and territories – that had not seceded. In April, Davis met with Secretary of War Leroy Pope Walker, where the two discussed not just the importance of defending Texas but how annexing New Mexico and Arizona would improve the situation.

Sibley presented his plan to the president in July. Raising a force at San Antonio, he would march 600 miles across the Hill Country, the Edwards Plateau and the Chihuahuan Desert to El Paso, settling into Fort Bliss. Already a small rebel force, the Second Texas Mounted Rifles under Lt. Col. John R. Baylor, had dashed into far

southern New Mexico, linked up with Arizona confederates and defeated a small Union force.

Sibley proposed to vastly expand upon Baylor's initial – if modest – success. With a brigade of 2,500 men, he would move north, up the Rio Grande into New Mexico before striking west. The detour would be necessary because supply lines to El Paso would have already been stretched and nearly exhausted; Sibley's entire strategy depended upon seizing supplies from his Union enemies to keep his force headed westward to California.

Despite the huge risk of depending upon the enemy for supplies, Davis reasoned that it could work: it took only 1,500 soldiers to capture Santa Fe in 1846, after all. He approved the expedition and gave Sibley command of the Confederate Army of New Mexico. But not everyone would share this sunny perspective. The march up the Rio Grande had been fraught with danger for centuries. With burning desert on either side of the river and Apache lurking along its banks, the Spanish named this track northward the Jornada del Muerto – the Journey of Death.

Upon returning to Texas, Sibley found plenty of doubt there as well. Gov. Edward Clark was slow to provide troops. Military units not provided by the governor said they were waiting on orders. And the Texans worried about sending so many troops out West even as they feared an invasion from the sea, where they were hurriedly reinforcing shore batteries. Meanwhile, Sibley went about scratching up troops for his brigade where he could, drilling in the San Antonio sun.

John Shropshire, a 28-year-old volunteer officer, would be among them. Having left his family's cotton plantation in Columbus, Tex., he wrote home:

My Dear Carrie,

We are now stationed about 8 miles from San Antonio where we will probably remain 4 or 8 weeks. We have been mustered into the Confederate Army for the indefinite period of the war. When we will get back I can't tell. Remember me to all.

Your, John

Tragically for his family, Shropshire would be one of many Texans not to return. Indeed, nearly

a third of the 2,500-man brigade would die in New Mexico. The initial dash up the Rio Grande was followed by a ruinous defeat at Glorieta Pass, near Fort Union – where those precious supplies were lost – and a frantic retreat. The sheer boldness of the plan that Sibley and Davis hatched would be its undoing.

The proud general, Sibley, would make it back to Texas, but his reputation would be destroyed. Stripped of his command, he would be a broken man whose remaining years were filled with his only real battle, a losing one with the bottle. And it would all be the result of that bold but foolhardy invasion of the West. ♦

Richard Parker is a journalist and publisher in Texas and a regular contributor to McClatchy-Tribune Information Services. Natalie Posgate is a senior at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, majoring in journalism.

Civil War Sesquicentennial –

Below are some of the major events which occurred 150 years ago from December of 1861 to February of 1862:

December 9 - Chusto-Talasah / Caving Banks
December 13 - Camp Allegheny
December 20 - Dranesville
December 26 - Chustenahlah
December 17 - Rowlett's Station / Green River
December 28 - Mount Zion Church
January 27, 1862 President Lincoln issued war order authorizing the Union to launch a unified aggressive action against the Confederacy. General McClellan ignored the order.
January 3 - Cockpit Point / Freestone Point
January 5-6 - Hancock / Romney Campaign
January 8 - Roan's Tan Yard / Silver Creek
January 10 - Middle Creek
January 19 - Mill Springs / Logan's Cross-Roads
February 6 - Fort Henry
February 11-16 - Fort Donelson
February 20-21 - Valverde
February 25, 1862: Nashville is first Confederate state capital to fall to Union forces.
February 28-April 8 - New Madrid ♦



Who Am I?



I was born at Piatt's Landing Kentucky, on November 9, 1817. I attended local schools before going to Wabash College, Crawfordsville, Indiana. I was then appointed to West Point, from where I was graduated 30th, next to the bottom, of the class of 1839, the same year as Henry Halleck. As a second lieutenant in the 2nd infantry, I saw service against the Seminoles, Creeks, Cherokees, and Choctaws. In the Mexican War (1846-48) I served on a brigade staff but still received brevets to captain and major for my actions at Contreras and Churubusco, and a lieutenant-colonel brevet for gallant conduct at the Belen Gate, Mexico City, in 1847. I became a major in the 10th Infantry in 1855, I was named colonel of the new 19th Infantry on May 14, 1861, and given command of the Department of New Mexico.

My department had little in the way of troops or supplies, being considered a backwater of the war. Nonetheless the Confederates invaded my domain, on what they planned to be their way to the silver mines of Colorado and the gold fields of California, in January 1862. My outnumbered troops fell back from Valverde, destroying resources upon which capture the Confederate plan depended. Finally, reinforced by Colorado volunteers, I met the Confederates at Glorieta Pass (called "the Gettysburg of the West"), and destroyed their supplies. The Confederates were forced to fall all the way back to Texas; I followed them, not needing to fight again since nature itself was going against them.



Glorieta Pass - Pigeon's Ranch

On May 23 1862, I was named brigadier-general of volunteers and sent east to serve largely in staff functions, although I did take command at New York City during the draft riots of July 1863. I was named major-general of volunteers on May 7 1864, and given command of the Military Division of West Mississippi. I reorganized the army which had suffered so much under Banks in the Red River campaign, and began the capture of Mobile, Alabama. Mobile surrendered to my forces on April 12 1865; I then accepted the surrender of the forces under General Richard Taylor, one of the last Confederate armies in the field.

In 1866 I named a regular army brigadier-general. In 1870 I was given command of the Department of Columbia, and three years later the Division of the Pacific. It was on April 11 1873, in the lava beds of northern California, while negotiating with the Modoc Indians for their removal, that I was suddenly shot through the head and stabbed by several of the Native-American negotiators, including their chief "Captain Jack". I was killed on the spot; my body was buried in Crown Hill Cemetery, Indianapolis, Indiana.

Grant later recalled that "(I) was an officer of great merit. He was naturally studious, and inclined to the law. There have been in the army but very few, if any, officers who took as much interest in reading and digesting every act of Congress and every regulation for the government of the army as he. His knowledge gained in this way made him a most valuable staff officer, a capacity in which almost all his army services were rendered up to the time of his being assigned to the Military Division of the Gulf. He was an exceedingly modest officer, though of great talent and learning..... His character was as pure as his talent and learning were great. His services were valuable during the war, but principally as a bureau officer. I have no idea that it was from choice that his services were rendered in an office, but because of his superior efficiency there." ♦

Courtesy of Osprey Publishin and the National Park Service

Answer to "*Who Am I*" is on page 12.

Civil War Visits.

John Maleski visited Manassas, VA, for the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the first battle of Manassas (Bull Run). Following is his "field report".

With President Lincoln's order for 500,000 troops, Manassas was supposed to be the last battle of the Civil War. As all of us know it was far from over. The union troops 'skedaddled' back to Washington, beaten, bruised and battered and the ugly war would rage on for another four long years. The 150th reenactment of First Manassas, although hotter then a 'fox in a forest fire', was done very well from its transportation, knowledge of its reenactors, and cleanliness throughout the streets and sidewalks, highways and wooded paths.



James & I at the monument where the battle turned.

The weekend was not as crowded as anticipated due to the temperature in the high 90's and the heat index in the 100s. With my son James and father in law Tom in tow, we arrived in town around 1:00PM at the visitor's center downtown. We purchased a ticket for a bus that would stop us at eight places around town. First stop was the *Liberia Plantation* plantation tour with a living history talk given by a confederate spy. Her talk was interesting and, under the shade of a mangrove tree, we wondered how she kept so cool with that oversized hoop dress she was wearing. Her talk gave insight to the overall importance of the 'spy game' on both sides. Woman played an integral part in this storyline. Some were cunning as a leopard gaining important information for their contacts involving battle plans, troop movements, supply

lines, railroad espionage and other plans which were gathered and sold. The tour of the mansion / plantation was not as involved due to the upstairs still being under renovation.

After an hour or so in the plantation, James, Tom, and I met up with our travel partners my brother in law John, his son Mathew, and his grandfather Ray (also a member of the Morris County Civil War Round Table). I then went back to the visitor's center for a walk around the *Jennie Dean Park* area where we found a signal station. The Signal station was very important during all the early battles of the Civil War. Using Flags, and sometimes flares, Generals would always be aware of necessary information using this sometimes crude manner. The telegraph was also used and, because of their manual dexterity, woman again would play a big role in this unique effort deciphering information and coding it in a manner so it cannot be understood by the enemy. Some of these woman were making as much as \$100 a month - a small fortune in those days, since a soldier was getting just \$14 per day. Also these reenactors had some really unique artifacts on hand which they let us use. Telescopes, field glasses, survey equipment, measuring units....all were explained very well. My son and his cousin were quite impressed with these rare artifacts. What a treat!

It was then time for a light lunch and a stroll around old Manassas. The town was well set up with signs out and about, art on display. It was just grand and it made for a great summertime walk in old time Virginia.



Stone house was set up as a hospital.

It was then off to our stop at the battlefield where my son James and I had a tour of the field hospital, just a small farm house where dozens of men would breathe there last in this what must have been hell on earth for those boys. Going through you can take yourself back in time a bit

and just wonder as some blood stains still stained the walls and floors in this god forsaken place. We walked a bit around and decided to head back to our hotel. We were both overheated a bit and needed a swim and nap until nightfall. We decided not to go back until Sunday morning so enjoyed a nice dinner at *Texas Roadhouse* just across from the hotel. Tom's group went into town and saw yet another well done lecture near the center of old town. All were impressed with the talk. James and I went to breakfast at the hotel and it was back to the battlefield for a grand ranger tour of the field. He was very knowledgeable and talked about how important the battle was for both sides and how the name "Stonewall" Jackson became as known as that of President Lincoln worldwide. This meek teacher at VMI outnumbered almost by almost 2 to 1 forged a great victory for the "cause". The high ground he gained at the beginning of the battle, and the surprise counter attacks, won him great notoriety throughout Richmond and with Jefferson Davis. All in all it was a great weekend for us all; I got some bonding in with my 23 year old. Nice seeing him and his 16 year old cousin Matt seem interested in our nation's history. So Hip Hip Hazza for the Manassas 150th...and looking forward to Sharpsburg Md.!! ♦

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.

Nolan R. Maxie - A Civil War grandson (SAR member on my paternal side) - Retired Texas law enforcement



My maternal grandfather, William Olden Ridgway, b. March 1837 in Darby, Pa., served two stints in the Civil War. He enlisted as a private and being from a Quaker family, was assigned to commissary duty. He served on

several battlefields and somewhere along the way was wounded and placed on inactive hospital leave. Upon recovery, he reenlisted as a Commissary Sergeant and served on more battlefields. At wars end he was honorably discharged and returned to Darby / Glen Olden, Pa., to work in the family business - *Glen Olden Mills* (the beginning of that township in Delaware County, Pa.). Two of his siblings had already gone west to California and grandpa decided to join them. He lived there for about 30 plus years. In the latter 1890's he took a presidential assignment to be U.S. Postmaster at Starks, La. (in S. Louisiana) where my mother was born in Calcasieu Parrish.

As Postmaster in Starks, La., in 1905, at age 68 grandpa married 21 year old Addie Clark, from the large S. Louisiana Clark family. Supposedly, due to his age, they had 2 - 3 miscarriages And at age 76, on July 28, 1913, my mother, Fairba Olden Ridgway, was born a two pound premie not expected to survive. But she did survive and lived to 83 years. (If she had been just another miscarriage, you know I wouldn't be here today.) Her brother and only sibling was born the following year, 1914. (Grandpa's age, 77).

Margarette Olden, grandpa's mother is what brought me to Camp Olden CWRT several years ago to see if someone could help me research her family. Her family namesake, Glen Olden, Pa.; with the lovely creek valley; a glen on the Mackenapukus Creek (Ms.), resulted in the name Glen Olden. Grandpa became disabled on the La., postmaster's job and was sent to the Union Soldier's Home in Danville, IL, where he died in 1925 and is buried there in the National Cemetery.

As a follow up Nolan also submitted the following:

SAR is "The National Society Sons of the American Revolution" and I joined in 1978 after tracing the ancestral lineage in my family who served in Virginia in the American Revolution to help overthrow British control over this new nation. Of course that was 10 to 12 generations back.

Margarette Olden Ridgway, my great grandmother was the daughter of Mary Olden, wife of Ephriam Inskip, originator/operator of the Glen

Olden mill. I have done no research on the Olden family, but am very interested in it, as it could possibly connect to Gov. Olden. Most of these families came into Delaware and Chester Counties, Pa., from Bucks County.

Margarette Olden Ridgway and husband, William Ridgway (my great grandparents) both died of cholera at Darby, Pa., in 1849 and left my grandfather (William Olden Ridgway) the CW vet and 3 siblings as orphans. The four kids were raised by their grandmother Mary Olden and step-grandfather Ephriam Inskeep.

I have been unable to pick up any trace of my great grandparents, Margarette Olden and William Ridgway back to where they came from to Darby, Pa., most likely NYC and Bucks County. I have found both their gravestones at Darby. ♦

Editor's Note: If any members have any information about Nolan's ancestors, please send it to:
piddlinacres@suddenlink.net.

The Death of Colonel Ellsworth

By Owen Edwards



When President Abraham Lincoln learned that Union Army Col. Elmer E. Ellsworth had been killed, the president exclaimed, "My boy! My boy! Was it necessary this sacrifice should be made?"

One of the quieter commemorations of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War—but one of the most intriguing—can be found in an alcove at the end of a main hallway at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery (NPG) in Washington, D.C. Between two rooms housing highlights of the museum's Civil War collection, a new exhibition, "The Death of Ellsworth," revisits a once-famous but now largely forgotten incident. The exhibit runs through March 18, 2012.

The focal object is a 3 3/8 - by 2 3/16-inch photograph of Union Army Col. Elmer E.

Ellsworth, a dashing figure, his left hand resting on the hilt of his saber. James Barber, the NPG historian who curated the exhibition, describes the portrait as "one of the gems of our story of the war."

The image was taken around 1861 by an unknown portraitist in the New York studio of Mathew Brady, the photographer who would become indelibly associated with Civil War images. The photograph is a print from an original glass negative purchased by the NPG in 1981.

Ellsworth was a man with large military ambitions, but his meteoric fame came in a way he could not have hoped for: posthumously. At the age of 24, as commander of the 11th New York Volunteers, also known as the First Fire Zouaves, Ellsworth became the first Union officer killed in the war.

He was not just any Union officer. After working as a patent agent in Rockford, Illinois, in 1854, Ellsworth studied law in Chicago, where he also served as a colonel commanding National Guard cadets. In 1860, Ellsworth took a job in Abraham Lincoln's Springfield law office. The young clerk and Lincoln became friends, and when the president-elect moved to Washington in 1861, Ellsworth accompanied him. A student of military history and tactics, Ellsworth admired the Zouaves, Algerian troops fighting with the French Army in North Africa, and had employed their training methods with his cadets. He even designed a uniform with baggy trousers in the Zouave style.

A native of New York State, Ellsworth left Washington for New York City just before the onset of the war. He raised the 11th New York Volunteer Regiment, enlisting many of its troops from the city's volunteer fire departments (hence the "Fire Zouaves") and returned with the regiment to Washington.

On May 24, 1861, the day after Virginia voters ratified the state convention's decision to secede from the Union, Ellsworth and his troops entered Alexandria, Virginia, to assist in the occupation of the city. As it happened, an 8- by 14-foot Confederate flag—large enough to be seen by spyglass from the White House—had been visible in Alexandria for weeks, flown from the

roof of an inn, the Marshall House.

The regiment, organized only six weeks earlier, encountered no resistance as it moved through the city. Barber notes, however, that “the Zouaves were an unruly bunch, spoiling for a fight, and when they got into Alexandria they may have felt they were already in the thick of it. So Ellsworth may have wanted to get that flag down quickly to prevent trouble.”

At the Marshall House, Barber adds, “Colonel Ellsworth just happened to meet the one person he didn’t want to meet”—innkeeper James Jackson, a zealous defender of slavery (and, says Barber, a notorious slave abuser) with a penchant for violence.

Ellsworth approached the inn with only four troopers. Finding no resistance, he took down the flag, but as he descended to the main floor, Jackson fired on Ellsworth at point-blank range with a shotgun, killing him instantly. One of Ellsworth’s men, Cpl. Francis Brownell, then fatally shot Jackson.

A reporter from the *New York Tribune* happened to be on the scene; news of the shootings traveled fast. Because Ellsworth had been Lincoln’s friend, his body was taken to the White House, where it lay in state, and then to New York City, where thousands lined up to view the cortege bearing Ellsworth’s coffin. Along the route, a group of mourners displayed a banner that declared: “Ellsworth, ‘His blood cries for vengeance.’”

“Remember Ellsworth!” became a Union rallying cry, and the 44th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment was nicknamed Ellsworth’s Avengers. According to Barber, “Throughout the conflict, his name, face and valor would be recalled on stationery, in sheet music and in memorial lithographs.” One side’s villain is another side’s patriot, of course, so Jackson was similarly celebrated in the South and in an 1862 book, *Life of James W. Jackson, The Alexandria Hero*.

After the war, and after relentlessly petitioning his congressman, Brownell was awarded the Medal of Honor. ♦

Owen Edwards is a freelance writer and author of the book Elegant Solutions.

Article contributed by Mario Florio

Here’s an article about one of our distinguished members:

Civil Service

By Tom Wilk



Dr. James M. McPherson and Bruce Sirak.

Step inside James M. McPherson’s office in the Princeton University Press building and it doesn’t take long to determine his academic passion. Books covering all facets of the Civil War fill the shelves that wrap around the room. A few DVDs, including one on Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee, are neatly stacked above his computer. Copies of “Tried by War: Abraham Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief,” McPherson’s 2008 book on the 16th president, are piled on a chair across from his desk.

“I used to have a bigger office,” says McPherson, now a professor emeritus after retiring in 2004 as a professor of history at Princeton University.

His quarters may be more compact, but his interest in the Civil War, the bloodiest conflict in U.S. history, remains undiminished. About 620,000 people died — 360,000 from the Union and 260,000 from the Confederacy — representing about 2 percent of the U.S. population at the time. The war and its aftermath are subjects McPherson has explored in more than a dozen books, including “Battle Cry of Freedom,” which earned him the Pulitzer Prize for History in 1989. This year marks the 150th anniversary of the war’s beginning and New Jersey is planning to mark the sesquicentennial over the next four years.

McPherson, an easygoing, amiable man with light blue eyes, offers several theories for the continuing interest in the Civil War, even after so many years. “It was American versus American and father versus son in border states like Kentucky,” he says. “There’s also the nostalgia factor. I call it the ‘Gone With The Wind’ factor.

Civil Service continued on page 11.

Bruce Sirak (pictured below), President of the Camp Olden CWRT, sent along these scenes from the 2011 Remembrance Day events at Gettysburg.



It's Membership Renewal Time!

Below is your renewal form for 2012 membership in the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table.

These rates reflect a \$5.00 discount for payment by the February meeting.

For payment after that date, please add \$5.00.

New members can use this form also with, of course, the same discounts.

Camp Olden Civil War Round Table and Museum Membership Application		
Name:	_____	
Address:	_____ _____ _____	
Telephone No. (_____)	_____ - _____	
E-Mail Address:	_____	
Birthdays:	_____	
Membership: Single (\$25)	☐	Senior Citizens: Single (\$20) ☐ Student ☐
Family (\$35)	☐	Sr. Husband & Wife (\$25) ☐ (\$15)

Send the completed form and your check to:

Camp Olden Civil War Round Table, P.O. Box 10565, Hamilton, NJ 08690

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

Ongoing Exhibits:

The Monmouth County Historical Association is presenting the exhibition, ***Marching Away: Monmouth County in the Civil War***, which focuses on Monmouth County soldiers who fought for the Union Army. The exhibition will run through July 2012 in the Washington Gallery at the historical society's museum and library building. The museum is located at 70 Court St. in Freehold and is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information about the exhibition and related programming, call 732-462-1466 or log on to monmouthhistory.org. ♦

"Gone for a Soldier:" Jersey men in the Civil War exhibit featuring rare and never before seen NJ Civil War items at Macculloch Hall Historical Museum, 45 Macculloch Ave., Morristown, NJ, until July 1, 2012. This exhibit brings together nearly 200 objects from the Civil War from nearly thirty museums, historical societies, and private collections. The museum is open Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday from 1 pm to 4 pm. For information, call the Museum weekdays at (973) 538-2404 ext. 10, or log on to www.maccullochhall.org. ♦

Civil Service continued from page 8.

The movie created an interest in the Civil War,” he says. That phenomenon occurred again in 1990 with the broadcast of “The Civil War,” the Ken Burns documentary series, for which McPherson served as a consultant. There is also the fact that the major questions surrounding the war — such as the extent of the federal government’s power versus states’ rights — continue to resonate in modern-day debates over issues such as mandated health care and gun control. The Civil War was a defining moment that decided whether there would continue to be a United States of America. And interest in that purely American drama never seems to fade.

Born in North Dakota, McPherson grew up in neighboring Minnesota before going away to college and settling in New Jersey. His parents were the first college graduates of their families and placed a premium on the value of a good education, he says. As a graduate student at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, McPherson began to notice the parallels between the civil rights movement of the 1960s and the Civil War and the abolition of slavery in the 1860s. “When Martin Luther King gave his ‘I Have a Dream’ speech, he invoked Lincoln at the Lincoln Memorial,” McPherson recalls. He wrote his doctoral thesis on the abolition of slavery. “I was interested in how to get from slavery to a new kind of race relations.”

That led to the publication of “The Struggle For Equality,” his first book, in 1964. After beginning his academic career at Princeton in 1962 as a history professor, he continued research and writing about the war. “My work shifted from abolition to the political and military,” he says.

All of those components came together in “Battle Cry of Freedom,” McPherson’s best-known, best-selling book and his longest at 904 pages. “It may be the best one-volume treatment of its subject,” The New York Times Book Review said in 1988. “It is comprehensive yet succinct, scholarly without being pedantic, eloquent but rhetorical. It is compellingly readable.” “Battle Cry of Freedom,” which is used as a textbook in high school and college classrooms, has never gone out of print. It has sold 700,000 copies,

says McPherson, and has been translated into French and German, with a Russian version in the works. “It’s still a steady seller. It’s like an anchor store in a shopping mall,” he quips. “It gave me more visibility in the field.” Which had its good and bad points.

“Anonymity has its benefits; fame has its downside”, he says. McPherson’s work as a historian paralleled his work as a professor between 1962 and 2004. For him, the relationship between teacher and student was a two-way street. “As a teacher, you’re learning as much as the students.”

Sean Wilentz, a fellow Princeton history professor and author, points to McPherson as a positive influence. “Apart from his formidable scholarship, Jim McPherson has had a profound impact on my work as a writer as well as a writer of history,” says Wilentz. “Over two decades, I had the privilege to co-teach a graduate seminar with him that covered the history of the United States from the War of 1812 through Reconstruction,” he says. “Designing long reading lists with Jim, and then discussing the books and articles intensely with him, as well as with Princeton’s exceptional students, changed my way of thinking on almost every conceivable issue.”

McPherson’s work has been shaped by his first hand research. He has visited every Confederate state from Virginia to Texas and has led tours of battlefields and other war sites. He began offering tours to Princeton students in the 1970s, expanded them to include university alumni and other groups and continues to serve as a tour guide. “Gettysburg is my most frequent tour, but I have also given tours of the Antietam campaign, the battlefields at Fredericksburg, Richmond, Petersburg, Chickamauga and Chattanooga, the various forts and battles along the South Atlantic Coast, Shiloh, and Vicksburg,” he says. “You can take a virtual tour of Gettysburg (on the internet), but there’s no substitute for being there,” he adds.

McPherson writes in longhand at the Princeton Township home he shares with his wife, Patricia, who assists him in his research. He also types out drafts of his book on an Olympia typewriter. “It was state-of-the art about 1970,” he said during

an interview with C-SPAN2's "Book TV." While McPherson uses a computer for the shorter pieces he writes for magazines and other publications, he still turns to the Olympia for longer writing. "I like the rhythm of it."

Although McPherson no longer teaches on a regular basis, he has not retired from writing. His next book will look at the role of the Union and Confederate navies and technological advancements at the time such as ironclad ships and submarines.

He admits there is irony in the fact that he has spent more than half a century researching and writing about a war that lasted a little more than four years. "I have sustained my enthusiasm because there always seem to be new questions to explore, new viewpoints to consider," he says.

McPherson says he is guided by the principle that has shaped his writing ever since his first book. "I learned that all assumptions should be examined and challenged." ♦

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Contributed by Mario Florio

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Answer to "Who Am I?":

Brigadier General Edward R.S. Canby ♦



President's Gavel continued from page 1.

in the upper right hand corner is Santa Claus driving his sleigh through camp throwing out Christmas boxes while overjoyed soldiers are running after him to scoop up his patronage.

I hope this has given you some insight into Christmas boxes during the Civil War. All the best, Kevin Rawlings

* * * * *

Kicking off our winter meetings on **Thursday, December 1**, will be Dick Simpson who will relate the "Story of the 2nd Vermont Brigade". This was a nine month unit whose members were called *paper-collar soldiers* having spent eight and one-half months of their nine month careers in the forts south of Washington. Here they guarded the Orange and Alexandria railroad, tangled with the "Grey Ghost" of the Confederacy, Colonel John S. Mosby, who to everyone's embarrassment captured their commanding general in bed. They might have faded into history unknown, but for their heroic performance at the Battle of Gettysburg. As their story unfolds Dick, in period dress, will be portraying his great-grandfather as he travels with the 15th Regiment, 2nd Vermont Brigade, on the road to Gettysburg. He will also do a book raffle and donate the proceeds to preservation.

January's meeting will bring the journal of *Heyward Glover Emmell* presented by Jim Malcolm. Heyward. Glover Emmell was a 19-year old store clerk in Morristown, New Jersey, when the Civil War started. As an infantryman in the 7th Regiment New Jersey Volunteers for 22 months and a stretcher bearer in the Ambulance Corps for 14 months, he witnessed and recorded major events and battles of the Army of the Potomac from the Peninsula Campaign to the Siege of Petersburg.

I want to thank Gary DeSiver for his years on our board. He has been invaluable with his knowledge and expertise. He will certainly be missed. To fill those hard shoes will be Bill Moore. Welcome Bill!

Hope to see everybody at the next meeting.

Happy Holidays!

Your Obedient Servant.

Bruce ♦