

The Camp Olden Gazette

News from the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table

Winter, 2013

President's Gavel.

First, I would like to thank all the previous board members for the past successful year. Even though there are not many changes for the upcoming year, I'd like to welcome everyone to another year that is sure to be just as successful as past years.

November has been a very busy month. I was fortunate to attend the annual Remembrance Day Commemoration of the Gettysburg Address. What a weekend and parade – one of the longest Remembrance Days parades I've ever experienced. Also in November, I traveled to Cape Canaveral, Florida, to witness the launch of the MAVEN rocket. Back in October, we had Dr. James Green speak on Civil War ballooning.



Launch of the MAVEN & Dr. James Green



Dr. Green works for NASA and gave us an update on the upcoming NASA project, the Mars Atmosphere and Volatile Evolution (MAVEN). Afterwards, he invited everyone to the launch of the rocket on November 18, 2013. I decided to take him up on the invitation along with Barry Leilich (past Events Coordinator) and his wife Joanne. It was spectacular! It is amazing how far we have come in aeronautics since the days of the Civil War balloon.

Our future speakers are:

December 5, 2013 - Jim Paradise, USCT Training Camp William Penn

January 2, 2014 - TBA

February 6, 2014 - Bob Costello & Ken Hall, Lincoln & McClellan Debate

March 6, 2014 - Bill Moore, Irish Brigade

See you at the next meeting!

Happy Holidays!

Your obedient servant,

Bruce ♦

See the MAVEN liftoff at:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rh_nyFIwPy0&list=PLiuUQ9asub3Tt0IIIVFIK85QUrGRDurf_i&index=4

Camp Olden Tours New Jersey Monuments at Gettysburg

Submitted by Tony Travaglione

On September 28 & 29, 2013 the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table traveled to Gettysburg National Battlefield Park for a guided tour of many of the New Jersey monuments. Our guide was Ralph Siegel, a Licensed Battlefield Guide and a member of our round table. Ralph guided us on a walk that followed the route of the famous Pickett's Charge of July 3, 1863. It was an informative and enjoyable weekend.

The following are photos taken during the tour.



Group at the Peach Orchard.

More Camp Olden tour pictures on page 9.

Civil War Visits.

Our members did some traveling over the past few months. Following are “field reports”.

Gettysburg Visit

Submitted by Corinne and Mike Mazzocchi

A recent three day Gettysburg trip gave us a better understanding of the battlefield using two favorite hobbies - hiking and podcasting.

Covering about 7 miles using information found online (see below) our hike began at Longstreet tower and along South Confederate Avenue, crossed the Emmitsburg Road, and followed the horse trail paralleling Warfield Ridge. At the Slyder Farm there is a monument to Berdan's sharpshooters who slowed down the Confederate advance on the second day. The farmhouse is currently being restored. Dan Mazzoti, in charge of Structure Preservation for the battlefield, happened to be there inspecting the progress. Seeing our interest in the work, he introduced himself and provided a new perspective of the battlefield. There are more than 250 structures under his supervision to be preserved and maintained. His staff is trained in historical preservation technique not simply maintenance. He indicated that one successful part of preservation is having park personnel live on site wherever possible.

The hike continued with new respect for the surroundings. The path crossed Plum Run to the monument of Union General Elon Farnsworth, who was killed in an ill advised charge on the third day, and continued along the route of the 15th Alabama to Little Round Top. It was a good place for lunch overlooking the battlefield while listening to a podcast describing this part of the engagement.

There is a pod cast for Devil's Den which follows the 124th NY (*Orange Blossoms*) and their encounter with the 1st Texas. Our path went through the “Triangular Field” as the podcast described the chaos, noise and physical exertion of the soldiers going up and down the hill multiple times to defend or capture Devils Den. The route then followed the path of an old trolley line (built for postwar visitors) back across Plum

Run and around to the *Valley of Death* and the monument to the 4th Maine.

Another podcast hike of the Wheatfield area followed the ebb and flow of the engagement. Although this involved quite a bit of walking, it was well worth doing to feel the whole experience. There is also a podcast hike around the Peach Orchard which describes the Union retreat to the Trostle Farm including the withdrawal of Bigelow's Battery using a technique called *firing by prolonge*.

For the 1st day of the battle following an online itinerary (see below), our hike began on Meredith Avenue and we used a trail near the 24th Michigan and 7th Wisconsin Infantry monuments to walk down to Willoughby Run. A short walk at Oak Hill lead to two Whitworth cannons. Surprisingly, there is minimal interpretive signage describing these relatively rare and unusual breech loading cannons that were used at Gettysburg. It then led to the 90th PA Regiment "Granite Tree" monument near the observation tower on the Mummasburg Road that commemorates the saving of a bird's nest during the battle.



Rendering of Bird's Nest on 90th PA Monument

A short drive led to Barlow's (Blocher's) knoll and then to the Costner Avenue Mural commemorating the holding action by the 154th New York on the first day.



Costner Avenue Mural & 154th New York Monument

Like the Battle of Gettysburg itself, visiting and revisiting can provide unexpected events. As we were admiring the Tennessee Monument on Confederate Avenue, questioning its modern design and wondering about the extent of Tennessee participation during the battle. A licensed Battle Field Guide was nearby with his “client.”

Although not above occasional eavesdropping, we are respectful of battlefield speakers and keep our distance. But this was different. Hearing our questions, the “client” offered that it was only dedicated in 1981. The guide spoke about the contributions of the Tennesseans. We learned that the “client” was a Gettysburg “guide in training”. Having performed very well on the multiple written exams and one oral, she was now with her mentor guide, preparing for her final in the field exam. Realizing our sincere interest, the guide asked what area of the field we would like to know more about. The guide candidate was then “gifted” to us for an informal *practice* tour.

We toured Powers Hill, seeing what Meade saw as he looked towards Culp’s Hill. We learned more about the importance of roads and supply lines. Along the hill are two granite cannon monuments which we wouldn’t have seen by ourselves. Later at Culp’s Hill, she made the battle conditions and movement very understandable. The afternoon was one of new and expanded knowledge for us, including seeing *Penelope* the upside cannon in the sidewalk downtown, a novel discovery that had eluded us.

Good News! Our guide Susan Strumello has just sent us an email happily saying that she is now a Gettysburg Licensed Battlefield Guide. She can be reached at Suzan1863@yahoo.com.

Hiking information can be found at <http://civilwarhikes.blogspot.com/2011/03/gettysburg-battlefield-longstreets-july.html> and <http://civilwarhikes.blogspot.com/2010/12/gettysburg-day-1-battlefield-hike.html>,

Podcasts and maps are available at <http://www.civilwartraveler.com/audio/podcasts.html>. ♦

The Spirit of Ocean County The Civil War’s Third Year & Toms River Residents

Submitted by Carole Lokan Moore

The Camp Olden Civil War Round Table President Bruce Sirak had passed around the flyer twice, before I wrote it on the calendar hoping that “nothing” would interfere with the hour trip to Ocean County Courthouse on September 12, 2013. The day arrived, the weather cooperated with our schedule, and we headed south from Edgewater Park, N.J.

Upon arrival we checked in at the court house for bathrooms, only to be put through the metal detectors which were set so “sensitively” that the foil candy wrapper in my pocket set it off with a loud gong. We had not been thinking that it was the day after September 11...understandable.

The program was sponsored by the Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Heritage Commission. Chairs out front of the three story pillared court house were being filled. The hot sunlight streamed through the trees, making some seats desirable and others too hot. The opening address by Freeholder John Bartlett began at noon sharp. It was followed by “The Grand March of the 9th NJ Regiment” (a Toms River unit). This recently found march had not been played for over 150 years when the regiment had grouped on this very same lawn before entering the war. Maestro Anthony LaGruth and the Garden State Philharmonic brass section made each note bounce off the marble façade of the court house.

Student readers from Toms River and Monsignor Donovan high schools presented individual readings from the 1863 local newspaper to give insight into public concerns at the time. Without modern TV and cell phones, this tiny river side town had no idea about the bloody battles of Fredericksburg, Antietam Creek, Chancellorsville, Vicksburg or Gettysburg. The Ocean County historian gave background information about the newspaper articles. A medley of Civil War songs from both the North (Battle Hymn of the Republic) and the South (Dixie was played. After all, both Yanks and

Rebs were Americans fighting for their interpretation of the cause. The Gettysburg Address was read by Freeholder Bartlett at this historic site. Cannon fire that shook the windows in the square ended the presentation.

The program brochure was printed in patriotic colors with the 1957 photos of the court house. It offered further information:

- “By the autumn of 1863, America’s bloodiest conflict had cost the divided nation more than 344,000 lives. The previous twelve months had witnessed the war reaching new levels of death and destruction as the two great armies clashed. For the North, the tide was finally turning. General U.S. Grant’s victory at Vicksburg in July, 1864, gave the Union control of the Mississippi River, effectively cutting the Confederacy in two. At Gettysburg, General George Meade the builder of Barnegat Light House (not far from this Toms River location) turned back Robert E Lee’s rebels and ensured that the Army of Northern Virginia would never again invade the North in force. But the victories did not come without a high price. Together the two battles left more than 60,000 Americans dead.”
- “More than a year and a half of bloodshed still lay ahead, but already Ocean County volunteers had tasted battle. In September, 1861, the first company of about 75 volunteers, later known as the Jersey Muskrats for their assault on swampy Roanoke Island, Virginia, left Toms River to join with other New Jersey troops gathering in Trenton. Together they formed the 9th N.J. Regiment.”
- In July 1862, 100 men answered President Lincoln’s Call for volunteers and mustered on the grounds of the recently completed Ocean County Courthouse in the Village of Toms River. Christened Company F of the 14th NJ Volunteers, these men soon marched westward to join with other units raised throughout the state before turning south towards war.”
- “In 1864 Company F found itself fighting a much larger Confederate force on the

outskirts of Frederick, Maryland. The successful delaying action at Monocacy, about 20 miles northwest of Washington D.C, prevented Southern General Jubal Early from launching a planned assault on that city. Today, a monument to the 14th NJ Volunteers stands at the Monocacy National Battlefield which reads - “Dedicated to the more than 400 Ocean County Residents who served their nation during the Civil War. We shall never forget”. ♦

Where Am I?

Where Am I? features one or more photographs showing distinct aspects of Civil War battlefields with perhaps a hint or two. Your job is to identify the battlefield(s). (***Your images from your travels would be most welcome for future issues.***) Here’s an Editor’s choice for this issue:

Occasionally political and military leaders seek council from members of the press. On which **TWO** battlefields are your editors giving advice to “Old Pete” and to Abe & Jeff?



Battlefield #1



Battlefield #2

These battles were fought in the same year.

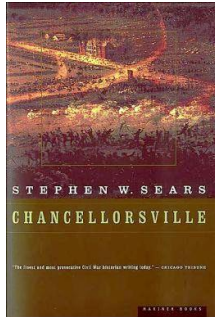
Where Am I? (Answers on page 9) ♦

Book Review

Following is a book review submitted by Camp Olden CWRT member John Allen:

Chancellorsville

By Stephen W. Sears



I thought I knew about the Battle of Chancellorsville: Hooker outflanked Lee, but lost his nerve when he reached Chancellorsville; Jackson's brilliant flank march and attack resulted in the disgraceful rout of the "Dutchmen" of Major General Oliver O. Howard's Eleventh Corps; Jackson's wounding and eventual death potentially robbed the Confederacy of final victory; Sedgwick's Sixth Corps took Marye's Heights behind Fredericksburg, but were unable to get near enough to support their compatriots at Chancellorsville; and both sides eventually settled back to their respective starting points with only long casualty lists to show for it. I was in for a very pleasant surprise when I read this book!

Chancellorsville, by Stephen Sears, does an excellent job of conveying the actions comprising the opening cavalry action at Kelly's Ford, the Battle of Chancellorsville and its component actions, the second Battle of Fredericksburg and the subsequent Battle of Salem Church. But it covers substantially more, resulting in a significantly greater understanding of the *campaign* than I had gleaned from previous reading. Chapter 6, "Army on the March", starts on page 136, and documents the initial movements of the Army of the Potomac, where many histories begin. By contrast, Sears' book opens in December, 1862, between the Battle of Fredericksburg and the "Mud March", describing the machinations of several Union generals sent to Washington, DC to convince

President Abraham Lincoln to replace Major General Ambrose E. Burnside as commander-in-chief of the Army of the Potomac. Ultimately this cabal was successful in removing Burnside, replacing him with Major General Joseph Hooker. The familiar interactions between Lincoln and Hooker are fully covered, culminating with Honest Abe's advice to Fighting Joe: "...in your next fight put in all of your men." (This advice went unheeded...).

Sears discusses in detail Hooker's decisions that resulted in the transformation of a demoralized mob to a motivated Army, including such innovations as Corps badges and improvements in the Army's rations. Pre-campaign organizational decisions were also part of Hooker's plan. The service terms of nearly a third of Hooker's 114,000+ infantrymen (some 60 regiments composed of two-year recruits and 90-day men) would expiry in the three months commencing in April 1863. And, since mustering-out laws required such troops to be released where they enlisted, these men would be lost at least a week before their term expired. In addition, many troops had yet to "see the elephant". Compounding these issues, Hooker's reorganized artillery arm effectively "sidelined" Brigadier General Henry Hunt and compromised the Army of the Potomac's tactical control of its gunnery. Is it any wonder the Army of the Potomac failed to put on a good show?

He discusses the origins and performance of the Bureau of Military Information under Colonel George H. Sharpe and Hooker's use of the Balloon Corps, something that would please October's speaker, Jim Davis. (It should be noted that the Balloon Corps apparently required Chief Engineer Cyrus Comstock to be aloft to generate "actionable" intelligence of Confederate manpower). Both these Service arms performed very ably during the run-up to Hooker's Chancellorsville Campaign, keeping the C-in-C well informed of Lee's dispositions on the south bank of the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers before and during the Campaign. Their contributions were crucial, given the near total absence of cavalry reconnaissance supporting the Union movement.

It isn't every "battle book" that contains a discussion of the Signal Corps or discusses, as this book does, the inclusion of counter-intelligence in campaign plans. These measures were necessitated by the Confederates cracking the Union code, obviating the use of signal flags in daylight and torches at night (although these *were* used for deceptive purposes). How would the two wings of the Army of the Potomac communicate, separated as they would be by Lee's Army of Northern Virginia ensconced in the Wilderness? Hooker, traveling with the right wing, had to rely on the telegraph and, when this failed, couriers between him and his Chief of Staff and key communications link, Major General Dan Butterfield. Communication failures played a significant role in the undoing of Hooker's plan. Oh, to have field phones!

Security, notoriously lax in the Army of the Potomac, is also given attention. Hooker shared his campaign plans with very few people, preventing his soldiery (including Corps commanders) from sharing these with the two most damaging "leak" sources: Confederate pickets and Union journalists, thereby leaving General Lee uninformed of his planned movements. In no small degree these measures resulted in Hooker "stealing a march" on Lee.

The supply problem faced by Confederate General Robert E. Lee is described in greater detail than most books covering American Civil War battles, which tend to restrict themselves to the discussion of troop movements and their eventual clash. Given that severing Lee's supply line was critical to Hooker's campaign plan, it warrants the discussion received in Sears' book. Cutting the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac railroad was assigned to the Cavalry Corps, but Brigadier General George Stoneman's troopers failed to fulfill this task. I got the impression that his poor performance was the key reason the Union lost this campaign. Failure to cut the R,F&P left the Army of Northern Virginia with its single supply line still active and available for Lee to bring up supplies throughout the campaign, and to later link up with Longstreet's Corps (previously investing Suffolk in southeastern Virginia) prior to moving North into Pennsylvania. What would have been

the result of cutting the supply line of an Army in such dire straits that a portion was sent away to obtain its forage in other parts of the ravaged State of Virginia?

The descriptions of troop movements and their resulting actions are solid and benefit from Sears' thorough research and access to primary source material. I will not recap these movements here. Although there are times he might be accused of being a "Hooker apologist", Sears' research is exhaustive. While I have not explored the source material on which the conclusions are based, the 49 pages of footnotes and 13 of bibliographic references - almost 6 of which are primary sources - leave little doubt in my mind that the conclusions reached are fully supported.

Lastly, the weather, which helped Hooker during his Army's river crossings, nearly proved his undoing when water levels rose to a point that they endangered the pontoon bridges necessary for the Army's evacuation. It also hindered the cavalry's effectiveness, although this reader is left with the impression that Stoneman would not have moved any faster if the weather cooperated the entire time.

In all, this book is a great resource and will undoubtedly live up to its billing as the "definitive book" of this significant Eastern Theater campaign. Noteworthy is the fact that it is the Campaign, as well as the Battle, that is discussed in this book. If you are interested in something beyond a standard account of troop movement and collision, I highly recommend Sears' *Chancellorsville*. ♦



Fighting Joe Hooker

Who Am I?



In 1865 I raised the first Union flag to fly over Richmond in four years. Born into a prominent Richmond family, I returned from my schooling in Philadelphia as an adamant abolitionist determined to fight slavery in the bastion of the South. "Slave power," I wrote in my diary, "is arrogant, is jealous and intrusive, is cruel, is despotic." Outspoken and rebellious, I appeared to my neighbors to be more than a little eccentric and soon became known as "*Crazy Bet*."

After Virginia seceded and Fort Sumter fell, I used my reputation for innocuous idiosyncrasy as a shield behind which my shrewd and resourceful mind devised schemes to abet the Union cause from within Richmond. My first target was the Confederate Libby Prison, which imprisoned Union captives. Pretending to make a merely humanitarian gesture, I brought baskets of food, medicine, and books to the prisoners. What I brought out would have shocked the guards she had learned to charm and deceive.

Not only did I help some prisoners escape, I also gleaned valuable information from various sources inside the prison. Newly arrived Union prisoners secretly recounted the strength and dispositions of Confederate troops they had seen on their way from the front to Richmond. Of even more use was information carelessly conveyed to the "harmless Crazy Bet" by Confederate guards and by the prison's Confederate commandant, Lieutenant David H. Todd (Mary Todd Lincoln's half-brother).

I even managed to penetrate the home of President Jefferson Davis by convincing one of her former servants to secure a position in the

Davis household staff. At first, I simply mailed the information I retrieved in letters posted to Federal authorities. As my work continued, my methods grew more sophisticated. I devised a code involving words and letters that prisoners would underline in the books I lent them.

I also sent my household servants (although I had freed my family's slaves, many of them chose to stay with me) northward carrying baskets of farm produce. Each basket held some eggs, one of which contained encoded messages in place of its natural contents. I sent my information directly to Benjamin Butler as well as to Grant through an elaborate courier system. It was so fast and effective that General Grant often received flowers still fresh from his spy's large garden. Grant would later say of my efforts, "You have sent me the most valuable information received from Richmond during the war."

After the war, President Grant rewarded me with a job as postmistress of Richmond, which I held from 1869 to 1877. Although revered in the North, I was, needless to say, ostracized by my Richmond neighbors. "No one will walk with us on the street," I wrote, "no one will go with us anywhere; and it grows worse and worse as the years roll on." Failing to be reappointed postmistress under Rutherford B. Hayes, I lived on an annuity from the family of a Union soldier I had helped in Libby Prison. I died in Richmond, around 1900.♦

"Who Am I?" (Answer on page 9.)

Civil War Sesquicentennial –

Below are some of the events which occurred 150 years ago from Dec. 1863 - Feb. 1864:

November-December -- The Siege of Knoxville

December 14 - Bean's Station

December 29 - Mossy Creek

January 17 - Dandridge

January 26 - Athens / Alabama

January 27 - Fair Garden

February 6-7 - Morton's Ford / Rapidan River

February 13 - Middle Boggy Depot

February 14-20 - Meridian

February 20 - Olustee

February 22 - Okolona

February 22-27 – Dalton ♦

It's Membership Renewal Time!

Below is your renewal form for 2014 membership in the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table. New members can use this form also with, of course, the same discount.

Camp Olden Civil War Round Table and Museum Renewal & Membership Application	
Name:	_____
Address:	_____ _____
Birthdays:	_____
Telephone No.	(_____) _____ - _____
E-Mail Address:	_____
Membership:	Single (\$30*) ☐ Senior Single (\$25*) ☐ Student (\$15) ☐ Family (\$40*) ☐ Sr. Husband & Wife (\$30*) ☐
* If dues are paid before or at the February General Meeting, there is a \$5 discount	
Mail Completed Application with payment to:	
Camp Olden Civil War Round Table P.O. Box 10565 Hamilton, New Jersey 08690	OR Ms. Connie Davis 36 Baltusrol St. Hamilton, New Jersey 08690

Paper Retracts 1863 Editorial Calling Gettysburg Address 'Silly'

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, November 15, 2013 -- A Pennsylvania newspaper Thursday issued a retraction of a 150-year-old editorial that described the Gettysburg Address as "silly remarks."

The Patriot-News, based in Harrisburg, 30 miles north of Gettysburg, reprinted the 1863 editorial in what was then known as the Patriot & Union that found fault with President Abraham Lincoln's speech. The paper ran an editorial Thursday commenting on its shortsightedness.

It was followed by a retraction in standard form: "In the editorial about President Abraham Lincoln's speech delivered Nov. 19, 1863, in Gettysburg, the Patriot & Union failed to recognize its momentous importance, timeless eloquence, and lasting significance. The Patriot-News regrets the error."

The 1863 editorial suggested that Lincoln's

speech was motivated by party politics. The paper apparently did not have a reporter at the dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg, relying instead on the text of the speeches by Lincoln, Edward Everett, a former Massachusetts governor who had run for vice president in 1860 on the Constitutional Union Party ticket, and Secretary of State William Seward.

Everett, one of the most celebrated orators of the day, spoke for 2 hours, delivering words now forgotten by almost everyone. Lincoln spoke for 2 minutes.

"Our predecessors, perhaps under the influence of partisanship, or of strong drink, as was common in the profession at the time, called President Lincoln's words 'silly remarks,' deserving 'a veil of oblivion,' apparently believing it an indifferent and altogether ordinary message, unremarkable in eloquence and uninspiring in its brevity," the Patriot-News said Thursday.



Ralph Siegel in front of Little Round Top.



Ralph Siegel pointing out an important incident.



At the 7th NJ monument.



At the 6th NJ monument.



The NJ Brigade Monument.



Camp Olden group at the NJ Brigade Monument.

Be a Gazette Contributor!

We hope you have enjoyed the many member contributions in this issue. Please submit some yourself. Explored a battlefield? Seen an interesting museum exhibit? Read a new Civil War book or reread a favorite one? Share your experiences with round table members. **Also, for our new *Where am I?* feature, submit a couple of your own photographs of a favorite Civil War site for other members to try to identify.**

Don't forget 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: 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 "***Where Am I?***"

Battlefield # 1 – Gettysburg
Battlefield #2 – Vicksburg ♦

Answer to "***Who Am I?***" - Elizabeth Van Lew ♦

