

April, 2021

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*We strive for accuracy. But if you see something that doesn't look right, please contact us. Sources for newsletter content available upon request.*

## From the Brigade Commander

There's lots of good news to share this month.

The American Battlefield Trust (ABT) has notified us that our Campaign 42 donations qualify our CWRT to remain a Color Bearer in 2021 and "... be honored for the extraordinary commitment [we] bring to the mission of saving our nation's most hallowed ground." The ABT has also named our CWRT to a new recognition category, a 20-Year Club. This honor recognizes "singular and extraordinary dedication to saving America's history." Clearly, your financial support continues to make a lasting difference to the preservation efforts of our nation's most hallowed ground and museums that safeguard and exhibit Civil War-era artifacts. And with three months still remaining in Campaign 43, I'm pleased to report that we have exceeded Campaign 42 donations by almost 35 percent and have met our budgeted goal for our annual print raffle. Words cannot express the pride I feel in what we're accomplishing—together.

Not forgetting the second part of our mission, if you were unable to attend our March meeting, you missed a great program. I'm not sure which "speaker" was more impressive: our Ed Root, as the interviewer, or Professor Miller, as the interviewee and guest speaker. The depth and breadth of Mr. Miller's knowledge about the Vicksburg campaign, including many of little-known facts, is amazing. If you weren't able to join in, no worries. We've got three more presentations lined up for Campaign 43, and I hope to see you (or hear from you, by phone). We've also got a field trip in the works, which you can read about inside. While you're there, you'll also find articles and tidbits that cover several important April happenings, each with a Civil War twist. (Although this year's tax day was moved to May.) Enjoy!

*Barry*

The Civil War Round Table of Eastern Pa., Inc. is a proud leader of America's battlefield preservation movement. It has been designated by the American Battlefield Trust as a Top 300 Lifetime Donor, a Color Bearer, and a member of ABT's 20-Year Club.

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

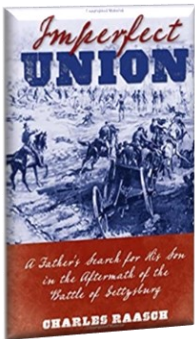
**Mark Your Calendar, and Join Us as Chuck Raasch presents:  
“Imperfect Union: A Father’s Search for His Son in the  
Aftermath of the Battle of Gettysburg”**

**Tuesday, April 6, 2021, 7:00 p.m. start** (Zoom meeting)



Our April speaker, Chuck Raasch, will share a story about *New York Times* correspondent Sam Wilkeson and his 19-year-old son, Lieutenant Baynard Wilkeson. We’ll learn about Baynard’s courage under fire and Sam’s search for Baynard in the battle’s bloody aftermath. Later, as Sam sits next to his dead son, he writes one of the greatest battlefield dispatches in American history.

Chuck Raasch is the chief Washington correspondent for the St. Louis Post Dispatch. He was also one of the five original long-form writers for USA Today and a national correspondent for Gannett News Service for 25 years.



“... an important book that contains an aerial and intimate view of the human cost of the greatest battle ever fought in North America.”

**Ken Burns**

“... the poignant story of a war correspondent, who wrote one of the most eloquent reports of the battle of Gettysburg, and his son Baynard. ... Even if you think you know everything there is to know about Gettysburg, you will find something new here.”

**James McPherson**

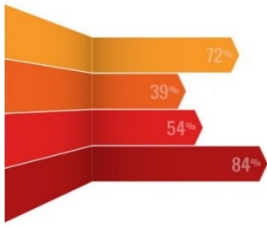
Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century, **April Fool’s Day**—once more commonly known as All Fools Day, was an occasion for hoaxes, merriment and practical jokes. Even the rupture of the Union provided no respite; if anything, anxious citizens seem to have relished the opportunity to break the tension.

*“Yesterday was ‘All Fools’ day, and it was generally observed in the army,” a Pennsylvanian wrote. “Our camp was in a roar from sunrise till ‘tattoo’ with the cracking of practical jokes.”* Not even the company captain was immune: His long-awaited appointment to colonelcy arrived that day, purporting to have come from the War Department—and it was not until after he had treated everyone to multiple rounds of celebratory drinks that his brother officers confessed to the forgery.

**Sign up Today!**

To register for April’s virtual CWRT meeting, contact Jim Duffy at [Duffysocwk@aol.com](mailto:Duffysocwk@aol.com) or 610-253-4549 (email preferred) **prior to 12:00 p.m. on April 5**. If you register by/before the deadline, you will receive an invitation via email that will include the information you will need to enter the virtual meeting room via the internet or telephone.

**Lecture Fee Payment Reminder:** In these unprecedented times, we understand how easy it is to forget how things used to work. This is a friendly reminder that **the standard \$5 per person lecture fee assessed to CWRT meeting attendees remains in force**, even though we can’t meet in person. (Back in the “good old days,” your \$25 meeting fee was split: \$20 went to the hotel; \$5 helped to offset speaker and other operating costs and/or generate preservation funds.) Please make payments to **CWRT of Eastern Pa., Inc.** and mail your check to P. O. Box 333, Allentown, PA 18105. And kindly indicate “lecture fee” in the note section of your check. Thank you!



## By the Numbers: The Civil War Round Table of Eastern Pa.

### Membership Update (*Jeff Gates*)

Campaign 43 membership renewals are up to 83 percent. We welcome new members, Bill Duffy and John Duffy, to our CWRT.

### Paymaster Update (*Jim Duffy*)

**Print raffle fundraiser:** Campaign 43 revenue for this fundraiser remains at \$450. There's still plenty of time to purchase tickets. See Page 7 to see the great prizes being offered.

**Preservation donations:** Since our last newsletter, the following CWRT members have made a preservation donation:

Dr. Gerald Sherwin, Joe Riggs, and Marie and John Maly. Total donations for Campaign 43 now stand at \$2,405. Thank you.

Thanks to the 26 individuals who "tuned in" or "dialed in" to our March meeting!

## Our First-of-the-Campaign Field Trip!!

**Saturday, May 1, 7 a.m. – 4 p.m.**  
(Rain Date: Saturday, May 8)

Planning is underway to finalize an all-day field trip to Gettysburg:

**In the morning**, we'll visit the Spangler Farm with our December meeting's speaker, Ron Kirkwood.

**In the afternoon**, our May speaker, Mark Snell, will talk about the impact that the World War I training grounds had on the sacred soil of battle.

The chance to (finally!) get together in a safe way is exciting; stay tuned for more details in the weeks ahead.

## Recent CWRT Website Postings (*Paul Bartlett*)

([www.cwrteasternpa.org/news](http://www.cwrteasternpa.org/news))

**Mar 16:** National Park Service Expands Protected Historic Battlefields in Pennsylvania by 73 Acres

**Mar 5:** Gettysburg NMP's (online) Winter Lecture Series

**Mar 3:** Black Influence in Gettysburg (first in a series)

**Mar 2:** Confederate Memorials Serve a Role in National Parks (Oped)

**Feb 27:** Relocating a Confederate Statue: One Town's Plan

**Feb 26:** Gettysburg NMP Preservation and Rehabilitation Continues through Pandemic

**Feb 23:** The Future of Confederate Monuments

**Feb 23:** 'The Black Civil War Soldier' by Philadelphia's Deborah Willis Honors Freedom Fighters

**Feb 19:** Black History Month Commemorated at Gettysburg NMP and Eisenhower NHS

([www.cwrteasternpa.org/preservation](http://www.cwrteasternpa.org/preservation))

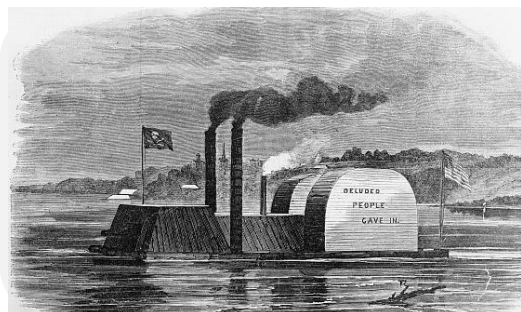
**Mar 19:** Six Acres Preserved at Bentonville

**Mar 5:** Adams County Historical Society Capital Campaign for New Building

**Mar 5:** Help Preserve 95 Acres at Mansfield, The Wilderness, and First Deep Bottom

**Mar 5:** Saved! 49 Acres at Gettysburg

**Feb 18:** 60 Acres Saved at Fort Blakely



## Admiral Porter's "Dummy" Frightening the Rebels at Vicksburg

This illustration of a phony ironclad, made from wood and meant to fool Confederate batteries on the Mississippi River at Vicksburg into wasting ammunition, appeared in the April, 1863, issue of *Harper's Weekly*.



## Abraham Lincoln and Our “Unfinished Work”

by Alan Y. Lowcher

A few years ago, I was a panelist in a continuing legal education program entitled, “Abraham Lincoln: 15 Captivating Stories from His Law Practice.” The main room was packed with lawyers, as were the simulcast rooms. The questions the attendees were asking made it clear to me that their interest was more about Lincoln than it was about earning education credits. Of course, it’s natural for lawyers want to claim Lincoln for themselves: he was one of us. But 26 of 46 Presidents studied or practiced law. So, what makes Lincoln the standout? Why have hundreds of statues and memorials been erected to him, both here and abroad? And why, with an estimated 16,000 already-published titles about Lincoln, would dozens of new books on the subject be written each year?

Polls taken over the last 65 years consistently rank Abraham Lincoln among the top three of US Presidents (the other two are George Washington and Franklin D. Roosevelt). Most of these polls were conducted among historians; presidents were rated on several categories, including leadership, accomplishments, crisis management, political skill, character, integrity. But the polling conducted, whether it be with liberals, conservatives or John Q. Public also returned No. 1 ratings for Lincoln. When all poll results are considered, more than 80 percent of Americans gave a favorable rating to Lincoln. Only George Washington surpasses Lincoln in the hearts and minds of Americans.

### Lincoln’s Enduring Popularity, Relevance and Our “Unfinished Work”

Writing on the occasion of the bicentennial of Lincoln’s birth, historian James McPherson pondered the “why” question of Lincoln’s enduring popularity and ranking as our greatest president. He posited several theories:

- Lincoln took office facing the greatest crisis of any President: a nation divided and soon to be engaged in a civil war “testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure.” His leadership and single-minded determination to assure the survival of the “experiment” begun in 1776 ensured the nation would live.
- Lincoln’s essentially military action, authorizing the seizure of enemy property (slaves), deprived the South of the manpower it needed to sustain the war and brought the power of the Federal government to bear to attack the “monstrous injustice of slavery.” These efforts, culminating in the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1865, assured Lincoln’s place in history.
- Lincoln the westerner, who grew up in a log cabin, split rails, piloted a flatboat on the Mississippi, worked as a store keeper and postmaster, read the law and became a successful trial attorney, a one-term Congressman, and then President, epitomized the uniquely American belief that if you work hard, you can go as far as your energy, intelligence and talents can take you. This opportunity for self-improvement was Lincoln’s definition of equality, which is also why, in addition to his moral aversion to the institution, he opposed slavery. To him, slavery was the antithesis of this definition of “equality.”
- And of course, Lincoln was a superb craftsman of the written word. As a lawyer, he wrote concisely and with persuasion. As President, McPherson observed, “Lincoln had the unique ability to write for both the eye and the ear,” as witnessed in the closing lines of his first inaugural address, the opening lines of the Gettysburg Address, and, of course, his second inaugural address.

McPherson was surely right when he said “[e]ven if his deeds were to be forgotten, his words will live as long as there is a United States.” And finally, Lincoln’s violent death, at a time he should have been savoring the fruits of victory, assured the martyred president’s immortality.

*(continued on page 6)*



## War and Peace Across the Aprils

April is a cruel month in the annals of American military history, beginning with a cry of warning from a silver-smith on horseback.

British troop movement

toward the arsenal at Concord, Massachusetts, spurs Paul Revere north from Boston on April 18, 1775, to “alarm” the colonial militia. William Dawes and Samuel Prescott help spread the word; the following day, alerted Minutemen engage the British at Lexington and Concord, and the American Revolution’s “shot heard around the world” is fired.

Ninety years later, Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrenders his Army of Northern Virginia to Union General Ulysses Grant at Appomattox Court House, April 9, 1865. Their “gentlemen’s agreement” allows Southern soldiers to return home and signals the coming end of America’s bloodiest conflict.

Eighty years later, on April 30, 1945, German Führer Adolf Hitler shoots himself in his Berlin bunker as Allied troops approach in the final weeks of WWII in Europe.

And although U.S. forces had withdrawn from Vietnam in 1973, it was Marine and Air Force helicopter airlifts, dubbed Operation Frequent Wind, which rescued 7,000 American and Vietnamese civilians as Saigon fell on April 29, 1975, brought the 20-year war to a close. The last helicopter departs Saigon the next day.

## A New Approach to the ‘Month of Reckoning?’

A satirical article, published in 2005 by *Smithsonian*, took the appearance of a “kinder, gentler” tax form under development by the IRS to “win the hearts and minds of ordinary taxpayers.” A sampling of questions follows:

- Name? Address? Social Security number? Favorite color?
- Total wages, salaries and tips? Total wages, salaries and tips you deserved?
- Can you name the commanders of the Army of the Potomac?
- Which U.S. general was known as Old Fuss and Feathers?

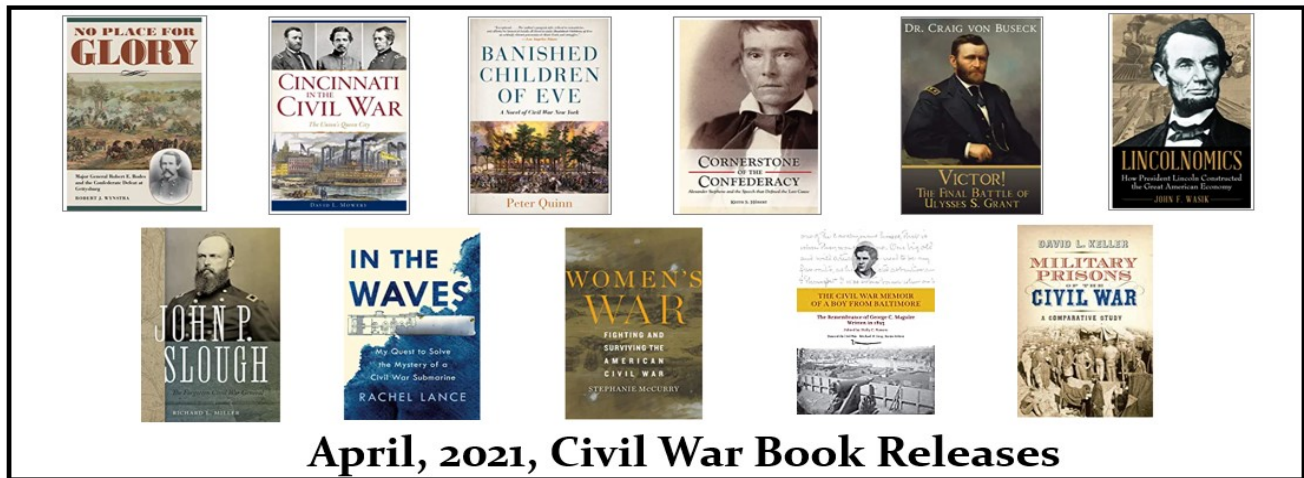
The form also included a helpful tip for how to meet someone new: Forget the bar scene. Why not include a recent photo with your tax return? Maybe we can help. After all, we know *everybody!*

**April 12, 1865:**

## Lincoln Delivers His Final Public Speech

Two days after General Robert E. Lee surrendered following the Battle of Appomattox Courthouse, the anticipation that the President would speak drew an immense throng to the White House, filling up the grounds in front of the mansion and obstructing the sidewalks for two blocks. Men and women gathered and stood in ankle-deep mud that had been created by the April rains. The Executive Mansion was brilliantly illuminated; the assemblage, enthusiastic and in thorough good humor. Banners streamed and bands played. The President showed himself at the window over the door and was received with tremendous and continued applause, as was Mrs. Lincoln, when, accompanied by some friends, she appeared at a neighboring window. Before he began his last speech, Lincoln told the band outside to play “Dixie,” about which he said, “Our adversaries over the way attempted to appropriate it, but I insisted yesterday we had fairly captured it.”

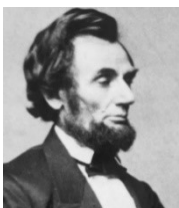
Among the throng gathered to hear Lincoln’s speak was a white supremacist and Confederate activist named John Wilkes Booth, who knew Lincoln’s announcement would mean full citizenship for African Americans. He swore, “That is the last speech he will make,” and made good on the threat—assassinating the president three days later.



*We share, for informational purposes only, what is most certainly a partial listing of books earmarked for an April, 2021, release.*

- “John P. Slough: The Forgotten Civil War General” | Richard L. Miller | April 1
- “Cornerstone of the Confederacy: Alexander Stephens and the Speech that Defined the Lost Cause” Keith Hebert | April 2
- “Victor! The Final Battle of Ulysses S. Grant” | Dr. Craig von Buseck | April 6
- “Banished Children of Eve: A Novel of Civil War New York” | Peter Quinn | April 6
- “No Place for Glory: Major General Robert E. Rodes and the Confederate Defeat at Gettysburg” | Robert J. Wynstra | April 6
- “In the Waves: My Quest to Solve the Mystery of a Civil War Submarine” | Rachel Lance | April 7
- “The Civil War Memoir of a Boy from Baltimore: The Remembrance of George C. Maquire” | Holly I. Powers | April 12
- “Lincolnomics: How President Lincoln Constructed the Great American Economy” | John F. Wasik | April 13
- “Women’s War: Fighting and Surviving the American Civil War” | Stephanie McCurry | April 15
- “Cincinnati in the Civil War: The Union's Queen City” | David L. Mowry | April 19
- “Military Prisons of the Civil War” | David L. Keller | April 28

*(Continued from page 4)*



And so, on the month of his untimely death, we remember Abraham Lincoln. For us and for historians, Lincoln matters. He guided the country through the crucible of civil war; we emerged a stronger, although still imperfect, nation. His leadership skills, determination, ability to compromise, fundamental fairness and integrity are worthy of study and emulation by today’s politicians and leaders of all stripes. There is something there for average Americans, too, in Lincoln’s words that should inspire us to be “governed by the better angels of our nature.” Lincoln’s birthday, as with Martin Luther King Jr. Day, should be a time of reflection on what these men achieved—and imagining what they might have achieved had they lived a full life.

I urge you to consider spending a day at Gettysburg, the venue of what is perhaps Lincoln’s greatest speech. Make your way past the Pennsylvania monument to the monument erected in memory of the officers and soldiers of the First New Jersey Brigade, and consider the following:

*(continued on page 7)*



## Print Raffle Preservation Fundraiser

Purchase your raffle ticket 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, (the original is in Fredericksburg) (donated by Jeff Heller); 10. chess set created by the National Historical Society; 11. print of the Battle of Fredericksburg; 12. lamp made by Barry Arnold

(Continued from page 6)

“... when the 1<sup>st</sup> New Jersey Brigade monument was constructed and dedicated on the battlefield of Gettysburg in 1888, in what likeness was the actual monument constructed?” A watchtower. Why that? The war was long over by 1888, and the veterans gathered at the dedication, fewer in number, had had their fill of war. **Why would they want future generations to gaze upon, and ponder, a watchtower?** Because, it is for **“us, the living”**... to man the watchtowers now ... light the watchfires ... and to remind ... instill ... and teach generations to come of the sacrifices made by so many ... over such a long time ... maintain ...”a more perfect union.” Lincoln’s legacy—and their legacy—should inspire each of us to redouble our efforts as Americans to keep history alive and relevant. This is our “unfinished work.”

*The 7’ tall granite watchtower honors the five regiments of the New Jersey Brigade, one of the few Union brigades made up entirely of regiments from the same state.*



## Civil War Round Table of Eastern Pa., Inc. Campaign 43 REENLISTMENT FORM 2020-2021 Dues

**Individuals: \$25.00      Full-time student: \$10.00**

**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.**

Know of anyone who has an interest in the Civil War? Feel free to pass along a copy of this form **OR** pass along his or her name and address to me, and I will send them a few complimentary newsletters and an introductory letter to our Round Table. Thanks for your support.

**Questions?** Contact Jeff Gates (610) 966-5773 or [jefgates@ptd.net](mailto: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.**