

The Camp Olden Gazette

News from the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table

Winter 2016

President's Gavel.



This is the last *President's Gavel* that I will write as President of Camp Olden Civil War Round Table and Museum. I have been President for the past seventeen years and have decided that for the benefit of the organization it is time for a change. In January William Moore will be sworn in as President. I wish Bill good luck and success in implementing his new ideas for the coming year.

I would like to share with you some of my memories of Camp Olden. It all started in 1992 when seven guys who were interested in Civil War history sat down together and discussed the possibility of forming a Round Table where people could share their knowledge and thoughts about the American Civil War and learn more about it. We developed by-laws, had Board elections and held our first official meeting. My nephew Mark and I served as the first two Events Coordinators. It was a very active time for the organization because of Ken Burns' historic civil war series airing on TV. I later was elected Vice President and in the year 2000 I was elected President and have been reelected every year since. It has always been the duty of the President to arrange to have speakers for each monthly

general meeting. So after 204 meetings, I hope that you have enjoyed them.

Next year our organization will be celebrating its 25th year. During its history Camp Olden has experienced a great many successes including developing two phenomenally successful Civil War symposiums with renowned speakers including James McPherson, David Martin, James Green and Anthony Waskie. The Camp Olden Civil War and Native American Museum is a special achievement. Camp Olden also sponsored its own Civil War reenactments, trips to various Civil War sites and other points of historical interest, dinners and various other events which made our organization well known in our local community, New Jersey and neighboring states.

I would like to thank all the committees with whom I have served as well as all of our round table members for their support over the years.

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as your President.

Thank you and Happy Holidays!

Your obedient servant,

Bruce. ♦

Upcoming Speakers:

The Camp Olden Civil War Round Table of Hamilton will meet at 7:00 at the Hamilton Township Library on December 1st when Robert Costello will present his portrayal of Abraham Lincoln.

The January 5th meeting will bring Dr. Judith Giesberg with a presentation on Lydia Bixby.

The February speaker has yet to be determined. Future speakers will include (March 2) Joseph Quartullo discussing "The Census in the Civil War" and (April 6) Trish Kaufman giving an "Introduction to Confederate Postal History". ♦

Bruce Sirak is Retiring

Long time Camp Olden CWRT President Bruce Sirak is retiring from office. He has been a unifying force for our organization, arranging speakers, running meetings and supporting our Civil War Museum.

Bruce's best contribution is his interpretation of Governor Charles Olden, using it to promote history, the Civil War and Camp Olden. We first met Bruce at a Camp Olden reenactment. Wearing his top hat and dignified black coat, he explained the battle plan to us. Conversation led to his describing the Camp Olden Round Table and inviting us to attend a meeting. We did that, joined, and, because of him, have learned much about history and the Civil War. Thanks Bruce!

Corinne and Mike Mazzocchi

Many other members have been influenced by Bruce. Here are some stories.



When I read the email announcement that Bruce intended to retire from his position as president of the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table, I was a bit surprised. I truly thought he would continue in the job until old age or the good Lord took him from it! After deciding to write a few lines to honor his service and congratulate Bruce for so many years of service, I tried to remember when we first met. I poured through files and scrapbooks dating back 30+ years. It looked as though Bruce had always been part of the historical community. If my memory is correct, he was a "soldier" with the Irish Brigade when we first crossed paths and I was part of the "military" in my role as *Vivandiere*.

Since our homes were close, we frequently shared the commute to ceremonies, re-enactments, meetings, programs, lectures, etc. In addition, Bruce and his wife began traveling with me on bus tours (Land of Lincoln, Memphis & Nashville, etc., etc., etc.) and even joined a trip to Scotland in 2002. Over the years, we have covered many miles together! Because of our shared love of the Civil War era, we often called on each other for information, support, participation and referrals. It has been both a professional relationship and a friendship. I knew I could

always count on Bruce.

After so many years, I believe I know Bruce well enough to say that he will not "disappear" from COCWRT or the Civil War community. Life will take him in other directions where he will share his enthusiasm, commitment, time and energy in other fields and endeavors. The world is truly a better place because of people like Bruce, who give their time and energy to make a positive difference.

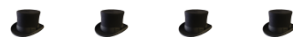
As Bob Hope always said, "Thanks for the memories!" ***Congratulations and Thanks to You!***

Jane Peters Estes



As a founding member of Camp Olden CWRT, I regret very much that Bruce Sirak 'MISTER Camp Olden' is stepping down as president. I have known Bruce for many years - really from the beginning. (I was the FIRST speaker at the first meeting of Camp Olden). We share many fine memories of past events and great efforts to promote Civil War History, historic preservation and educating the public to our shared history. I congratulate Bruce for his many years of selfless service and wish him well in his retirement.

Andy Waskie, Ph.D. - General Meade Society



My best memories are of Bruce Sirak, my mother, Myrtle Lokan, and I as we waited to welcome the first run of the River Line Train. We drank champagne with the Beverly and Edgewater Park Dignitaries in period dress and took a ride on the new train. Bruce was always ready to put on his three piece suit and become Governor Olden to welcome the train to town.

Carole Lokan Moore



For the past 17 years, we have shared many, many Camp Olden events from reenactments to school programs, to Jr. Camp Oldens with Bruce. We thought he would be "President for Life" but that is not to be. It will be strange not seeing Bruce banging the gavel calling the meeting to order. The next Camp Olden president will have big shoes to fill.

Cindy and Stan Saperstein



Since we only met Bruce 3 years ago when we joined the Camp Olden Round Table, we don't have any funny or embarrassing stories to tell about him. However, right from the start, we could see how hard he worked and how dedicated he was while serving as the president in keeping the members informed about the happenings in our own round table as well as on the many civil war and history events going on throughout New Jersey. Bruce, you definitely kept the meetings fun and interesting and your choice of speakers was always good. Your warm personality, sense of humor and willingness to help out with whatever needed to be done whenever it needed to be done are just some of the qualities that made you not only a good president but a friend as well. We walked into our first meeting at Olden basically strangers to the group knowing only Corinne and Mike but, within a few minutes, Bruce walked up to us, introduced himself, welcomed us warmly and even introduced us to several other members. By the end of that first meeting, we had found a new Civil War Round Table home. Thanks Bruce for making us feel welcome. When he had to give up his Remembrance Day reservations and Ted expressed an interest in them, Bruce generously offered them to us. Wow - last minute reservations at a beautiful hotel in the heart of Gettysburg for Remembrance Day. We had a great time. Thanks again Bruce. We wish you the best not only in your personal life but also in whatever position you may take (and knowing you we are sure there will be one) in any one of the many organizations you so generously give your time to. So even though you will no longer be president of Camp Olden, we are still looking forward to seeing you at the meetings.

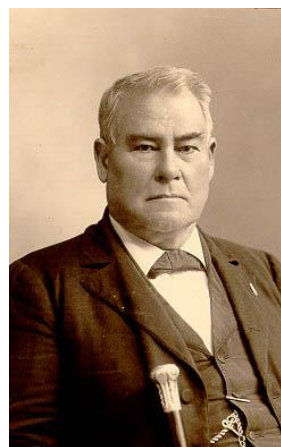
Marilyn & Ted Evan



2017 Camp Olden Civil War Round Table and Museum Board of Directors

President	William Moore
Secretary	Carole Moore
Treasurer	Connie Davis
Museum Representative	Bruce Smith
Event Coordinator	Al Barbano
Event Coordinator	John Maleski

Who Am I?



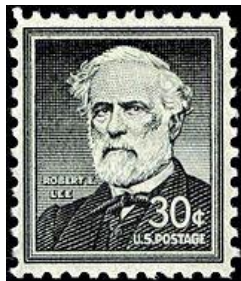
I was born in Sevier County, Tennessee, in 1818. My rural raising denied me much education until I left home. I then attended several academies and seminaries before settling down to the study of law. I migrated to Nacogdoches, Texas, in time to participate in the 1839 Battle of the Neches, near Tyler, that resulted in the removal of most of the Indians from East Texas. I worked as a surveyor and studied law and, by the time I was admitted to the bar in 1848, I had already served as a justice of the peace and a county judge. I quickly became one of the leading lawyers in Texas. In 1847 I won a seat in the state legislature, and in 1852 I was elected to a six-year term as district judge. In 1856 I won a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. I was reelected two years later, despite my denunciation of the position of proslavery extremists.

In 1861, however, I became deeply involved in the secession movement. I was first elected to the Texas secession convention and then sent by that convention to the provisional Congress of the Confederacy. By March 1861 I was postmaster general of the Confederacy, a position I held until the Confederacy collapsed. A capable administrator, I kept the post office running efficiently and, during the last few weeks of the Civil War, also served as treasury secretary. Only I and Secretary of the Navy Stephen Mallory held our posts continuously throughout the Civil War, and, at the end, I was the last cabinet member remaining with Davis when we were captured near Abbyville, Georgia.

For the next 22 months I was held in Fort Warren, in Boston harbor. In August 1865, while in prison, I sent a letter advising Texans to accept the terms of Reconstruction as quickly as possible to get it behind them. The "Fort Warren Letter" made me unpopular with fellow Texans who were determined to resist Federal requirements as long as possible, but several years of Radical Reconstruction convinced many of the wisdom of my unheeded advice. After the war, I returned to my home in Palestine, Texas.

During the following decade I became active in the railroad business and successfully sought a rail line to serve Palestine. In 1875 I returned to the U.S. House of Representatives, and he was reelected continuously thereafter. In 1887 I took a seat in the Senate. While in Congress I served on both the House and Senate commerce committees, and I was co-author of the bill establishing the Interstate Commerce Commission.

In 1891 I accepted appointment to the Texas Railroad Commission and served as its chairman from 1897 to 1903, when I retired from public life. I died in 1905 and am buried in Palestine, Texas. ♦



Answer to "Who Am I" is on page 10.

BILL MOORE TAKES TO THE AIR WAVES

Contributed by Carole Lokan Moore

Bill Moore, newly elected President of Camp Olden Civil War Round Table, past Commander of Lincoln Camp 100 of the Sons of the Union Veterans and founder of the Riverfront Historic Society has begun a new adventure. He is presenting a history program on Live Stream TV, www.RadioVisionNetwork.com, entitled ***History for my Grandchildren***.

History of the Civil War, World War II and New Jersey, etc. will be presented on his show each Wednesday at 1 PM. In the past, he has spoken about Col. Henry Sawyer who was assigned by Civil War Governor Olden to Washington to represent NJ in contributing to the war effort. Over Sawyer's career he was shot 5 times in battle. One time he was left for dead on the battlefield, retrieved by Confederates, and sent to Libby Prison. Thinking they would be "exchanged", he and his brother officers drew straws to be freed. Actually they were selecting themselves to be shot in retribution for the two Confederate officers who were killed as spies by an overzealous Union officer. Accepting his doom, he wrote home to his wife who worked through influential personages to have him exchanged for Robert E. Lee's son. After the war he worked as a hotel manager until he built his own, the post-Civil War "hero's hotel", known as *The Chalfonte* in Cape May, NJ.

To learn more about the adventures of Col. Sawyer, go to www.radiovisionnetwork.com and look for ***History for my Grandchildren*** and share Bill Moore's passion for history of all times, especially Civil War History. ♦

Hospitality:

Thanks to all members who help with Hospitality! The Board will be providing hospitality for the December meeting. We need volunteers for future meetings. If you wish to volunteer to provide hospitality for a meeting, contact Connie Davis at a meeting or at cmdavis3745@hotmail.com.

Remember - You will be reimbursed for all expenses. ♦

Civil War Visits.

Camp Olden member John Allen did some traveling over the past few months. Following is his “field report”.

Overland Campaign - Part 2

Last year the Civil War Round Table of New York hosted “The Overland Campaign - Part 1” battlefield tour, visiting the Wilderness and Spotsylvania battlefields (see the Winter 2015 *Camp Olden Gazette*). This Fall, for their 59th Annual Tour, they organized a “Grant’s Overland Campaign - part 2” tour, including sites along the North Anna River, Cold Harbor, the Union flank march to and across the James, and the initial Federal assaults on the Petersburg defenses. (The J.E.B. Stuart monument on what remains of the Yellow Tavern battlefield, although not chronologically correct, was also visited).

After viewing the scenes of the early May 1864 “slugfests” last year, this was a “must see” complementary trip. Last year’s final stop highlighted the Battle of Harris Farm in which “the Heavies” - heavy artillery transformed into infantrymen - achieved a bloody success and kept Dick Ewell’s troops away from the Federal supply wagons on the Telegraph Road (approximately modern US Route 1). Subsequently, Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant dangled Maj. Gen. Winfield S. Hancock’s II Corps as bait on his move south, hoping to draw General Robert E. Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia out of its Spotsylvania Court House fortifications and into open battle. While the stratagem failed to produce the desired battle, it succeeded in moving the Army of the Potomac closer to Richmond, still thought of as the *real* prize. Our tour guide for the North Anna and Cold Harbor sites was National Park Service employee Bobby Krick. Making use of multiple routes south, Lee gathered his Army on the south bank of the North Anna River, the northernmost defensible line between Spotsylvania and Richmond. The Union troops successfully crossed the river on both their right and left flanks. On May 23, 1864, Lt. Gen. A. P. Hill drew the wrath of a very ill Lee by attacking the Union V Corps at the Battle of Jericho Mills, but failing to repel the Union’s right flank beachhead on the North Anna’s south bank. (“General, why did you let

those people cross here? Why didn’t you throw your whole force on them and drive them back as Jackson would have done?”) was Lee’s criticism to Hill). The field across which Hill’s troops assaulted Union lines, only to be stopped by V Corps artillery, is shown below. Despite the V Corps’ victory, a series of misunderstandings and errors in judgment left the Union army across the river on both flanks as well as a part remaining on the north bank in the center at Ox Ford.



Battle of Jericho Mills.

Lee held a Council of War to discuss options to remain or retreat. Lee’s Chief Engineer, Martin Luther Smith, proposed a defensive formation which became known as the “inverted V”. The tour visited spectacular Confederate left flank entrenchments.



Confederate entrenchments on the flank of “inverted V”.

Their condition reflects their protection from the elements by the surrounding forest. Grant's disposition resulted in three distinct troop concentrations, with the flanks unable to support each other without crossing the River twice. Lee's health prevented him from taking advantage of this situation and, as a result of officer losses (Jackson, Longstreet, Stuart), he lacked faith in his remaining lieutenants to fulfill his wishes.

Upon realizing his situation, Grant ordered Meade to once again move southeast, with the corps consolidating near the crossroads at Old Cold Harbor, the site of the infamous costly Union assaults. (Grant's memoirs: "I have always regretted that last assault [June 3, 1864] at Cold Harbor was ever made.") Krick rightly pointed out that there were many other assaults in which the attacker suffered more casualties: Pickett's Charge, the Federal assault on Fredericksburg's Marye's Heights and the Bloody Angle at Spotsylvania among them). That does not diminish the significance of the losses suffered, particularly by Col. Griffin A. Stedman Jr's 2nd Brigade of Brig. Gen. John H. Martindale's XVIII Corps Division who attacked the entrenched Confederates across the open field shown below. The division suffering over 1,000 casualties in perhaps 20 minutes!



Stedman's XVIII Corps troops charged from right to left across the field at Cold Harbor, June 3, 1864.

Grant again decided to shift operations to the southeast and, ordering what the modern army refers to as "noise discipline", pulled his troops out of the line and marched them toward the James River, intending to cross to the southern bank and assault Petersburg. This movement was a complete success with the Federal troops "stealing a march" on Lee. Tour guide and

National Park Service employee Chris Bryce led the tour to the westerly crossing site at Wilcox's Landing where Federal troops used a ferry to cross the James to Windmill Point.



View across James River toward Windmill Point. Ferrying spot for Union II Corps troops.

The downriver crossing was about 2,100 feet in length comprising some 100+ pontoons, capable of withstanding a tidal range of up to 4 feet, and of opening to accommodate shipping traffic: an engineering marvel by 19th Century standards! Once across, Grant established his headquarters in a tent at City Point. Due to a number of command failures, the Federal forces failed to capture Petersburg and, once it was obvious the "siege" would continue into the winter of 1864-65, he established his HQ in a more substantial (yet very modest) building on the grounds of the large plantation home belonging to the Eppes family.



Grant's Headquarters at City Point, VA, after June and July 1864 assaults failed to capture Petersburg.

Thus, the nine-month Campaign against Petersburg and Richmond commenced. Sites associated with this were not visited during the tour since they were not related to the Overland Campaign. Another visit will result, and might even include the Peninsular Campaign sites scattered all over the north bank of the James River. ♦

It's Membership Renewal Time!

Below is your renewal form for 2017 membership in the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table.
New members can use this form also with, of course, the same discount.

Renewal & New Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

Birthdays: _____

Telephone #: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Membership: Single (\$35*) ☐ Senior Single (\$30*) ☐ Student (\$20*) ☐
 Family (\$45*) ☐ Senior Husband & Wife (\$35*) ☐

*** If dues are paid before or at the February meeting, deduct a \$5.00 discount from the above.**

Mail Completed Application with payment to:

Camp Olden Civil War Round Table
P. O. Box 10565
Hamilton NJ 08650

OR

Ms. Connie Davis
109 Endsleigh Court
Robbinsville NJ 08691

Future Speakers



The incoming President, William Moore, is initiating a program for our "learned members" to speak at some of our meetings. For their efforts their dues will be paid for that year. Now we need to know which members are interested in doing a program. Our open months are January, February, June, July, September, October, November and December.

We welcome any amateur "speakers" from our insider group, to step forth, and bring their collections, their notes on a proposed book, a recent trip they took to a historic Civil War site, a book they have read and learned something, are just a few of the suggestions. Make up your own, and pick a month, and help out the "Program Committee" which is in transition from Bruce Sirak arranging the programs to the secretary-elect Carole Moore performing that service.

Any and all suggestions are welcome and these are tentative dates, which can be changed at a later time, but we do have to "get this under way" now to be presented to the other Round Tables and the Calendar for the coming year. Contact Bill or Carole Moore at 609-871-9555 or cell 609-433-7979 or email at whitebriarbb@hotmail.com for questions or comments. ♦

The Farms of Gettysburg

The heaviest fighting of the Battle of Gettysburg took place around the buildings and across the fields and orchards of the Gettysburg battlefield farms. Trostle and Codori and Bliss are not just places on a map, but families whose lives changed when the Civil War's bloodiest battle came into their homes. Many of these buildings can still be seen today, with a number restored to their 1863 appearance. Visitors sometimes need a refresher about the names and locations. *Below is a guide to the Farms of Gettysburg.*



Courtesy Stone Sentinels

Cemetery Corner

Continuing our feature where readers can submit one or two paragraphs and a photo of a Civil War veteran's headstone. It's an easy way to get your work in print and give tribute to a CW veteran.

James Anthony Costar

Contributed by John F. Allen, Jr.



Born in New York County (Manhattan) on 26 February 1823, James was the only son of Anthony M. Costar and Mary Arinda Costar, both native New Yorkers. James married fellow New Yorker Mary Louisa Gray on his birthday in 1851. Mary bore six children, including twin daughters in 1860, while James established himself in business as a cooper. War clouds were gathering, but James had a family to support and stayed out of the service until he enlisted in Company E, 10th New York Infantry in New York City on 5 April 1864. At the age of 41, he was 5'-4" tall with blue eyes, brown hair and a fair complexion. He was paid a \$25 bounty upon enlistment.

The "Muster and Descriptive Roll of a Detachment of U.S. Vols. forwarded" dated 10 April 1864 shows him on Hart Island, NY

where new recruits received some basic training. It couldn't have amounted to much, since the unit's return of April 1864 has him near Morton's Ford, VA "right from depot". On 21 April 1864 he was transferred to Company F. The 10th New York Infantry Battalion was assigned to Col. Samuel S. Carroll's 3rd Brigade in Brig. Gen. John Gibbon's 2nd Division of Maj. Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock's II Corps of the Army of The Potomac. The II Corps crossed the Rapidan at Ely's Ford at the beginning of Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's Overland Campaign. The II Corps eventually found itself protecting the left (southern) flank of the Army during the Battle of The Wilderness, where, on 6 May, James was struck in the face by a Minnie ball while defending the Brock Road / Orange Plank Road intersection.

He was admitted to Finlay General Hospital, Washington, DC from "Field Hospital" on 26 May 1864, where the diagnosis read "G.S. [gunshot] Destruction of right eye and laceration of neighboring parts". Interesting is the fact that almost 3 weeks passed before James was forwarded to the General Hospital in Washington DC. "Head shot" soldiers were commonly "triaged" as likely to expire; James was a survivor.

He was granted sixty day furloughs 2 September, 1864, 19 November 1864 and 31 January 1865. Incredibly, he was required to report to the War Department following these furloughs, receiving a disability discharge on 16 June 1865 on half disability pay.

Unable to continue his work as a cooper with one eye, he tried his hand at several other jobs. His pension - ultimately upgraded to a full pension - continued until his death in New York City on 2 March 1906 at the age of 83. He is buried in the Evergreen Cemetery in Queens, New York, beneath a granite veteran's stone set in 2006. For 100 years his grave was unmarked. That has now been rectified. ♦



Correction:

Camp Olden member Ted Evan has brought to our attention an error in the Fall 2016 issue.



The above photo was incorrectly identified as a Browning Automatic Rifle. It is actually an M1919 A4 .30 Caliber Machine gun designed by John Browning. ♦

Civil War Quotes

Below is a sampling of Civil War Quotes:

"Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power." - **Abraham Lincoln**

"I hate newspapermen. They come into camp and pick up their camp rumors and print them as facts. I regard them as spies, which, in truth, they are. If I killed them all there would be news from Hell before breakfast." - **William Tecumseh Sherman**

"I know Mr. [Jefferson] Davis thinks he can do a great many things other men would hesitate to attempt. For instance, he tried to do what God failed to do. He tried to make a soldier of Braxton Bragg." - **Joseph Johnston**

"We talked the matter over and could have settled the war in thirty minutes had it been left to us." - **Unknown Confederate Soldier** (referencing a meeting he had with a Union soldier between the lines).

"The Army of Northern Virginia was never defeated. It merely wore itself out whipping the enemy." - **Jubal Early**

Courtesy of American Civil War Story

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 *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. ♦

Museum Hours

The Camp Olden Civil War and Native American Museum is located in Veteran's Memorial Park at 2202 Kuser Rd. in Hamilton, NJ, and is open the 2nd and 3rd full weekends of each month (except January and February) from 1 PM to 4 PM. Please come and visit and remember we do need docents to guide people! To sign up contact Bruce Smith at a meeting or at Bruce0069@aol.com. ♦

Answer to "Who Am I?" - **John Henninger Reagan**, (Oct. 8, 1818 — March 6, 1905). Our April 2017 speaker will be Trish Kaufmann who will be giving a presentation entitled *Introduction to Confederate Postal History*. ♦

