

The Camp Olden Gazette

News from the Camp Olden Civil War Round Table

Spring 2017

President's Gavel.

I am excited and proud to be your new president. My heartfelt thanks to our retiring president, Bruce Sirak, for his leadership over many years. I look forward to leading Camp Olden in 2017. We are reaching out to neighboring Round Tables to try and coordinate their activities and events, with ours. The Board of Directors is working on a budget for the new year which will reflect and protect our finances. We are working on a complete calendar of events, including meeting dates, times and locations. The list of speakers for this coming year is available on our web site. I will be working with Bruce Smith and his docents to initiate a series of programs to be held at the Museum entitled *A Night at the Museum*. We need to focus more on the museum which is an underutilized resource. (See page 12.)

Congratulations to Stan Saperstein for the presentations he made at Laurel Hill Cemetery during the Meade Societies Annual General Meade Birthday Celebration on New Year's day. Stanley's wood working skills on this special walking stick is superb. (See page 12.)

Thank you for your support. Remember I am open to any and all suggestions and advice to make this Round Table the best it can be. Please everyone - actively seek new members. Bring a family member, a friend, neighbor or anyone interested in history and the Civil War - particularly young members.

Your obedient servant,

William E. Moore III. ♦



Civil War Medicine

Recently, Camp Olden Civil War Round Table member, Carole Lokan Moore, presented the program *Civil War Medicine* at the NJ History Fair. Included in her personage as a camp medic/medical assistant were the crude unsanitary efforts put forth by surgeons and nurses, in an attempt to stop bleeding, sustain life and save limbs. Unfortunately, the art of "sanitation" was not in play until the end of the war, when surgeons realized that the "cauterizing" of blood vessels, not only stopped the flow, but also sanitized the area because of the heated primitive blade/torch.

The complete display of two cots with Union soldiers bodies in assorted array of illness, along with medical kits, benches, amputation bowls, lanterns, aprons, etc. were donated to Camp Olden by the late Bill Ford and is now used around the state to promote knowledge of the civil war and it's primitive methods of trying to save soldiers.



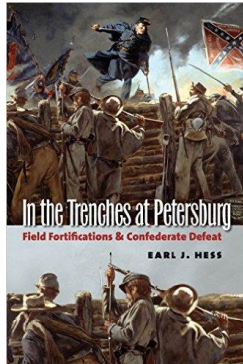
The image above is Ms. Moore, in surgeons assistant apron, shown with a replica of the original Lincoln Coffin that carried his body across the country by train. It stopped in so many towns and took so long, because of the slow train speed, allowing onlookers to view the procession. His body had to be "re-embalmed" and "recreated" several times on the journey. Lincoln was one of the first "noted persons", to have been embalmed with wax used for facial preservation. ♦

Book Review

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

In The Trenches at Petersburg

By Earl J. Hess



The third of three volumes by Earl Hess about the role of forts and fortifications in the eastern theater of operations during the Civil War, this book deals with the final campaign in the east: the "siege" of Petersburg and Richmond. Reading the full set impresses one with Hess' over-arching thesis that the soldiers (and their officers) eschewed fortifications during the early war, entrenching only *after* experiencing the shock of combat. With few exceptions (Chancellorsville, Culp's Hill and the Mine Run line) early war engagements tended to be "open field" encounters except where existing features could be employed as defensive enhancements (think of the stone wall at Fredericksburg on Marye's Heights, the railroad embankment at Second Manassas and Antietam's "Bloody Lane"). Grant's Overland Campaign started with open field (such as it was) engagements in the Wilderness, but trench warfare characterized the Campaign from Spotsylvania through Cold Harbor.

The topic of this review is the extensive use of large and complex static fortifications resulting in an entirely new form of warfare in which soldiers' daily lives were by-and-large confined to entrenchments. Blockhouses, forts, trenches, ditches, palisades, revetments, covered ways... ALL were incorporated in complicated networks on both sides of "No Man's Land" from north of the James River, across the Appomattox River, ultimately winding south and west until they reached around Petersburg to Five Forks. The book is a very thorough discussion of the

evolution of these systems throughout the Campaigns. This was the first book that really explained to me Grant's strategy for defeating the Army of Northern Virginia once the Army of the Potomac crossed the James River. Describing Grant's strategic evolution culminating in one of "biting and holding one bit of ground after another", the Army of the Potomac sidled crablike - always to their left - fortifying territorial gains resulting from offensive maneuvers. Eventually Lee's army was stretched beyond its breaking point, which later resulted in the Union breakthroughs which led to the evacuations of Petersburg and Richmond and, ultimately, the surrender at Appomattox Court House.

Life in the lines around Petersburg and Richmond is described in the text and, despite only infrequently being exposed to hostile battle lines, sounds awful! The danger of losing life or limb to a sharpshooter's ball was omnipresent. Conditions were appalling when one considers troops occupied the same trench system for extended periods of time and sanitary practices were not uniformly satisfactory.

This trilogy is highly recommended, documenting the evolution of officers' and soldiers' thinking and acceptance of earthworks, breastworks, and - ultimately - fortifications, and covers not just the military activities in the Virginia theater but also discusses the coastal fortifications of the Carolinas and occasionally (albeit briefly) the Atlanta Campaign. The first volume, *Field Armies and Fortifications in the Civil War* includes a very useful glossary defining the various terms the reader will encounter in all three volumes. Unless you're familiar with terms such as paradox, revetments and the like, I suggest having this glossary nearby! ♦



Trenches at Petersburg

Who Am I?



I was born June 1, 1806, near Blacksburg, Virginia. I graduated from South Carolina College in 1829 and moved to Helena, Arkansas, where I practiced law and lost a considerable amount of money in an ill-fated cotton planting venture. I moved back to my home state and was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1847. I became Governor of Virginia in 1848 and served until 1852, during which time I was an active proponent of the new Fugitive Slave Law.

In 1857, President Buchanan appointed me to be his Secretary of War, a post I resigned during the secession crisis of December 1860. I was accused of having overseen the transfer of thousands of arms to the Southern states, and was even indicted on charges of conspiracy and fraud, though those charges were later dropped.

In May, 1861, I was commissioned a brigadier general in the Confederate Army. I served with Robert E. Lee in the western Virginia campaign and was wounded in the arm at the Battle of Carnifex Ferry before being sent west. I assumed command of Fort Donelson, a crucial stronghold on the Cumberland River, on February 13, just as Union forces under Ulysses S. Grant were arriving. Without much personal military experience to draw on, I deferred to my subordinates Gideon Pillow and Simon Bolivar Buckner. After an unsuccessful breakout attempt, Confederate command decided to surrender the fort on February 16. Rather than allow myself to be taken and potentially tried for treason, however, I escaped before the actual surrender and, along with my Virginia troops, made my way to Nashville. For this I was summarily removed from command by President Jefferson Davis. My health soon failed me, and I died a year later on August 26, 1863 in Abingdon, Virginia, where I am buried. ♦ *Courtesy: Civil War Trust.*

Answer to “Who Am I” is on page 12.

Sunshine Corner

The Olden Civil War Round Table is sending out a special "Thank You" to Kathy Porutsky for her time and effort, which she so generously gave to the Round Table in sending out the birthday and get well cards we have all received over these past years. This year Kathy has decided to pass on that pleasure of sending out cards to someone else. As of January that will be me. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Marilyn Evan. My husband Ted and I have been Round Table members for almost four years and always look forward to the monthly meetings where we enjoy sitting and chatting with so many of you fellow Civil War buffs. Those who know me, know there is nothing I love better than sending out greeting cards whether it is a special occasion or just a thinking of you card. I am sure everyone enjoys being remembered on their birthday, when they are in the hospital or simply in poor health. I am looking forward to sending out those birthday cards and get well wishes to all our members.

Starting with this month's newsletter I thought it would be nice to acknowledge our birthday members in our quarterly newsletters. Our new membership chairman, Dorothy Wright, is in the process of updating the 2017 membership list along with everyone's address and birthdays. We surely do not want to miss sending along good wishes to any of our members. So whether you are a new member or have been a member for some time, make sure we have your correct name, address and birthday (no year required). You can give the info to Dorothy or me at the meeting or simply add your address and birthday alongside your name on the sign in sheet. You can also give the info to Connie Davis when you pay your dues. If you cannot make the meeting, feel free to email me at mje6466@yahoo.com. Everyone likes to see their name in print so don't miss out seeing yours in our newsletter.

In order to catch up with and keep the birthday list current we are sending Happy Birthday wishes to all those members who have celebrated or will be celebrating a birthday from January 1 to May 30, 2017. Our next newsletter will be out in June with our summer birthday

list. Please let me know if you do not receive a card for your birthday or see your name on the birthday list in the newsletter. If that happens I sincerely apologize. It might be that I did not have your address and/or birthday info before February 15 which was the deadline for this newsletter. I am presently working with names from a previous members list, which is why we need your current information. Please let me know how accurate this list is. ♦

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

1/6 - N. Ray Maxie	4/2 - Nicole Emily
1/14 - Alex Robb	4/17 - Cindy Saperstein
1/18 - Ted Evan	4/28 - Renee Angel
1/23 - Thomas Milacki	5/1 - John Maleski
1/29 - Sue Slowik	5/4 - Brian Sirak
2/8 - Bruce Smith	5/6 - Corinne Mazzocchi
3/15 - Mary Lamont	5/7 - Carole Moore
3/21 - Lisa Emley	5/13 - Dan Fox
3/21 - Missy Emley	5/31 - Warren Spengler
3/27 - Dave Potts	



Camp Olden Civil War Round Table of Hamilton meets at the Hamilton Public Library located at [1 Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr. Drive; Hamilton, NJ](#), on the first Thursday of the month (except August).

Upcoming speakers are:

March 2:

Joseph Quartullo - "Census in the Civil War".

April 6:

Trish Kaufman – "Introduction to Confederate Postal History".

June 1:

Martin Moshu - "What Did They Do With Civil War Dead?"

October 5:

Kenneth J. Serfass portraying Ulysses S. Grant (first person impression). ♦

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

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

Coming Events –



Camp Olden favorite Charlie Zahm will be performing along with violinist Ted Marks on March 26 at 3:00 PM at The Sacred Heart Auditorium, 260 High Street, Mount Holly. Water and snacks will be available. There will also be door prizes and other drawings. A voluntary contribution would be welcomed. For further information call (609) 313-1650 ♦

Hospitality:

Thanks to all members who help with Hospitality! Following is the list of volunteers for the future.

March – Brian and Mark

April – Need Volunteer

May – Marilyn and Ted Evan

June – Need Volunteer

July – Susan Slowik and Don Cooper

Aug. – No Meeting ♦



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.

Pvt. William Horton.

Contributed by John F. Allen, Jr.

There is no headstone photograph for this article. Instead, there's a close-up of an 1873 map of East Amwell Township, Hunterdon County showing the house of "Mrs. R. Horton". Her husband, William, like many soldiers, has no known grave (at least not that I have found). What I did find is evidence of his widow living in the southern part of the County. Here's what I can tell you...



In the 1850 Federal census, William and Rebecca are living with their 3-year old daughter, Angeline, in East Amwell Township. Both parents were 25 years old. Their daughter, Angeline, was born in 1847. William enlisted in Company E of the 11th New Jersey Volunteer Infantry. Organized in response to President Lincoln's call for 300,000 three year soldiers, the regiment was mustered into Federal Service at Camp Olden on 15 August 1862. Ten days later, William left New Jersey with the regiment for Washington, D.C. where they manned the defensive works for almost 3 months. Marching to Falmouth, Va., the 11th arrived in the "seat of the War" in time to participate in the Battle of Fredericksburg and Burnside's "Mud March" with the Army of the Potomac's 3rd Corps. His three year tour of duty was cut short when he was killed at the Battle of Chancellorsville, 3 May 1863. Presumably his body was not recovered since he fell on land subsequently held by the Confederates. Or he could be interred in the Fredericksburg Military Cemetery as an "Unknown Union Soldier". How did it end? Page 63 of the "History of the Eleventh

New Jersey Volunteers, from its organization to Appomattox" states: "William Horton, of Company E, did not arise [to assault the enemy on 3 May 1863] with the rest of the company, and an examination showed that he was dead, having been shot through the head by the first fire of the enemy."

When he died he left Rebecca, age 38 or so, to raise their only daughter, Angeline, age 16. In the 1870 census Rebecca lives with a son, John Horton, age 7. He was born 14 November 1862, very near William's departure on active service. It's doubtful he ever saw his father, nor did William likely ever see his son.

Rebecca must have had a tragic life. Not only was she widowed when her son was only a few months old, but her daughter, Angeline, having married John Danbury 19 May 1866, died on 10 September 1869 not yet 22 years old. She was buried in the Amwell Ridge Cemetery. Prior to her death, she and John had a son, Henry, on 8 June 1867, living with Rebecca in the 1870 census. (Where was father John?) She not only raised her own son from birth alone, but seems to have raised her grandson from the age of two until his marriage in 1878.

Rebecca is enumerated in the 1890 Veterans Census, despite having passed away in June, 1889, a woman whose life was drastically altered by America's Civil War. ♦

MILITARY BALLOONS IN THE CIVIL WAR

by Kathy Faulks

Military use of balloons was not a new idea during the Civil War. Years before during a balloon exhibition, Benjamin Franklin told others of his idea to fly soldiers in hot air balloons into battle. The French established a balloon corps during the French Revolution, and the use of the balloon was proposed in the Seminole War and the Mexican War, but the idea never got off the ground.

It was Thaddeus T. Lowe who successfully established the usefulness of the balloon for military purposes. In June of 1861, Lowe demonstrated his balloon, the "Enterprise," to

President Lincoln on the lawn of the White House.

Smoke and hot air balloons had too many drawbacks and it was realized early on that gas inflation was by far the best way to launch the balloons. Gas was plentiful in the cities, but after inflation the transportation of the balloon away from the city to the battlefield was too dangerous and time consuming. To solve that problem, Thaddeus Lowe invented a portable gas generating device that could be used anywhere. What he came up with was a lined wooden tank mounted on a wagon filled with some water and iron filings. This combination yielded hydrogen gas when doused with sulfuric acid. A total of twelve of these wagons were built to service the Union's balloons. The most well-known Union balloon was the "Intrepid." It was 38 ft. wide and 45 ft. high and required at least 3 hours to inflate.

Union General George McClellan was a staunch supporter of observation balloons, and urged commanders to make use of them. The balloons were tethered and ascended to between 300 and 500 feet above the battlefield to determine the enemy's position and numbers.

The Confederacy started their balloon program using hot air, but they too found that gas was the best way to fly the new apparatus. Due to limited resources, the Confederate Balloon Corps did not last long. Their first balloon was captured by Union naval forces in 1862 and their second balloon remained in service until it was lost during the siege of Charleston in 1863.

The Union Balloon Corps was formed strictly for reconnaissance. Offensive military operations such as aerial photography, aerial bombing, and troop transport were suggested but were not followed through. The Balloon Corp did pioneer many military actions, including using the first "aircraft carrier" (the *USS George Washington Parke Custis*) and using the balloons for artillery aerial spotting.

Military conservatism and interdepartmental rivalries doomed what could have been a useful tool and by the summer of 1863, the Balloon Corps and the balloons were gone. ♦

Submitted by Dorothy L. Wright

Well Armed

By Ron Soodalter

At the beginning of the 19th century, it was unthinkable for a nation to try to wage war or establish a viable national defense without sufficient resources to manufacture cannons. Yet that's the position in which the United States found itself after the War of 1812. The country had only one small operating foundry, located at Georgetown, in Washington, D.C., and was largely dependent on importing foreign artillery. Well aware of the deficit, President James Madison authorized establishing four new arsenals, each with an iron foundry capable of casting heavy guns. Three of them—in Richmond, Georgetown and Pittsburgh—were federally funded and operated. The fourth, a privately owned concern located across the Hudson River from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, would be instrumental in preserving the Union within the next half-century.

The site for the West Point Foundry, owned by wealthy New Yorker Gouverneur Kemble, was part of a huge tract of land seized from a Loyalist family during the Revolution. Aside from being a member of one of New York's most affluent families, Kemble had friends in high places: His sister had married the secretary to the Board of Navy Commissioners. Kemble and his partners, calling themselves the West Point Foundry Association, selected what proved to be an ideal spot for the project. A sheltered 90-acre Hudson River inlet, soon dubbed Foundry Cove, offered sand for casting, while water from nearby Margaret's Brook—soon to be renamed Foundry Brook—powered the foundry. Thick forests provided timber for fuel and charcoal production, while local quarries supplied iron ore. Most important, the river itself served as a reliable shipping highway. And when the Hudson froze, the Philipstown Turnpike, which ran east into Connecticut, offered overland access.

The new foundry first fired up its furnaces in 1817, turning out not only guns and projectiles but also domestic goods. America's first two steam engines came from the foundry's mills, as did iron boats, benches and fences; lampposts, lighthouses and building facades; beam engines and mills for

use in Austria, Canada and the Caribbean; marine engines and boilers for frigates and early steamships; and huge pipes, fixtures, and fittings for the Croton Aqueduct, New York City's system that conducted water 41 miles from the Croton River to Gotham. And before the Civil War the foundry shipped countless cotton presses to Southern plantations. It was one of America's first marvels of modern technology, a literally glowing example of a rapidly industrializing North. Artists found it irresistible, invariably portraying it in the halo of smoke and orange and yellow glow that was visible for miles on both sides of the Hudson.

In 1836 former physics instructor and West Point graduate Robert Parker Parrott was named inspector of ordnance at the academy and posted at the foundry. Kemble recognized the young man's ability, and within the year Parrott resigned his commission to become foundry superintendent. He also invested heavily in the foundry that he would be running. In 1839 Parrott married Kemble's sister, Margaret, a propitious union for both the Parrotts and the foundry.

Parrott devoted his considerable talents to improving production. While continuing to stress the use of local materials, he began processing a superior grade of pig iron from the Greenwood Furnace, in nearby Orange County. He imported skilled labor from abroad, mainly Europe and the British Isles, and established an apprenticeship program for teenagers. Parrott also provided housing and clothing for his burgeoning workforce and enlarged the foundry school, where apprentices, workers' children and—time permitting—the workers themselves could study. As the factory grew, so did the village of Cold Spring, which had started out as a tiny trading hamlet.

But it was in the development of a new type of cannon that Parrott made his mark. Throughout the Civil War, Parrott's operation would turn out various types of artillery, such as Dahlgren and Rodman cannons. At the time, these guns were still traditionally smoothbore and muzzle-loaded. While easier to manufacture than cannons with rifled bores, they were far less accurate, with a markedly shorter range. Rifling—the creation of lands and grooves in the barrel that give spin to

the projectile—allowed the shells to travel considerably farther, and with greater accuracy, than those fired from the tubes of smoothbore cannons. The West Point Foundry played a major role in defeating the Confederacy because it produced a specific type of rifled cannon—or “rifle”, as they were called. That gun was Robert Parrott's brainchild.

Though Parrott was not the first to rifle the barrels of cannons, he made significant improvements to the production system. His contributions, for which he was granted a series of patents, lay in the proprietary process used for wrapping the breech of each gun with a thick band of wrought iron, as well as in the type of projectile the gun would fire. Cannons of his day had a tendency to burst at the breech, destroying the guns and killing or maiming their crews. To reinforce the gun and keep it from exploding, Parrott hot-wrapped a stout iron band around its breech, allowing it to shrink immovably in place as it cooled. He also received patents for a special fuse and sight for his rifles.

Parrott guns became the conflict's most commonly used artillery pieces—in the words of one historian, “available, inexpensive and accurate.” So popular was Parrott's innovation that Confederate arsenals copied them religiously. Ironically, several Parrott guns had already been sold to the Southern states prior to the war's outbreak, including some that would be used to bombard Fort Sumter.

By the fall of 1861, the demand for artillery was so great that the foundry's forges and furnaces were thundering and blazing around the clock. One area visitor recalled, “[W]e could hear the deep breathing of furnaces, and the sullen monotonous pulsations of trip-hammers, busily at work at the West Point Foundry, the most extensive and complete of the iron-works of the United States.” The foundry was then turning out 25 rifled Parrott guns and 7,000 projectiles per week, in addition to a range of smoothbore cannons, howitzers and mortars—and the numbers grew with demand. On each muzzle were stamped the letters “WPF”, for West Point Foundry, and “RPP”, for Robert Parker Parrott. The guns ranged in size (measured by the weight of the projectile

they fired) from 10-pounder field rifles to 300-pounder monsters weighing up to 13 tons. The Parrott guns were conformed for use as fieldpieces (typically 10- and 20-pounders) and larger siege guns for the Army, as well as for service aboard Navy warships.

Around 1850, a 600-foot dock had been built, to accommodate deep-draft vessels on the Hudson. Now a constant stream of Parrott's war engines rolled on rails from the foundry buildings down the dock to waiting Union vessels. No gun was shipped for military service without first being test-fired, or "proofed." For that purpose, a platform and spotting tower had been built facing west over the Hudson. Each piece was fired—sometimes as much as 100 times—at the sides of rocky Crow's Nest Peak and Storm King Mountain, looming on the river's west bank.

President Abraham Lincoln got to witness the proofing process firsthand when he traveled to West Point in June 1862 to meet with retired Army commander Winfield Scott. After touring the foundry, Lincoln observed from the spotting tower as Superintendent Parrott oversaw a test-firing of 100- and 200-pounders.

The foundry's rifled guns were far superior to earlier versions. But despite Parrott's innovations, no cast-iron cannon of the period was immune to malfunction due to a number of problems, from sand in the barrel to excessive elevation, inadequate lubrication of shells, friction within the projectile itself or excessive overheating from repeat firing. The barrel might simply explode at any point along its unreinforced section, or at the muzzle itself. And although the trademark iron band usually protected the crew from a ruptured breech, blowouts sometimes occurred at reinforced sections.

One of Parrott's larger guns suffered such a calamity. In late August 1863, a 200-pounder siege rifle weighing more than eight tons, dubbed the "Swamp Angel", had been mounted on a four-ton carriage during the assault on Charleston, S.C. Its crew, from the 11th Maine Infantry, successfully fired 35 massive projectiles—10 of which contained the incendiary mixture known as Greek fire—doing significant damage to the besieged city from an unheard-of 4½ miles away.

A platform in marshy earthworks in Charleston Harbor had to be built to elevate the gun, and for the first time in recorded military history a compass reading was taken to target the fire on the city at night.

But six other incendiary shells had detonated prematurely inside the cannon's tube, causing invisible damage to the gun itself. The all-important wrought-iron breech band grew loose as the barrel's integrity was compromised. Aware the gun had taken terrific punishment, the crew lengthened the lanyard, allowing them to fire from a safer position. After each round they would reenter the battery to swab and reload the massive piece. It proved to be a sagacious plan: With the 36th round the gun burst, blowing out the breech and knocking the cannon off its carriage. Four members of the crew were injured, though none seriously. (*See Editor's note at conclusion of this article.*)



Not all artillerymen were so fortunate. When the U.S. steamer *Juniata*'s 100-pounder Parrott gun burst during a fight off Fort Fisher, N.C., on December 24, 1864, the explosion killed five sailors—including two officers—and badly injured eight more. A *Harper's Weekly* illustration depicted the gun blowing the fiery contents of its projectile out at the breech, strewing dead and injured sailors around the deck. In his report, *Juniata*'s surgeon described the effects of the explosion in detail. The injuries listed during Second-Class Fireman Theodore Abos' autopsy were typical: "left leg, thigh, hip, arm and forearm fractured, soft parts extensively lacerated, killed by hemorrhage and shock." *The New York Times* later reported that shipboard fatalities alone due to Parrott gun mishaps numbered more than 100.

But in the imprecise world of cast-iron weapons, Parrott guns usually worked remarkably well, and provided long and effective service. By war's end,

only 19 of the Navy's 352 100-pounders had burst. One 30-pounder reportedly fired some 4,600 rounds before finally breaking down. Today its remains are on display at West Point.

The foundry, the sole manufactory of Parrott guns throughout the conflict, could not turn them out fast enough. In April 1863, Robert Parrott wrote his brother, who managed the Greenwood Foundry that Parrott now owned, "We continue very busy and likely to use all the iron you can make." Two days later he wrote, "Guns are ordered by the fifties and all my efforts required to keep up the supply." In June he noted that the calls for guns and projectiles were "increasing daily," and in August he exulted, "I am over head and ears in business and demand for guns, etc." The demand would not abate until the South surrendered.

At the height of the foundry's activity, Parrott employed upward of 1,400 workers. For his time, he seems to have been a remarkably progressive and compassionate boss. He owned a number of the row houses in which his employees lived, charging a modest rent. He also provided widows' benefits, and limited compensation for injured workers.

But the work was still, by its nature, often dangerous, and in March 1864 several hundred men formed what they called a "Laboring Men's Union" and went on strike for higher wages and presumably better working conditions. They also kept workers outside the union from reporting for work. Given the North's need for weapons, the government was not about to allow the strike to continue. Some 120 Federal troops soon appeared. After a brief hiatus, and the arrest of three union leaders, production resumed.

The factory's wartime output was staggering. Within four years the West Point Foundry turned out 3,000 Parrott guns—nearly half ordered by the Navy—and more than 3 million projectiles, in addition to countless smoothbore cannons and other types of ordnance.

Although the foundry filled an order for 200 Parrott guns after the war's end, the demand for cannons evaporated practically overnight. Converting to civilian production wasn't an overnight process, nor were orders for nonmilitary

products fast in coming. Parrott, then the vice president and director, terminated his lease in 1867. Eleven years later the owners, with the South Boston Iron Company, unsuccessfully petitioned the War Department for funding to subsidize them in the event of a future war.

Even as orders for cast-iron armaments dwindled, another serious blow came in the form of the Bessemer process, an English system for the cheap manufacture of steel. The first U.S. plant to use that new method was built in 1865, and by 1877, 11 Bessemer mills were rapidly producing steel at an affordable rate. The glory days of the nation's great iron forges were all but over by that time, since they couldn't compete with the newer, cheaper and better metal being produced.

The West Point Forge held on under new owners, enjoying middling success throughout the remainder of the 19th century by casting metal furniture, heavy machinery, structural columns and some ordnance, including a 13-ton coastal defense gun. But in 1911 the fires went out for the last time and the foundry closed its doors. A succession of companies purchased the site, including a silk-dyeing and -processing plant, tearing down some of the buildings and altering others. In 1952 what was left of the old foundry was bought by a battery plant, which would dump chemical waste into the cove for the next two decades. In 1986 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency launched a 10-year-long Superfund cleanup of the place.

Nature eventually reclaimed most of the site. With the exception of a stately 1865 brick office building, the structures either collapsed or were demolished, leaving few traces of the greatest American forge of the Industrial Revolution.

Then in 1996 Scenic Hudson, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the Hudson River and Hudson River Valley, acquired 87 acres on the original site, in an effort to protect it from development and additionally create an interpretive historic and ecological preserve. After years of serving as a dumping ground for toxic chemicals, the now-pristine Foundry Cove welcomes visitors.

Today a sign on Cold Spring's picturesque Main Street directs visitors down a side street and along

a tree-lined dirt road to the site of what once was the foundry that saved the Union. The West Point Foundry Preserve offers a walking tour of the site that encompasses stabilized ruins, as well as native plantings and sculptural models illustrating the immense scale of the old operation.

Scenic Hudson president Ned Sullivan points out: "What's really special about the preserve is that visitors learn so much about the foundry's wartime contribution, while enjoying the natural beauty of a tranquil ravine. The juxtaposition offers an unforgettable experience." ♦

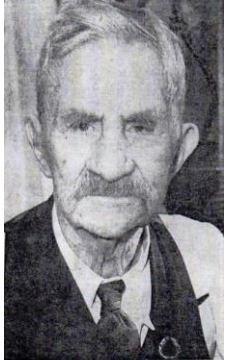
Contributed by John Allen

Editor's Note: For further information about the Swamp Angel now mounted in Cadwalader Park, Trenton, NJ, see the Fall 2013 and the Fall 2016 issues of the Camp Olden Gazette available on our website: www.campolden.org.

New Jersey's Last Union Sailor

By Steve Glazer, Lieutenant Colonel, USA (Ret.)

On April 19, 1945 -- less than three weeks before the end of World War II in Europe -- The New York Times carried an article headlined, "Veteran of Monitor, 101, Dies." The U.P. news report, datelined the previous day from Vineland, N.J., began, "Andrew Fenton, who served on the iron-clad Monitor during the Civil War, died today in the Soldiers Home here." Thus was born a tortuous tale that continues to this day.

	Veteran of Monitor, 101, Dies VINELAND, N. J., April 18 (U.P.) —Andrew Fenton, who served on the iron-clad Monitor during the Civil War, died today in the Soldiers Home here at the age of 101. Mr. Fenton was flag-bearer when the United States took possession of Alaska. He leaves a widow, a son, five grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren and two great-great-grandchildren. The New York Times Published: April 19, 1945
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The Times' report drew the attention of numerous historians over the years. Professor Jay Hoar of the University of Maine wove an elaborate tale describing how Fenton suffered the partial loss of sight and hearing in action against Fort Sumter when one of the Monitor's guns unexpectedly discharged, and how he later dramatically survived the iconic ironclad's sinking. (The North's Last Boys in Blue, Higginson Book Co.,

2006, pp. 352-57.) Hoar largely relied on an interview of the old sailor published in 1938.

On the other hand, John Quarstein, Director of the USS Monitor Center in Newport News, Virginia, concluded that there is no proof for Fenton's purported service on the Monitor. Indeed, Quarstein goes much further. He categorically and repeatedly asserted in his book on the ship's crew that "there is no indication of any naval service" by Fenton. (The Monitor Boys, The History Press, 2011, pp. 299-301.) The Monitor Center's website similarly now asserts that "no records of naval service have been found" for Fenton.

Both Hoar and Quarstein, as well as The Times, were mistaken. Moreover, there are abundant official records documenting Andrew Fenton's distinguished military service, making him New Jersey's last known survivor of the Union Navy, and the nation's last known survivor of the Civil War's ironclad monitors, albeit not the USS Monitor.

Andrew Fenton was born in St. Augustine, Florida, on Christmas 1843, but his family moved to Philadelphia when he was still an infant. According to unearthed naval records, Fenton enlisted for three years as a 1st Class Boy at the U.S. Naval Rendezvous in Philadelphia on September 2, 1862, on the receiving ship Princeton. Soon thereafter, he was sent to the USS Patapsco, a Passaic-class ironclad monitor first launched later that month from Wilmington, Delaware, by shipbuilder Harlan & Hollingsworth. Patapsco was commissioned on January 2, 1863, when Fenton was formally assigned to her according to his service records. Fenton and his ship would be engaged in combat operations for the next two years.

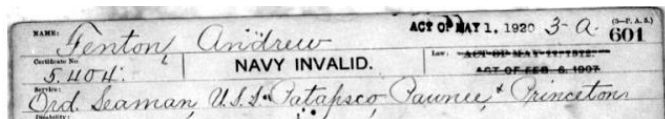
According to naval records, on the afternoon of November 2, 1863, while firing at Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, a premature explosion of one of Patapsco's guns instantly killed a crew member and injured several others, including then-landsman Andrew Fenton. (Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XV, p. 88.) And on the night of January 15, 1865, the Patapsco, on station for picket duty some 700 yards from Fort Sumter, struck a large torpedo and sank in the harbor's channel within 15 seconds, taking the ship's

complement with her. Most perished, but Ordinary Seaman Andrew Fenton survived. (Official Records, Ser. I, Vol. XVI, pp. 178-79.) Two weeks later, Fenton reported for duty on the USS Pawnee, which saw action the following month in South Carolina against numerous Confederate artillery batteries.

Photo # NH 95087 USS Patapsco engaging batteries on Sullivan's Island, S.C., during the Civil War



On July 26, 1865, Pawnee was decommissioned at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, where Fenton was honorably discharged the same day, according to the ship's final muster roll. However, Fenton was not done serving his country. One year later he re-enlisted in the U.S. Navy, and after that term expired, he enlisted yet again.



Fenton's service record from the Veteran's Admin.

After his years at sea, Fenton made his home in Fairfield and Mount Holly, N.J., as well as in Philadelphia, where he was a member of Anna M. Ross G.A.R. Post No. 94. In 1881, he married Susan Cecelia Bamford of Bridgeton, N.J., one year later having a son, Andrew Percy Fenton. On April 18, 1945, the ancient mariner passed away in Vineland, being buried in Overlook Cemetery in Bridgeton, marking the end of a direct link to the Civil War and its transformation of naval warfare. ♦

Civil War Documentary

Reviewed by Alex Robb

I have heard many people say that there is nothing worthwhile on television. I have seen and heard of shows that seem far less than desirable. So I was pleasantly surprised when the American Heroes Channel (formerly the Military Channel) advertised a six part series on the American Civil War.

The series, which began airing on December 14th,

is titled, "Blood and Fury: America's Civil War". The graphics and special effects take viewers beyond words and pictures on a written page. From temperate scenes of Army camps to the horrors of the battlefields, one can experience six battles through the eyes of the soldiers who fought in them. Each episode takes its audience to see lesser-known stories of ordinary Americans. We all know who Grant and Lee are. But what about Sgt. Kirkland?

Audiences can find themselves in Bull Run, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, Nashville, and Petersburg. Each episode is as action-packed and intense as the one before, and all of them give new information and important stories from the most pivotal conflict in our short history. I highly recommend that anyone who hasn't seen this wonderful series to do so. It will be time. You can stream all six episodes online at:

<https://www.ahctvgo.com/blood-and-fury-americas-civil-war/>. ♦

Exhibitions:

New Jersey Civil War Flags Gallery

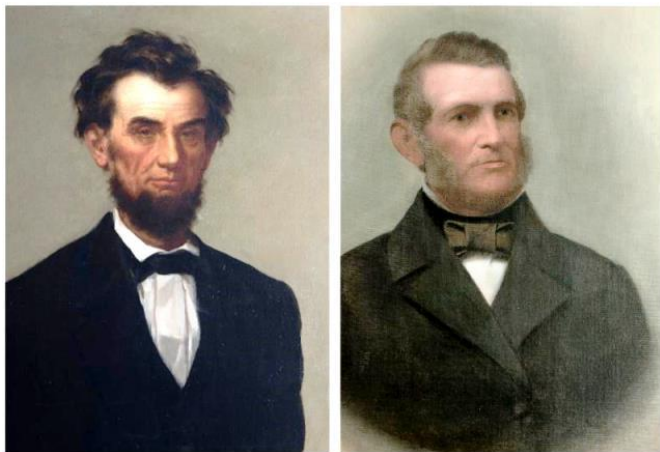
Even if you couldn't make it for the flag unveiling during Patriots Week, there is still plenty of time to see the current installation of Civil War flags, on view in the gallery at 225 West State Street (the Dept. of State building, next to the Museum.) In addition to the flags, the gallery features stories and artifacts which highlight the involvement of New Jersey residents in the Civil War. The gallery is open Monday through Friday, 9:00 AM to 4:45 PM, and is closed on weekends and state holidays. The exhibit will be on display through June 30. Admission is free. ♦



Bruce Sirak (3rd from left), David Martin and Gary DeSiver (6th and 7th from left) at the Ceremony

Exhibition:

Lincoln & Olden: The President and the Governor



Pres. Abraham Lincoln and Gov. Charles Olden

This Exhibition will run from February 22 to May 31, 2017, at Drumthwacket located at 354 Stockton Street in Princeton. The exhibit ‘brings to life’ through historic letters, photographs and artifacts, two distinguished leaders, Governor Charles Olden, who built Drumthwacket in 1835, and President Abraham Lincoln. Both statesmen are elected to office at a time when the country, divided over the issue of slavery, is on the precipice of Civil War. Olden sees in Lincoln, “an honest man after his own heart,” who will restore the Federal Government to “its pristine purity and vigor.” The Governor, likewise, is described by contemporary John Y. Foster as a man “of incorruptible integrity, of inflexible loyalty and of indomitable will”. Together, one will steward a nation and the other a state through the deadliest war on American soil. This exhibit includes artifacts from our own Camp Olden Civil War and Native American Museum. For further information contact Drumthwacket Foundation, (609) 683-0057, info@drumthwacket.org. ♦



Drumthwacket

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. ♦

Museum Hours



Be sure to visit the ***Camp Olden Civil War and Native American Museum*** located in Veteran’s Memorial Park at 2202 Kuser Rd. in Hamilton, NJ, which is open the 2nd and 3rd full weekends of each month (except January and February) from 1 PM to 4 PM. Remember we do need docents to guide people! Contact Bruce Smith at a meeting or at Bruce0069@aol.com. ♦

Answer to “Who Am I?” - Brigadier General John Buchanan Floyd (June 1, 1806 – Aug. 26, 1863) ♦
