

January, 2021

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*Sources for newsletter content is
available upon request.*

From the Brigade Commander

Earlier this month, we hosted the second meeting of our 43rd Campaign. Ron Kirkwood, a retired journalist and Gettysburg Foundation guide at the George Spangler Farm Civil War Field Hospital, revealed the many critical roles that the Spangler Farm played during the Battle of Gettysburg: A Union command center, a communications hub, an artillery reserve and a field hospital. Knowing most CWRT members hail from the greater Lehigh Valley area, he also incorporated stories about members of the 153rd PVI who fought at Gettysburg—something that greatly touched my heart. Attendance for the December meeting was 26, a slight increase over November. My thanks to those who joined us.

Thanks also to Bob McHugh and Laura Kleinschmidt for their efforts to find speakers that share interesting, informative Civil War tales from varied perspectives.

We began Campaign 43 by hosting a preeminent authority on Philadelphia history who spoke about a little-known document of great historic importance—and the man who wrote it. We then followed with a speaker whose talk strongly hinted at his journalism background. On January 5th, we'll hear from a former U.S. Department of State officer who began his adult life as a student of 19th century history. Look inside for details about our January lecturer, his lecture topic, and meeting signup instructions.

If you're like me, you're more than ready to move to a new year but, unfortunately, the pandemic is going to follow us. And so, for the foreseeable future, we'll continue meeting virtually.

With the holiday season now here, and from all of us here at the Round Table, best wishes for a wonderful holiday season. Stay safe. Be smart. Happy New Year!

The Civil War Round Table of Eastern Pa., Inc. is a proud leader of America's battlefield preservation movement. It has been designated an American Battlefield Trust Color Bearer and Top 300 Lifetime Donor.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ Our 43rd Campaign Year! ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Mark Your Calendar and Plan to Join Us as Gene Schmiel presents: “Lincoln, Antietam and a Northern Lost Cause”

Tuesday, January 5, 2021, 7:00 p.m. start (Zoom meeting)



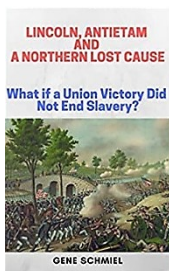
As a graduate student, Gene Schmiel studied 19th century history and subsequently served as an Assistant Professor of History at St. Francis University. Since that time, he has written six books related to the American Civil War, among them, “*Lincoln, Antietam and a Northern Lost Cause*.”

Gene is a retired U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Officer who served in

Sweden, South Africa, Djibouti, Kenya, and Iceland. He later worked at the State Department on international political-military and terrorism-related issues.

Sign up Today!

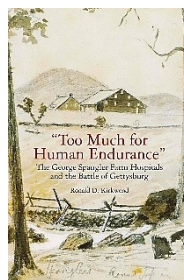
To register for January’s virtual meeting (via Zoom), contact Jim Duffy at Duffysocwk@aol.com or 610-253-4549 (email preferred) **prior to 12:00 p.m. on Monday, January 4.** Those who register by/before the deadline will receive an invitation via email that will include the information you need to enter the virtual meeting room via video or telephone.



Copies of Mr. Schmiel’s book are available from www.Amazon.com or by contacting the author at geneofva@gmail.com.

Signed copies of last month’s speaker, Ron Kirkwood, are available from the Visitor’s Center in Gettysburg or through publisher, Savas Beatie

www.savasbeatie.com). Unsigned copies are available from www.Amazon.com.



CWRT of Eastern Pa., Inc. Designated an American Battlefield Trust Color Bearer

In the summer, 2020, edition of “Hallowed Ground,” the CWRT of Eastern Pa., Inc. was listed among the American Battlefield Trust’s (ABT) Color Bearers, which the ABT refers to as “the undisputed leaders in this nation’s battlefield preservation movement.”

Color bearers represent less than three percent of ABT memberships, but the 1,300 Color Bearers donate nearly 50 percent of all the gifts the ABT receives each year.

As the ABT says, “As their 19th-century counterparts were uniquely and appropriately acclaimed for their courage, ABT Color Bearers will be honored for the extraordinary commitment they bring to the mission of saving our nation’s most hallowed ground.”

Leading the Charge to Save Battlefields



A Bloody New Year: The Battle of Stones River



Charge of the First Brigade under Union Col B. Walker

Image source: Library of Congress

January 1, 1863, Washington D.C.

President Abraham Lincoln announces his Emancipation Proclamation: "I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within any States...in rebellion against the United States shall be...forever free." Hundreds of miles away, in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, Union and Confederate troops were focused on other priorities: tending to the dead and wounded that covered the ground and filled makeshift hospitals.

On the evening of December 30, 1862, Confederate Gen. Braxton Bragg and Union Gen. William S. Rosecrans and a combined total of more than 80,000 soldiers were camped near Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Everyone knew a battle was only hours away. The bands of both armies played, each trying to drown out the other. Then, one of the bands struck up "Home Sweet Home," and "as if by common consent, all other airs ceased, and the bands of both armies, far as the ear could reach, joined in the refrain.

General Braxton attacked at dawn, while Union soldiers were building fires and eating breakfast. One Union soldier described that morning:

"The comfort of warming chilled fingers and toes and drinking a grateful cup of hot coffee outweighed for the moment any consideration of danger.... As all was so quiet, not a shot having been fired, I...walked out until the enemy's breastworks were in view and there, sure enough...a succession of long lines of Gray were swarming over the Confederate breastworks and sweeping towards us but not yet within gun shot [sic] range.

The soldier continued:

"Our only salvation was to lie flat as possible, for the air seethed with the 'Zip' of bullets... . It reminded me of the passage of a swarm of bees. Bullets plowed little furrows around us, throwing up grass and soil into our faces or over our bodies, and others struck with a dull 'thud' into some poor unfortunate soul."

The Union was forced back three miles, briefly holding several positions long enough to allow General Rosecrans to gather Union cannon and redeploy units to successfully shield his army's lifelines. Trivializing the sharp rebuff, Bragg telegraphed Richmond, Virginia, exclaiming, "God has granted us a Happy New Year."

December 20, 2020: Forty-Eight Acres Saved at Stones River!

The American Battlefield has announced that 48 acres in the heart of the battlefield are now protected forever. The fighting that took place on this acreage occurred on Day 1 of the battle, December 31, 1862, when the Confederates made its final assault against the Union left. Funding to save this piece of the battlefield came from several sources, including people like you, who donated funds as individuals or as members of Civil War Roundtables or other nonprofit organizations.

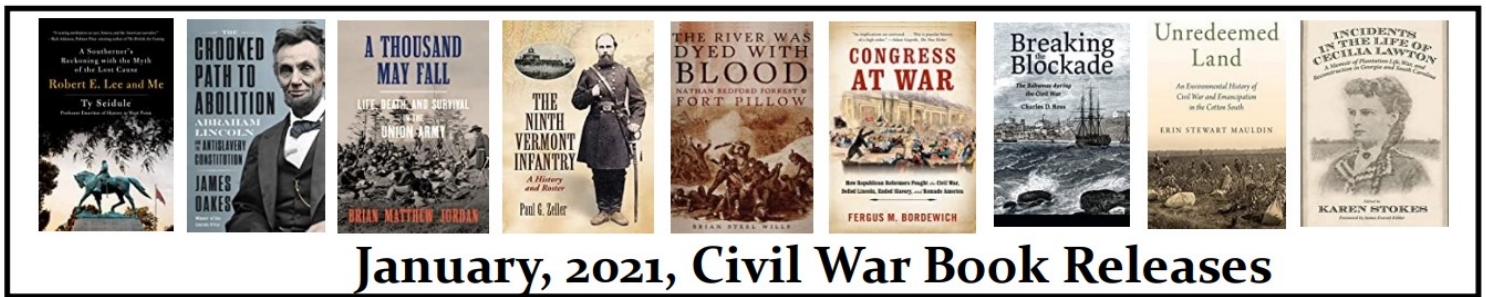
Fighting resumed the next day, at 4 p.m., near the banks of the Stones River. A successful Confederate attack drove the Union troops in headlong retreat across the river. Once again, the Confederates were met by Union cannon. Firing more than 100 rounds per minute at close range, the cannon mowed down the Confederates. The roar continued for more than 10 minutes and shook the earth under the men's feet. A soldier from Florida reported:

"The nearest the [Yankees] came to getting me was shooting a hole in my pants and cutting hair off my right temple. I know a peck of balls passed in less than a yard of me... . The man in front of me got slightly wounded...the one on my right mortally and the one on my left killed." In less than an hour, 1,800 Confederates fell dead or wounded, and their earlier successful, dashing charge suddenly turned into a retreat. Two days later, Bragg withdrew in the midst of a cold winter rain.

Shortly after the battle, a Union soldier wrote: "Before this battle took place, the outlook for our country was very dark and threatening. Our armies had gained no signal [important] victories for many months, and there was very great danger that some of the Nations of Europe would recognize the Southern Confederacy, and that it would be impossible for us to maintain our blockade. Had General Rosecrans' Army been defeated at the battle of Stones River...it would not only have prolonged the War, but would have greatly increased our danger of conflicts with foreign countries."

Among the major engagements of the Civil War, the casualty percentage at Stones River is second only to the Battle of Gettysburg: More than 23,000 soldiers were killed, wounded, missing or captured. Rosecrans' army was so battered that it would not campaign again for six months; Bragg left 10,000 irreplaceable veterans in the cedar forests. Some men spent as many as seven agonizing days on the battlefield before help could reach them.

Although more of a draw than a victory, Stones River eased the terrible Union losses suffered during the Battle of Fredericksburg. Learning of the much-needed, strategic victory, Abraham Lincoln told Rosecrans, "... you gave us a hard victory which, had there been a defeat instead, the nation could scarcely have lived over."



We share, for informational purposes only, what is most certainly a partial online listing of book releases marked for a January, 2021, release.

“Unredeemed Land: An Environmental History of Civil War and Emancipation in the Cotton South,” by Erin Stewart Mauldin | Jan 1

“Congress at War: How Republican Reformers Fought the Civil War, Defied Lincoln, Ended Slavery, and Remade America,” by Fergus M. Bordewich | Jan 5

“The Crooked Path to Abolition: Abraham Lincoln and the Antislavery Constitution,” by James Oakes | Jan 12

“The River Was Dyed with Blood: Nathan Bedford Forrest and Fort Pillow,” by Brian Steel Wills Ph.D. | Jan 12

“Incidents in the Life of Cecilia Lawton: A Memoir of Plantation Life, War, and Reconstruction in Georgia and South Carolina,” by Karen Stokes | Jan 15

“The Ninth Vermont Infantry: A History and Roster,” by Paul G. Zeller | Jan 17

“Breaking the Blockade: The Bahamas during the Civil War,” by Charles D. Ross | Jan 15

“A Thousand May Fall: Life, Death and Survival in the Union Army,” by Brian Matthew Jordan | Jan 26

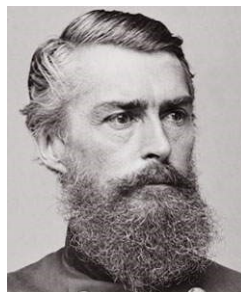
“Robert E. Lee and Me: A Southerner's Reckoning with the Myth of the Lost Cause,” by Ty Seidule | Jan 26

January 3, 1861: Delaware Rejects Secession



Two weeks after South Carolina voted to succeed from the Union, Delaware votes to remain, despite arguments to the contrary made by Henry Dickinson (pictured), a man who served a seven-year term as Vice Chancellor of the Northern District Chancery Court in Mississippi. Dickinson visited a joint session of the Legislature, after petitioning Governor Burton to do so, to argue the Southern cause. (At the time, Delaware was a slave state, but its freed Black population was far greater than its slave population (20,000 freed versus < 1,800 slaves)). Dickinson's speech was reportedly greeted with both applause and hisses.

January 31, 1862: U.S. Military Railroad Established



The U.S. Military Railroad was established as a separate agency to operate any rail lines seized by the government; its actions were limited to Southern rail lines captured during the course of the war. The organization benefitted greatly from the appointment of experienced railroad men from the private sector, like Herman Haupt (pictured). President Lincoln once accused Haupt as having rebuilt a railroad bridge in Virginia with nothing “... but cornstalks and beanpoles,” owing both to the sturdy bridge's flimsy-looking appearance and the short order in which the bridge had been repaired.

Print Raffle Preservation Fundraiser

Purchase your Print raffle tickets booklets today (10 chances for \$5) by sending your check, payable to "Civil War Round Table of Eastern Pa., Inc.," to: P. O. Box 333, Allentown, PA 18105. your tickets stubs will be returned to you by mail.



(Raffle items, below, from left, counterclockwise):

1. Surrender at Appomattox signing print; 2. Robert E. Lee print; 3. Union "General Service" Coat Button display; 4. "The Life of Billy Yank" and "The Life of Johnny Reb," by Bell Irvin Wiley (2-volume box set); 5. "Stonewall Jackson, The Legend and the Man" and "Stonewall Jackson, Seven Days to the Last March." by Lenoir Chambers (2-volume box set); 6. "The American Heritage Picture History of the Civil War (2-volume box set) ; 7. "The Civil War," by Shelby Foot (3-volume set); 8. "Grant and Lee, The Virginia Campaigns, 1864-1865," by William Frassanito (signed copy); 9. print of Stonewall Jackson, original by J.A. Elder, (original is in Fredericksburg); 10. chess set created by the National Historical Society; 11. print of the Battle of Fredericksburg; 12. lamp made by Barry Arnold

By the Numbers

Civil War Round Table of Eastern Pa., Inc.

Membership Update (*Jeff Gates*)

Our membership now stands at 41 (up from last month's report of 37). Currently, our membership roll is 26 people fewer than this time last year.

Paymaster Update (*Jim Duffly*)

Print Raffle Fundraiser: Total revenue to date from this fundraiser is \$340. The Campaign 43 target for this fundraiser is \$500. Proceeds will be used to support preservation projects.

Preservation donations: Thanks to the following individuals, who, combined, have donated \$515 to our preservation fund: Jeff Gates, Neil and Katherine Coddington, Kay Bagenstose, Carol Detweiler, Ed Oeschle, Paul Bartlett, Joe Riggs, John and Marie Maly, and Ed Root.

Recent CWRT Website Postings

Paul Bartlett

(www.cwrteasternpa.org/preservation)

Dec 24: Bloody Ravine at Williamsburg Civil War Battlefield Preserved for Posterity

Dec 19: Help Save Land at the “Gibraltar of the Valley”

Dec 19: Gaines’ Mill and Cold Harbor Preservation Opportunity

Nov 11: 80 to 1 Match for Southern Revolutionary War Battlefields

(www.cwrteasternpa.org/news)

Dec 17: Adams County Historical Society to Build New Exhibit Gallery, Archives and Education Center

Dec 12: VMI Removes Stonewall Jackson Statue

Nov 25: Washington’s Thanksgiving Proclamation of 1789

Nov 24: Lincoln’s Thanksgiving Proclamation 1863



From the CWRT of Eastern Pa. website

GAR Civil War Museum of Philadelphia Receives

\$50,000 Gift

Joe Perry, President and Librarian,

Grand Army of the Republic Civil War Museum recently announced that the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War (DUVCW) have donated \$50,000 to the museum’s new building fund. The DUVCW is a long-time supporter of the museum. **The Civil War Roundtable of Eastern Pa., Inc. made a \$500**

preservation donation to the Museum using Campaign 42 funds.

Don’t Forget!

CARES Act Tax Benefits End December 31st

If you plan to take the standard deduction on your 2020 income tax return, you can ALSO deduct up to \$300 in donations made to 501(c)(3) nonprofits like the CWRT of Eastern Pa., Inc.

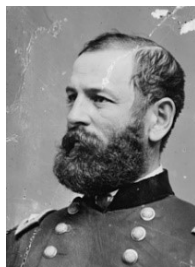
(Membership fees are also a tax-deductible expense.)

You can indicate a donation, over and above your membership fee, right on the membership form, a copy of which is included on page 8 of this newsletter issue. Any additional funds received will be used in support of preservation projects. Thank you.

Gettysburg Winter (Virtual) Lecture Series Begins January 16

This free, digital series will feature service rangers and historians from both the Gettysburg National Military Park and the Eisenhower National Historic Site. These individuals will examine some of the treasured artifacts on display at these two sites. The series will begin on January 16 and run through March 27 on the [Gettysburg National Military Park Facebook page](#). Presentations will be archived on the Park’s website (www.nps.gov/gett).

January 21, 1863: Union General Fitz John Porter Dishonorably Discharged



Porter was accused by Generals John Pope and Irwin McDowell of incompetence and slander and blamed for the Union defeat at the Second Battle of Bull Run. (Some say Pope and McDowell used Porter as a scapegoat to cover their own incompetence.) Porter would spend most of the next 20 years fighting to clear his name. An official review in 1879 concluded Porter was not only innocent of wrongdoing but had likely prevented a more serious defeat. A full pardon was granted in 1882 by President Chester Arthur.

Civil War Round Table of Eastern Pa., Inc.

REENLISTMENT FORM

It is re-enlistment time for the 2020-2021 Campaign! Again, our numbers have decreased over the past year and the Roundtable can use your help in acquiring some new recruits. If you know of anyone who has an interest in the Civil War, please pass his or her name and address along to me. I will send them a few complimentary newsletters and an introductory letter to the Round Table. Better yet, bring them to our next dinner meeting or excursion.

Dues are payable now!

2020-21 dues are \$25.00 for individuals, \$10.00 for full-time students.

Please complete the form below and mail it with your check payable to CWRT of Eastern PA, Inc. to:
P. O. Box 333, Allentown, PA 18105.

Thanks for your support. Questions? Contact Jeff Gates (610) 966-5773 or jefgates@ptd.net

Name _____	How many years have you been a member? _____
Address _____	
How did you hear of this organization? _____	
What is your occupation/profession? _____	
Phone _____	E-mail address _____
Reenactor? (Yes/No) If yes, Unit(s)? _____	
(If known), please give name(s) and unit(s) of ancestor(s) who fought in the Civil War: _____ _____	
My major interest is: _____	
Would you be willing to speak to groups on some aspect of the Civil War? (Yes/No)	
Would you be interested in participating in Round Table activities? (Yes/No) If yes, please specify below: ___ public functions ___ political action ___ preservation ___ living history other _____	

(Please make your check payable to CWRT of Eastern Pa., Inc.)

___ Individual membership (\$25.00) ___ Full-time student membership (\$10.00)

___ I am also enclosing a donation in the amount of \$_____ to benefit our CWRT's preservation fund.
(Use the blank space provided below if you are making a donation in memory of an individual):

**The Civil War Round Table of Eastern, Pa., Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
Your membership dues are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.**