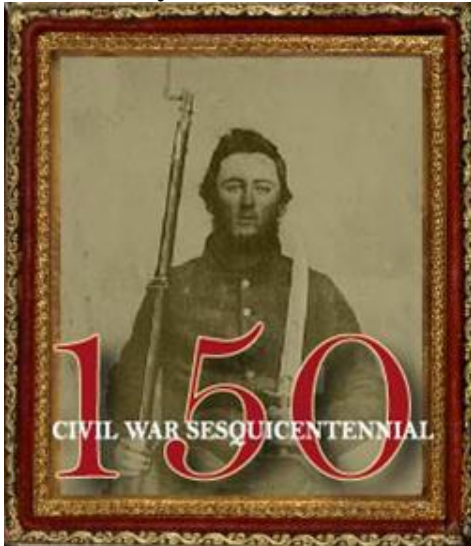


150th Anniversary of the American Civil War



Winter on the Potomac

Cape May County Civil War Round Table Newsletter December 2012

2012 Meeting Schedule

NEW MEETING LOCATION!!

We are now meeting in the Jury Room at the New
Courthouse near the Public Library

6 Dec: Pot Luck Christmas Party; will be at the Jury Room.
Cost will be approximately \$10.

2013 Meeting Schedule

No meetings in January or February 2013

21 March: Refreshments:

18 April: Dick Simpson will be back to tell us about “*The 2nd Vermont Brigade; Gettysburg Heroes.*” Refreshments:

16 May:

20 June:

18 July:

15 August:

19 September:

17 October:

21 November:

?? December:

CMCCWRT Officers for 2012/2013

President: John Burke
40 Secluded Lane, Rio Grande, NJ 08210
609-408-8238 = NEW PHONE NUMBER
jwburke@comcast.net

Vice President: Lou Bishop Jr.

21 Schoolhouse Ln, Cape May Court House, NJ 08210
609-463-9277 or 741-5438
southwilriseagain@aol.com

Secretary: Pat Munson-Siter

42 Franklin Ave., Villas, NJ 08251-2407
609-287-5097
ladysymitar@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Jim Marshall

202 Bartram Ln., Ocean City, NJ 08226
609-398-6924
jim@jimocnj.com or James.Marshall@prufoxroach.com

**REMINDER:
DUES FOR 2012 ARE DUE NOW!!!!
Send to Jim Marshall, address above**

Minutes of the Business Meeting of the CMCCWRT 15 November 2012

President Burke brought the meeting to order. We held a moment of silence for those standing in harm's way to protect us. President Burke then had our two guests introduce themselves.

Secretary Munson-Siter read the minutes from the last meeting. One correction made to minutes; Old Baldy courses are in Blackwood NJ, not Blackwood Co. NJ. Motion made to accept minutes as corrected, seconded and passed.

Treasurer Marshall gave his report, motion made and passed to accept report and file for audit. Reminder that dues are due. If you can't pay them at the December meeting, please mail them to Jim. If you have not paid by the March meeting in 2013, the March Newsletter will be the last issue you will receive.

Elections – there being no one who wants to contest the current slate of officers continuing in their present positions, a motion was made to accept the current slate of officers for 2013. No one opposed the motion, election by acclamation verified.

Lou Bishop is making arrangements for food for the Christmas party. He expects the cost to be about \$10 per person, payable at the door.

Efforts are being made to insure we can continue to meet in our current meeting place in 2013. We should have better information at the December meeting.

On 15 December, there will be a Salem County “Military Time Line” at Ft. Mott, from 6 to 11 pm. The timeline will cover military events from the Revolutionary War through Vietnam. The Civil War portion will include a re-enactment of a prisoner exchange.

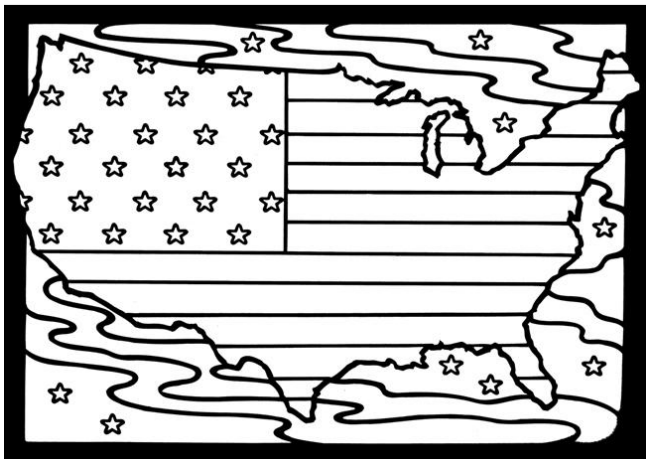
Andy Lolli has a copy of *The Class of 1846* for the drawing tonight. He also has several sets of back issues of Civil War magazines. They will sell for \$5 a set, all monies to go into the donation jar for Civil War preservation efforts.

Sue Gibson attended the meeting. She will need help loading up the PA equipment belonging to the Round Table, and

also has some Civil War VHS tapes that have been donated for drawings or other donation efforts. She also has some of the Time Life series on the Civil War that can also be used for our efforts to raise money for preservation programs. Several people volunteered to help her load up the equipment so it will be available to be used by future presenters. She suggested that if we no longer need it, the Round Table might sell it to raise more funds for preservation. Idea tabled for the moment, as the jury room is large enough that some presenters may well prefer to have the PA system available.

There being no further old or new business to be brought up, a motion was made, seconded and approved. Marty Runner began his presentation on his experience as an extra during the filming of *Gettysburg*.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia A. Munson-Siter
Secretary, CMCCWRT



Civil War Timeline for January

1861

- 9 USS Star of the West fired on in Charleston Harbor
- 9 Mississippi secedes
- 10 Florida secedes
- 11 Alabama secedes
- 19 Georgia secedes
- 29 Kansas admitted as 34th state

1862

- 19 Battle of Mill Springs (KY)

1863

- 1 Emancipation Proclamation takes effect

1865

- 15 Fort Fisher falls to Union forces



Civil War Related Events January 2013

- 1 **DC** ★ 150 Special display of the original Emancipation Proclamation at the National Archives (East Rotunda Gallery) 10 am-5 pm Sunday, 10 am-noon Monday and 10 am-5 pm Tuesday. Free. www.archives.gov
- 1-2 **TN** ★ 150 Anniversary programs commemorating the Battle of Stones River at the Stones River. Talks and tours at the Stones River National Battlefield in Murfreesboro. Free. www.nps.gov/stri
- 13 **VA** Walking tour of Fort Boykin, Confederate fort on the James River at 7410 Fort Boykin Trail near Smithfield. 3 pm. Free. 757-357-0115.
- 18 **VA** Symposium: "Lee-Jackson." Speakers on historical importance and character of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson as well as their ongoing significance and the controversial aspects of their legacies. 1-6 pm, Lexington Holiday Inn Express, 880 N Lee Hwy, Lexington. www.leejacksonday.webs.com
- 19 **VA** Lee-Jackson Day in Lexington. Free events: 10 am wreath laying at Stonewall Cemetery, 11 am parade, memorial service in Lee Chapel at noon. Ticketed events: Luncheon and ball also scheduled. www.leejacksonday.webs.com
- 21 **VA** Stonewall Jackson Birthday Celebration. Open house, free tours of the house, cake and ice cream at the Stonewall Jackson House in Lexington. 9 am-5 pm. www.stonewalljackson.com
- 26 **VA** Book Talk, *Civil War in Northern Virginia 1861* by William Connery, 10 am. Civil War Interpretive Center at Historic Blenheim, 3610 Old Lee Hwy, Fairfax. 703-591-0560.
- 27 **VA** Curator's talk, "Civil War in Isle of Wight County,"

at the Isle of Wight County Museum, 103 Main St, Smithfield. 2:30 pm. Free. 757-356-1223.



Chase commemoration: 'Both sides' salute 150th anniversary
by Marcus E. Howard
mhoward@mdjonline.com
April 13, 2012

MARIETTA — There were no hard feelings Thursday when the descendants of Capt. William Fuller, conductor of The General locomotive, and Jacob Parrott and Wilson Brown, members of the Andrews Raiders, met to watch the re-premiere of the 1956 Walt Disney "The Great Locomotive" movie at the Strand Theatre in Marietta.

The film's re-premiere kicked off four days of events being conducted in Marietta to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Great Locomotive Chase, which occurred on April 12, 1862. The city of Kennesaw and Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History hosted a number of commemorative events Thursday in Kennesaw.

Retired bankers and cousins Wilbur Kurtz III, 71, of Marietta, and Bill Fambrough, 66, of Madison, are the great-grandsons of Fuller. Gordon Smith, 72, a farmer in Urbana, Ohio, and Duane Cordrey, 45, of Mount Airy, Md., are the great-grandson and great-grandnephew, respectively, of Parrott and Brown, whose children married.

Both sides said their families are extremely proud to be connected to the event. The men all said they have been very familiar with the story of the locomotive chase from the time they were small children.

"Since right after I could walk," Fambrough said.

He said he hoped the celebration sparks more interest in history among the general public.

"It commemorates an event that demonstrated extraordinary bravery and tenacity on both sides of the conflict that day," Fambrough said before the re-premiere. "They're heroes, both sides. I think anything that serves to preserve history, such as this tonight, is a good thing because quite frankly there's generational slippage and interest in historical events."

The Andrews Raiders' descendants have been in Kennesaw several times before, but Thursday was the first time they visited Marietta. Earlier in the day, they journeyed by railway to Ringgold, in north Georgia, on the same route their ancestors took on their planned mission of destruction along the railroad toward Chattanooga.

"It was probably a day like this, the leaves were turning out and of course the mountains and scenery were beautiful," said Cordrey, a Northrop Grumman program manager. But "I'm sure they weren't so

much focused on the scenery, as much as they were just trying to get their mission accomplished."

Marietta Mayor Steve Tumlin said it's great to see people in the area turn a bitter event into a source of strength that many are proud of. He said the 1956 Southern premiere of "The Great Locomotive Chase," which he attended as a boy, was a big event for the community.

In a special presentation Thursday night, the Waggoner family of Ohio, descendants of Sgt. John M. Scott, donated the Medal of Honor that Scott, like some other Andrews Raiders, was awarded for his participation in the chase. It will become a permanent display at the Southern Museum. The Strand Theatre displayed Parrott's Medal of Honor for the night.

The Andrews Raiders were the first recipients of the Medal of Honor.

In downtown Kennesaw at 6 a.m. Thursday, officials and guests began the day with breakfast at the Trackside Grill about the same time The General had stopped in town for breakfast, 150 years earlier, before Andrews Raiders hijacked it and were pursued by Confederates.

In reference to the chilly early morning temperatures, Clarence Gooden, executive vice president of CSX, noted in his public remarks that if one were to steal a train, the best time to do so would be around noon.

After breakfast, a ceremony at the old train depot featured an official proclamation honoring the day, entertainment, a cannon firing and speeches by dignitaries. A CSX train with executive passenger cars was made available for public tours. The Southern Museum was also open for free throughout the day.

Lewis Bramlett of Kennesaw brought his two sons, Andrew, 6, and Daniel, 4, to the Kennesaw event. He said they visit the museum often and that his eldest son knows a lot about the chase.

"The boys love trains, especially The General," said Lewis.

Kennesaw Mayor Mark Mathews gave a brief history of the chase in his remarks to the crowd of more than 100 people Thursday morning. He noted how important the railroad has been throughout the history of Kennesaw, which was formerly called Big Shanty.

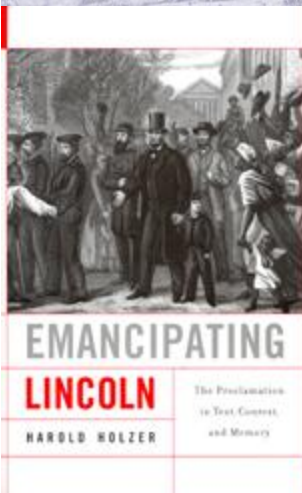
"It's personal, it's our story," he said of the chase. "This event today is all about honoring our past. Why is our history so important? There are many reasons to remember the Civil War: The war reshaped how the United States was and is defined. It showed the strength of the American democracy by keeping our young country together through its toughest time."

Russell S. Bonds of Marietta, author of the book, "Stealing the General: The Great Locomotive Chase and the First Medal of Honor," also spoke about the historic chase in his remarks before the film re-premiere in Marietta.

"Just to remind them that even though it was a relatively minor event in effect on the war, it really had lasting effects on American history," said Bonds, a Coca-Cola lawyer. "The main legacy, of course, being the Medal of Honor."

U.S. Rep. Phil Gingrey (R- Marietta), who represents much of the area in which the chase cut through, said the event has been something fun and interesting to research and read about. He attended the celebrations in Marietta and Kennesaw on Thursday.

"I'm glad that we're a Union and that the tragic situation was finally resolved and that we're a stronger nation now," the congressman said.



Emancipating Lincoln: The Proclamation in Text, Context, and Memory

by Holzer, Harold
Publisher: Harvard University Press
Retail Price: \$24.95
Issue: Summer 2012
ISBN: 978-0-674-06440-9

Putting Emancipation into Perspective

This volume gathers expanded versions of the Nathan I. Huggins lectures delivered in October 2010 by Harold Holzer. The title of the book has a double meaning: it refers to Lincoln's actions as emancipator and seeks to emancipate Lincoln from the judgments of posterity that have tended, especially in the later twentieth century, to cast aspersions upon the President and Proclamation. In three lively chapters, Holzer examines the ways in which Lincoln prepared the public for the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, probes the contours of the written document, and studies representations of emancipation in American iconography.

Holzer begins with "The Bow of Promise," a phrase coined by Frederick Douglass. He examines closely the period between July 22, 1862, when Lincoln first announced to his cabinet his intentions to issue an Emancipation Proclamation, and September 22, 1862, when he followed through and signed the preliminary decree. Holzer carefully traces the ever enlarging circle of politicians, editors, and friends who knew what was coming. They did so, he argues, because Lincoln intentionally sought to manipulate public opinion. "However primitive what we might call today the era's 'media platforms,'" Holzer insists, "Lincoln certainly knew the terrain and how to dominate it" (17).

Lincoln must have enjoyed the gamesmanship, hinting to friends (a letter to Reverdy Johnson), feinting in one direction while planning to go in another (his response to Horace Greeley), speaking harshly about the place of blacks in America so as to appease northern opponents (a meeting with a "Deputation of Free Negroes"). Although Holzer adds to the list of confidants those who recalled only years later being informed by the President (for example, most historians, including Holzer it

would seem, discount Hannibal Hamlin's claim of being the first to whom Lincoln showed the Proclamation, but then Holzer inexplicably finds "an element of truth" in the account), he offers an insightful and penetrating analysis of a critical and often overlooked period in the history of the Emancipation Proclamation.

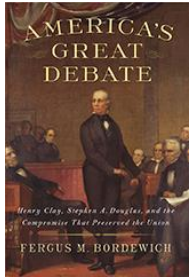
Holzer's second chapter, "Emancipator versus Pettifogger," ranges widely in trying to come to terms with the bland, legalistic language of the Emancipation Proclamation. Holzer's conclusion, "Lincoln wanted not a proclamation that would please literary critics but one that would survive challenges in the courts; not a declaration that would enthrall the enslaved but one that would seal the cooperation of the free," fits well with what has become the standard interpretation of the document as written text (99-100). Most important, he returns the Proclamation to the past by narrating the myriad ways in which it was revered at the time. Evoking Lincoln's Annual Message of 1862, Holzer invites us to "disenthral ourselves" from viewing the Proclamation "from the vantage point of the twenty-first century, from which perspective we cannot help concluding only that it was delayed, cold, insincere, halfhearted, and uninspiring" (125).

In "Sacred Effigies," the final chapter, Holzer returns to the visual history of the Emancipation Proclamation. No one knows more about these images or has done more to make lithographs, engravings, paintings, sculptures, and other artistic expressions central to our understanding of Lincoln and emancipation. Here, Holzer ranges beyond his seminal work in *The Lincoln Image* (co-authored with Gabor S. Boritt and Mark E. Neely, Jr.) and his authoritative essay "Picturing Freedom: The Emancipation Proclamation in Art, Iconography, and Memory". In keeping with the book's theme of not imposing current sensibilities upon the past, he argues that the image of the kneeling slave being raised by Lincoln's outstretched hands was viewed as radical at the time, though Frederick Douglass murmured at the unveiling of Thomas Ball's Emancipation Memorial in 1876 that it "showed the Negro on his knees when a more manly attitude would have been indicative of freedom."

Holzer's forays into late nineteenth and twentieth-century iconography are especially welcome. He discusses such images as a bronze relief from 1894 that shows Lincoln handing a rifle to a kneeling black soldier, and the mid-twentieth-century work of African-American artists William H. Johnson and Horace Pippin. Holzer mentions briefly some recent work; for example *Emancipation Approximation*, a series of twenty-six prints in the style of silhouette cutouts by Kara Walker, an African-American artist born in 1969. Twenty-first-century visual representations are beginning to draw the attention of scholars (see the essays by Elizabeth Young and W. Fitzhugh Brundage in Thomas J. Brown, editor, *Remixing the Civil War*); Holzer's groundbreaking work on nineteenth- and twentieth-century images will serve as a foundation for all future studies of artistic representation of Lincoln and emancipation.

With the sesquicentennial of the Emancipation Proclamation nearly upon us, *Emancipating Lincoln* serves as an excellent introduction to the interpretive challenges posed by the document and its place in history.

Louis P. Masur, Professor of American Studies and History at Rutgers University, is the author of *The Civil War: A Concise History* (2011) and *Lincoln's Hundred Days: The Emancipation Proclamation and the War for the Union* (2012).



America's Great Debate: Henry Clay, Stephen A. Douglas, and the Compromise that Preserved the Union

by Bordewich, Fergus M.
Publisher: Simon & Schuster
Retail Price: \$30.00
Issue: Summer 2012
ISBN: 978-1-4391-2460-4

Of all the attempts to avert the looming sectional crisis, the Compromise of 1850 offered the greatest hope that the North and South could find a peaceful settlement. Fergus M. Bordewich, journalist and author of *Bound for Caanan*, offers a well-written synthesis of the debate for the general reader, with particular attention to the near war between Texas and the U.S. over the boundary with New Mexico and the exhaustive debate in the Senate, led by Henry Clay. The legislative history offered here will be familiar to scholars. *America's Great Debate* chronicles the blow-by-blow development of Clay's "omnibus" bill admitting California as a Free State, forming the territory of New Mexico without reference to slavery, settling the boundary between New Mexico and Texas, securing slavery in the District of Columbia, while repealing the slave trade in that district, and drafting a bill to return fugitive slaves to their southern masters. This approach floundered on the radical demands of northern and southern "Ultras" who refused to compromise on the admission or exclusion of slavery into the West. While these factions were successful in defeating the "omnibus" approach to the compromise, Senator Stephen Douglas successfully navigated the bill through the Senate by breaking it into its component parts.

Bordewich devotes great attention to the polished oratory of the antebellum era. In contrast to the "pathetic" level of contemporary Congressional debate, Bordewich insists the high level of antebellum debate is far more engaging (3). Henry Clay and Daniel Webster are praised for their lofty rhetoric, while Thomas H. Benton and Henry Foote are criticized for personal invective and boredom-inducing histrionics. These Senators were actually all-too-human; their plans were frequently brought to despair by their monumental egos and parliamentary missteps. That these particular senators, all unionists, nearly destroyed their own attempts to save the Union through their personal hatred made their success all the more remarkable. By mid-way though the book, the reader will be wondering if Henry Clay will really find the needed votes for passage of his

Omnibus. When it fails, the sense of tragedy and impending secession is profound.

While Bordewich focuses on the Senate, he helpfully situates the debate amidst the politics of jingoism during and after the Mexican War. California, so often seen as the center of the crisis, was a mere sideshow to a looming war with Texas militants on the New Mexico frontier, who sought to annex Santa Fe. Southerners were so bent on expansion that they raised Filibustering expeditions like the disastrous López invasion of Cuba. This emphasis on the West is nicely complemented with attention to the presidencies of Zachary Taylor and Millard Fillmore. These men, so often neglected by antebellum historians, become surprisingly relevant to the debate. Taylor's intransigence over any expansion of slavery very nearly destroyed all hope of compromise. Fillmore, in contrast, liberally dispensed executive patronage during the House debate and likely secured passage of the territorial "omnibus." By situating the legislative history in its broader political and cultural milieu, Bordewich creates a fairly convincing argument that, but for the determination of a handful of statesmen, Civil War would have started in Texas, and spread to the South.

Despite its passage, the Compromise ultimately failed to gain the support of southern and northern people. Far from providing a binding settlement, he argues, "...the apparent peace that had been achieved by the compromise might really prove to be a means to new and unanticipated political wars" (345). The key requirement for an enduring bi-sectional compromise was the leadership of statesmen who were willing to treat their differences as political and technical, as Clay and Douglas did, rather than as constitutional and moral, as Abraham Lincoln and William Seward did. The compromise of 1850 consisted in territorial adjustments, not moral theorizing, and so common ground could be found. Most Senators agreed that California was entitled to statehood; most wanted a peaceful settlement to the Texas boundary question. They could not have reached agreement on whether popular sovereignty included the right to prohibit slavery in the West. The Unionists in 1850 were able to fudge the differences only with careful parliamentary maneuvering, which Bordewich makes intelligible with his lively prose.

America's Great Debate concludes, fittingly, with the deaths of Clay and Webster. One wonders if the demise of these legislative giants was one of the interior causes of the Civil War. Douglas, for a moment emerged as the next pre-eminent statesman by securing the Compromise of 1850. Unwittingly, he undid his achievement a mere four years later when he permitted the expansion of slavery in the Kansas-Nebraska act. Lincoln then challenged Douglas's position of prominence in the North by reframing the debate as a moral argument for free soil and against slavery. Douglas's finely-tuned policy compromises could not adequately answer this challenge. Neither could presidents like James Buchanan, "one of the most experienced and least capable men to ever sit in the White

House,” lay out a moral argument acceptable to both North and South (373).

A strength of the book is that it presents the debate over slavery in its proper context. The most effective political arguments were the moderate Whig defense of Union and the Democrats’ linkage of Manifest Destiny and slavery. While abolitionists like Frederick Douglass and William Seward are taken seriously today, Bordewich is clear that their contemporaries marginalized them in debate. In contrast, positions that today would be considered extreme, such as the defense of slavery as a positive good by “ultras” from the Deep South, are carefully digested from the speeches by John C. Calhoun and David Yulee. This careful attention to pro-slavery and moderate arguments helps the reader understand the limits of what was politically feasible in 1850.

Bordewich, then, correctly apprehends the roots of the Civil War in a moral debate over slavery. He neglects an equally significant set of constitutional debates. Southern nationalists like Calhoun claimed that “our right to go [West] with our property is unquestionable,” not simply because they believed slavery to be a blessing, but because they understood the U.S. Constitution to guarantee their property rights (61). Abolitionists, likewise, opposed the expansion of slavery as a violation of the “Higher Law,” to be sure. However, Bordewich neglects their Constitutional innovation—the argument that slavery violated the substantive rights of all Americans under the due process clause of the Constitution. His focus on the titanic conflicts between individual senators suggests that personality, rather than a constitutional disagreement about the nature of the Union, drove the North and the South further apart. Unfortunately, he treats constitutional theory as window dressing for racial argument; to wit, he claims that “the doctrine of states’ rights [was] invented largely as a firewall in defense of slavery” (15). In point of fact, New England Federalists were among the most prominent early defenders of states’ rights against what they perceived to be an aggressive Southern nationalism. In response to the Fugitive Slave Law, many northern state legislatures passed personal liberty laws under the theory that their states had the right to resist a southern-dominated national government. A full examination of the compromise, then, would take examine the constitutional nationalism of Southern “Ultras” who wanted both an empire of slavery and believed the U.S. Constitution granted it to them. Bordewich accurately portrays the southern pro-slavery tradition and the abolitionists’ rights critique of slavery; but misses the way that both sides used states’ rights theory to interpret the Constitution. Although this book does not fully develop the constitutional angle, *America’s Great Debate* still offers a lively and faithful legislative history, which places the Compromise into the context both of the sectional slavery debates and the coming of the Civil War.

Christian Esh is an Associate Professor of American History at Northwest Nazarene University. He is presently writing a monograph on Northern theories of Union before the Civil War.



The Picket By Ethel Len Beers

Ethel Lynn Beers was born Ethelinda Eliot in 1827 in Goshen NY. She married William Beers in 1846, and became Ethel Lynn Beers. She lived in both NY and NJ. Her poem *The Picket* was published in Harpers Magazine in 1861, and became known by the opening line, *All quiet along the Potomac tonight*. It has occasionally been attributed to a dead Confederate soldier who was found with a copy of it in his pocket. Ethel’s collected poems were published on 10 October 1879 as *All Quiet Along the Potomac and Other Poems*. She reluctantly published the poems, believing that when they were released, she would die. She passed away the day after the book went on sale.

“All quiet along the Potomac,” they say,
Except now and then a stray picket
Is shot, as he walks on his beat to and fro,
By a rifleman hid in the thicket.
’t is nothing – a private or two now and then
Will not count in the news of the battle;
Not an officer lost – only one of the men,
Moaning out, all alone, the death rattle.

All quiet along the Potomac tonight,
Where the soldiers lie peacefully dreaming,
Their tents in the rays of the clear autumn moon,
Or the light of the watch-fire, are gleaming.
A tremulous sigh of the gentle night-wind
Through the forest leaves softly is creeping;
While stars up above, with their glittering eyes,
Keep guard, for the army is sleeping.

There’s only the sound of the lone sentry’s tread,
As he tramps from the rock to the fountain,
And thinks of the two in the low trundle bed
Far away in the cot on the mountain.
His musket falls slack; his face, dark and grim,
Grows gentle with memories tender,
As he mutters a prayer for the children asleep,
For their mother, may Heaven defend her!

The moon seems to shine just as brightly as then,
That night, when the love yet unspoken
Leaped up to his lips – when low-murmured vows
Were pledged to be ever unbroken.
Then drawing his sleeve roughly over his eyes,
He dashed off tears that are welling,
And gathers his gun closer up to its place,
As if to keep down the heart swelling.

He passes the fountain, the blasted pine tree,
The footstep is lagging and weary;
Yet onward he goes, through the broad belt of light,
Toward the shade of the forest so dreary.

Hark! Was it the night-wind that rustled the leaves?
Was it moonlight so wondrously flashing?
It looked like a rifle..."Ha! Mary, good-bye!"
The red life-blood is ebbing and splashing.

All quiet along the Potomac tonight,
No sound save the rush of the river,
While soft falls the dew on the face of the dead
The picket's off duty forever...

SAVE HISTORY - NATIONAL GUARD MILITIA MUSEUM NEEDS OUR HELP

Closed until further notice due to the devastation from Hurricane Sandy

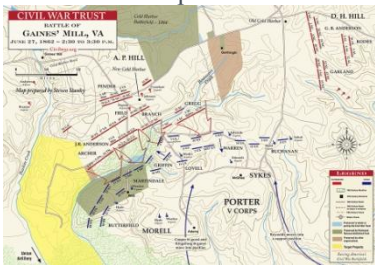
Commonwealth of Virginia, Civil War Trust Announce Completion of Landmark Gaines' Mill Preservation Effort PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP PROTECTS 285 ACRES ON THE BLOODIEST OF THE SEVEN DAYS' BATTLEFIELDS

(Mechanicsville, Va.) – This morning, representatives of the Civil War Trust, the nation's largest battlefield preservation organization, and the Commonwealth of Virginia came together to celebrate the successful completion of a \$3.2 million campaign to protect 285 acres of hallowed ground at Gaines' Mill, the bloodiest engagement of the Seven Days' Battles and Gen. Robert E. Lee's first major victory as commander of the Army of Northern Virginia. During the ceremony, held at the Watt House, on the Gaines' Mill unit of Richmond National Battlefield Park, Virginia Secretary of Transportation Sean T. Connaughton was recognized for the \$1.5 million transportation enhancement matching grant that made the landmark project possible.

BATTLEFIELDS

- [Gaines' Mill](#)

"I firmly believe that this monumental achievement at Gaines' Mill ranks among our organization's top three preservation success stories," said Trust president James Lighthizer. "Prior to this, only 65 acres of this crucial battlefield had been protected — with just one purchase, we have more than quintupled the amount of land at Gaines' Mill preserved forever."



According to Sec. Connaughton, the unique combination of tremendous historic significance and looming development threats made this project an ideal candidate for preservation through the transportation enhancement matching grant program. In its 1993 study, the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission gave Gaines's Mill a Priority I, Class A designation, marking it as one of 11 top candidates for preservation efforts in the nation. The \$1,521,443.07 grant awarded by Sec. Connaughton is among the largest ever

allocated from the Virginia transportation enhancement program for a historic preservation effort.

"The Commonwealth of Virginia is committed to making the permanent protection of historic and scenic landscapes like this one an important part of the sesquicentennial commemoration of the Civil War," said Connaughton. "A hallmark of this philosophy is our ongoing collaboration with the Civil War Trust, a partnership that is creating a legacy that will last for generations to come."

The scope of this preservation campaign, first announced in the waning days of 2011, dwarfs all earlier efforts at Gaines' Mill. The bulk of previously protected land was purchased in the 1920s by a group of dedicated Richmond residents — including legendary historian and Richmond News Leader editor Douglas Southall Freeman — calling themselves the Richmond Battlefield Park Corporation, who purchased 60 acres south of Boatwain's Creek that included a portion of the Union line. In 1932, the Corporation donated all of the land it had purchased at Gaines' Mill and other nearby battlefields to the Commonwealth of Virginia, creating a state park; four years later, the land was transferred to the National Park Service as the foundation for Richmond National Battlefield Park. No new land was protected at Gaines' Mill until the second half of the last decade, when the Richmond Battlefields Association saved 3 acres immediately north of the creek, and, in 2011, the Trust bought two more acres further to the east.

Because the entire 285-acre parcel lies within the authorized boundary of Richmond National Battlefield Park, the Trust intends that the land will be turned over to the National Park Service for long-term stewardship and interpretation. This and other Trust-owned properties in the Richmond area will be transferred as part of a larger initiative announced by Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar and NPS Director Jon Jarvis during an event at the Glendale Battlefield in February 2012.

"The inclusion of this truly historic land will be a tremendous boon to the Park," said superintendent Dave Ruth. "It will open up new opportunities for us to tell the incredible stories of this region during the tumultuous days of the Civil War era. For the first time, visitors will be able to retrace the dramatic Confederate charge of June 27, 1862 — by many accounts, the Robert E. Lee's largest assault of the war."



During the course of the Battle of Gaines' Mill — a rare instance where the Confederate army held a considerable numerical advantage — new Southern commander Gen. Robert E. Lee launched a number of attacks that failed to dislodge his foe. However, at 7:00 p.m., historians believe that Lee may have unleashed upwards of 32,000 men in 16 brigades in a powerful assault against the Federal lines — an attack that dwarfs the 12,500-man Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg. This portion of the Gaines' Mill battlefield also played a key role in the

development of aeronautical observation in military intelligence. During the battle, both armies had observation balloons aloft — the first such instance in American history — with the Union Intrepid launching from this vicinity.

Delegate Chris Peace, a long-time vocal advocate of battlefield preservation initiatives in the Old Dominion, was among the event's distinguished guests. "Civil War battlefields like Gaines' Mill are not only powerful reminders of our region's rich past, but they are also dynamic engines that help drive Virginia's future," said Peace. "These incredible sites draw many thousands of tourists each year, injecting vigor into our economy and providing proven and measurable benefits to our communities."

Virginia Director of Historic Resources Kathleen Kilpatrick elaborated further on the numerous benefits of battlefield preservation. "By working through public-private partnerships like the one we recognize today, we are able to make tremendous strides in setting aside some of our Commonwealth's most historic sites. Once preserved, these hallowed grounds provide inspirational and enlightening outdoor classrooms for students of all ages and, in many cases, safeguard sensitive environmental resources as well."



Cape May County Civil War Round Table, c/o

www.cmccwrt



Although its campaign to protect this land at Gaines' Mill has concluded, the Trust is currently engaged in active fundraising

efforts to save significant battlefield properties at Appomattox, Va., Bentonville, N.C., Cedar Mountain, Va., Chancellorsville, Va., Fredericksburg, Va., Kelly's Ford, Va., Perryville, Ky., Petersburg, Va., Sailor's Creek, Va., and Second Manassas, Va. To learn more about current fundraising projects and the Trust's ambitious sesquicentennial preservation effort, Campaign 150:

Our Time, Our Legacy, please visit

www.civilwar.org/campaign150.

The Battle of Gaines' Mill, fought June 27, 1862, was the second of the Seven Days' Battles, where the Confederates sought to turn back a Union force that had traveled up the Virginia Peninsula to arrive virtually at the gates of Richmond. After seizing the initiative and forcing his opponent, Maj. Gen. George McClellan to reevaluate his strategy, newly promoted Confederate commander Gen. Robert E. Lee was eager to press his advantage, but a series of disjointed assaults demonstrated the strength of the Union position. Once his ranks were significantly reinforced, Lee ordered a massive twilight assault; only the approaching darkness prevented a complete disaster for the Union. When the smoke cleared, the 15,500 casualties suffered at Gaines' Mill made it the second bloodiest battle of the war, up until that point, surpassed only by Shiloh, Tenn., two and a half months earlier.

The Civil War Trust is the largest nonprofit battlefield preservation organization in the United States. Its mission is to preserve our nation's endangered Civil War battlefields and to promote appreciation of these hallowed grounds. To date, the Trust has preserved more than 34,000 acres of battlefield land in 20 states, including 17,190 in Virginia. Learn more at www.civilwar.org, the home of the Civil War sesquicentennial.

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