

150th Anniversary of the Beginning of the Civil War



Lee statue, Monument Avenue, Richmond, Va

Cape May County Civil War Round Table Newsletter December 2010

www.cmccwrt.com

Tentative Dates for 2011 Meetings:

Jan & Feb: No Meetings

17 March

21 April

19 May

16 June

21 July

18 August

15 September

20 October

17 November

December date to be determined

If you end up missing a copy of the newsletter, or the post office tears your copy up, digital copies are posted on the Round Table website (cmccwrt.com).

CMCCWRT Officers for 2010 - 2011

President: Andy Lolli
17 Delaware Ave, Del Haven, NJ 08251
609-889-0061

Email: andylolli@comcast.net

1st Vice President: Suzanne Gibson
214 Exton Rd., Sommers Point, NJ 08244
609-927-9484
susiegirl618@msn.com

2nd Vice President: Lou Bishop Jr.
21 Schoolhouse Ln, Cape May Court House, NJ 08210
609-463-9277 or 741-5438
Email: sothwilriseagain@aol.com

Secretary: Pat Munson-Siter
42 Franklin Ave., Villas, NJ 08251
609-287-5097 / ladysymitar@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Jim Marshall
202 Bartram Lane, Ocean City, NJ 08226
609-398-6924/jim@jimocnj.com
Or James.Marshall@prufoxroach.com

Reminder:
DUES ARE NOW DUE!
Give or mail your 2011 dues to Jim
Marshall, listed under "Officers"

Minutes for the Business Meeting Cape May County Civil War Round Table 19 November 2010

President Lolli called the meeting to order. We saluted the flag and held a moment of silence for those standing in harm's way to protect us.

President Lolli reported to the Round Table that no one new has called any of the officers or the members of the nominating committee to ask to be presented as a nominee for any of the officer positions for this group. Therefore, President Lolli asked that the slate of officers presented to the group by the nominating committee be approved. Motion was made, seconded, and approved by the members present.

Treasurer Marshall presented his financial report; motion made to accept it and file for audit; motion passed.

President Lolli mentioned that last month's speaker informed him that his speaker's fee had been donated to the Franklin Battlefield Preservation fund.

Vice President Bishop reminded the attendees that the December meeting will be held at the Anglesea Pub in North Wildwood. Reservations must be made by 1 Dec 2010.

The prize for the donation drive this meeting is *They met at Gettysburg* by Stackpool.

New Business = Treasurer Marshall needs a fee of \$12 to renew our website for another year. Motion made to pay the fee, seconded and approved.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned so the presentation could begin.

9 December

President Lolli called the meeting to order. The only item of business was the swearing in of the officers for 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Munson-Siter



Sheridan's Ride to the Front

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 2011

- 1-2 **TN** Anniversary programs at the Stones River National Battlefield in Murfreesboro. Ranger led walking and car-caravan tours, living history and talks. See www.nps.gov/stri for schedule.
- 14 **VA** Lecture, "Civil War Photos: Richmond in 3-D," at the Lucy Corr Village, 6680 Lucy Corr Blvd, Chesterfield. 7 pm. Free. 804-751-4946.
- 15 **VA** "Lee-Jackson Day" in Lexington. Wreath laying at Stonewall Jackson's grave 10:30 am followed by living history parade through downtown to VMI. Noon service and speaker at Lee Chapel. Free. 540-461-0389.
- 16 **VA** Lecture, "Mosby in Manassas and Prince William" at the Manassas Museum in Manassas. 2 pm. Free. 703-368-1873 or www.manassasmuseum.org.
- 21 **VA** Lunch talk, "Seceding States Establish a Government," at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond. Noon. Free with admission. www.moc.org or 804-649-1861.

- 21 **VA** Free tours at the Stonewall Jackson House in Lexington in honor of the general's birthday. Refreshments. 9 am-5 pm.
www.stonewalljackson.org or 540-463-2552.
- 22 **VA** Manassas Blue and Gray Ball at the Hylton Performing Arts Center, 10900 University Blvd, Manassas. Civil War food, music and dancing. \$150/person. 703-361-6599 extension 102.
- 24 **VA** "Ghost Watch," annual event at Centre Hill Mansion in Petersburg. Free tours focus on "ghostly activity" by Civil War ghosts. 6-9 pm. Fee charged. Reservations: 804-733-2401.
- 27 **VA** Lecture, "'There Stands Jackson': The Life and Times of General Thomas Jonathan Jackson," at the Old Manassas Courthouse, 9248 Lee Ave, Manassas. 7 pm. Free. 703-367-7872.
- 29 **VA** Civil War Ball at Gadsby's Tavern in Alexandria. Dance instruction, refreshments and music at this annual event. 8-11 pm. \$45/person in advance. Reservations, details: www.gadsbytaVERN.org or 703-746-4242.

Sign up for 2011 Conference

Registration is now open for the 2011 Signature Conference sponsored by the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission.

The "Military Strategy in the American Civil War" conference will be held in Blacksburg and features James I.

Robertson, Gary Gallagher, William C. Davis and Joseph Glatthaar. The date is May 21. Early registration price is \$15. Details: www.virginiacivilwar.org/2011conference.php



Lt. John Patterson and the Medal of Honor

BATTLE OF THE WILDERNESS

EXCERPTED FROM "JOHN H. PATTERSON: HERO OF THE CIVIL AND SPANISH-AMERICAN WARS"

BY JOSEF W. ROKUS

NOTE: The Civil War Preservation Trust is currently working to save 49 acres of the Wilderness Battlefield. This land next to Saunders Field was where Lt. Patterson and the 11th U.S. Infantry were located on May 5, 1864, the day that John Patterson would earn the Medal of Honor.



Lt. John Patterson, 11th U.S. Infantry (National Park Service)

LIEUTENANT PATTERSON AT THE BATTLE OF THE WILDERNESS

Lieutenant John H. Patterson was assigned to the 11th U.S. Infantry Regiment, which at the time was commanded by Captain Francis Cooley. The regiment was part of the 1st Brigade (Brig. Gen. Romeyn B. Ayres), which reported to the 1st Division (Brig. Gen. Charles Griffin) which, in turn, was one of the divisions in the 5th Corps, commanded by Maj. Gen. Gouverneur K. Warren.

On the morning of May 5, Union pickets observed a force of Confederates moving up the Orange Turnpike (Ewell's Corps), and they hastily constructed earthworks along the western edge of Saunders Field, a clearing intersected by the Turnpike. Grant and Meade directed Warren to attack immediately, but Warren hesitated because the Confederate formation overlapped his right flank and would enfilade him if he advanced. He beseeched Meade to postpone the attack until Maj. Gen. John Sedgwick with his 6th Corps could arrive on the battlefield. By 1:00 PM, however, Meade had become so exasperated with Warren's delay that he ordered him to proceed without Sedgwick.

Griffin's men, including Ayres' Brigade and the 11th U.S. Infantry Regiment, strode across Saunders Field into intense Confederate firepower. Ayres' Brigade, on the far right of the line on the north side of the Orange Turnpike, was blistered by Southerners shooting from behind earthworks not only to their front but also on their right. Many of Ayres' men were forced to fall back across the field, seeking refuge in a gully. Lieut. Col. William H. Powell, 11th U.S. Infantry Regiment, later wrote, "The tremendous roll of firing excluded all other sounds. Here and there a man toppled over and disappeared, or springing to his feet, pressed his hands to the wounded part and ran to the rear. Men's faces were sweaty black from biting cartridges, and a sort of grim

ferocity seemed to be creeping into the actions and appearance of everyone within the limited range of vision. The tops of the bushes were being cut away by the leaden missiles that tore through them, and occasional glimpses of gray, phantom-like forms crouching under the bank of cloud were obtained.”

At one point during the heavy fighting, Warren thrust an artillery section into Saunders Field, which began lobbing shells into friend and foe. When the Federals came tumbling back, Rebels swarmed into the abandoned cornfield and captured the guns. Warren’s riflemen prevented the Southerners from hauling off the pieces – at least until the night of May 6 - 7 when, under the cover of darkness, the Confederates dragged the artillery pieces into their lines.

Around 3:00 PM, Sedgwick’s lead elements reached Saunders Field. By then, much of the fighting there had sputtered to a close, although Sedgwick and Ewell engaged in an hour of confused and bloody combat before both sides disengaged and began erecting earthworks. Although some combat continued later that afternoon and evening, at the end of the day neither side could claim victory at Saunders Field.

In the midst of the fighting, brush fires erupted on the battlefield. Wounded men from both armies watched in horror as their comrades were consumed in flames. As best they could and at the risk of becoming casualties themselves, soldiers from both sides tried to carry the wounded out of the fast-spreading fires to safety, but some could not be reached, and they were burned alive. “Suddenly, to the horror of the living,” wrote a member of the 7th Indiana Regiment who was lying along the Turnpike, wounded, “fire was seen creeping over the ground, fed by dead leaves which were thick. All who could move tried to get beyond the Pike, which the fire could not cross. Some were overtaken by the flames when they had crawled but a few feet, and some when they had almost reached the road. The ground, which had been strewn with dead and wounded, was in a few hours blackened, with no distinguishable figure upon it.”



Another historian has described the fires at Saunders Field as follows: “Ignited by powder sparks, fed by dry underbrush and stoked by the wind, flash fires flared up across the battle lines. The flames exploded many of the cartridge boxes strapped to the bellies of the fallen, blowing bloody holes in the helpless, screaming victims. A New York Zouave viewed the horror and recalled, ‘The almost cheerful “Pop! Pop!” of cartridges gave no hint of the almost dreadful horror their noise bespoke...The bodies of the dead were blackened and burned beyond all possibility of recognition.’”

Finally, today’s National Park Service historical marker at the Wilderness Battlefield Exhibit Shelter at Saunders Field states, “Brush fires added to the horror of the Wilderness fighting. Ignited by muzzle blasts and fueled by dead leaves and twigs, fires swept through the dry woods, obscuring soldiers’ vision and filling their lungs with suffocating smoke. ‘Two thousand men, inspired with the desperation of demons’ wrote one soldier, ‘were fighting in a wilderness of fire.’ Hundreds of wounded men, unable to escape the devouring flames, suffered an agonizing death. Others, unwilling to endure such a fate, chose instead to take their own lives. Union artilleryman Frank Wilkerson saw a man with two broken legs lying between the lines. Next to him lay a loaded rifle. ‘I know he meant to kill himself in case of fire,’ wrote Wilkerson, ‘knew it as surely as though I could read his thoughts.’”

Lt. John H. Patterson received his Medal of Honor because he “picked up and carried several hundred yards to a place of safety a wounded officer of his regiment who was helpless and would otherwise have been burned in the forest” on May 5, 1864, at the Battle of the Wilderness. That officer was Lt. Wright Staples of the 11th U.S. Infantry.

PATTERSON RECEIVES HIS MEDAL OF HONOR 33 YEARS LATER



John Patterson's Medal of Honor (National Park Service)

Patterson was awarded his medal in 1897, 33 years after he rescued Lt. Staples from the battlefield at the Battle of the Wilderness in 1864. This delay was not unique, however, because only about one third of the Civil War Medals of Honor were awarded by 1870.

While stationed at Fort Crook, Nebraska, Patterson’s daughter, Elizabeth, describes the scene when Patterson received a letter from Secretary of War R.A. Alger notifying him that he had been awarded the Medal of Honor.

I remember the day my father’s medal came. We were sitting around the dining table at our noon meal. It was the great day of the week, the day of the Eastern mail. My father came in to the table with a letter in

his hand: a long envelope with black printing in the corner. I was looking at him as he opened it. His face went very red, then drained slowly white. He looked up; something seemed the matter with his throat - he could not speak. Then he reached over our heads and handed the letter to our grandmother. She read it, and her first look was for us. I remember her voice.

"Children," she said, "your father has been awarded the Medal of Honor by the Congress of the United States." Her manner was formal and unfamiliar. My father recovered himself.

It is difficult to determine why so many men received the Medal of Honor roughly 30 years after the fighting ended. It might have been that, as they grew older, some felt they wanted some physical evidence of their participation in the war to pass on to their children and grandchildren. It might have been that as some of the men became aware that their comrades were being recognized with the country's most prestigious medal, even though somewhat belatedly, they felt that they also should be recognized in the same way.

Cemetery's lost veterans found and honored

Associated Press

Members of an American Legion post have been doing some detective work to find grave sites in a historic cemetery to ensure that no soldier is forgotten.

Louis Hebert and Ed Huresky, both retirees from Pompton Plains and members of the John H. Lookhoff American Legion Post 242, began the hunt about a year and a half ago. They have identified the grave sites of about 100 previously forgotten and unknown veterans in the First Reformed Church cemetery.

The men have documentation suggesting that about another 40 or so "lost" veterans are among at least 6,800 people buried there _ including Charles Schuyler who was born a slave and enlisted in the Union Army during the Civil War _ but they haven't located the graves.

That would bring the total to 622 veterans, whose service dates to the Revolutionary War.

"We are all comrades in arms," said Hebert, a Vietnam War veteran. "It doesn't matter what conflict you were in. You were representing your country, giving the supreme sacrifice. It is something we feel deeply about _ recognizing our fellow man."

Veterans buried in the 12-acre cemetery off the Newark-Pompton Turnpike include Revolutionary War Capt. John Sandford; storied Civil War hero James Evans, recipient of the Medal of Honor; and Civil War brevetted Brig. Gen. Moses N. Wisewell, who was credited in his obituary as the inventor of margarine, although it was likely invented in France.

Once the location of the graves is documented, the American Legion plans to put up historic markers at each grave site to make sure they are not lost to history again. The post is trying to raise \$7,000 to cover the cost of the markers.

Identifying the grave sites has been a challenge. Some records were lost in a 1937 fire that gutted the church, and writing on some of the headstones has been worn away. Grave markers have become hidden under bushes or buried over the years or do not clearly identify which families members share the plot.

The American Legion tracked down one concrete headstone _ of Civil War veteran William H. Davenport, who died in 1892 _ that had been overlooked for years because it was made in the shape of a tree.

Members of the post came to realize that they didn't have a complete accounting of the veterans buried in the cemetery and the location of their grave sites as they repeated the annual ritual of placing flags at each headstone in advance of Memorial Day.

The post had kept maps of where it was believed all the veterans were buried. But the maps were haphazardly covered in notations that had been taped on over the years. Based on the information on those maps, the post handed out flags to volunteers to place at the grave sites.

"Every year there was confusion, and every year we made it better," said Huresky, who served in the National Guard and Army Reserves during the Vietnam War. "Then people would come back and say 'I have all these flags left over.'"

Or family members also would come forward and notify the post of a veteran who was skipped over because the name wasn't on their list.

A few years ago, Huresky began recreating the maps on his computer so they could be easily updated. Soon, he and Hebert started to track down the veterans buried in the cemetery who weren't on the post's list.

They combed through Morris County death records available online, waded through federal and state military records, consulted with the cemetery manager and even called a few funeral homes. They reviewed hand-written records the church had that dated to the 1800s and early 1900s. They compared the names they collected to a list the church provided of all known people buried in the cemetery and walked the grounds looking for grave sites.

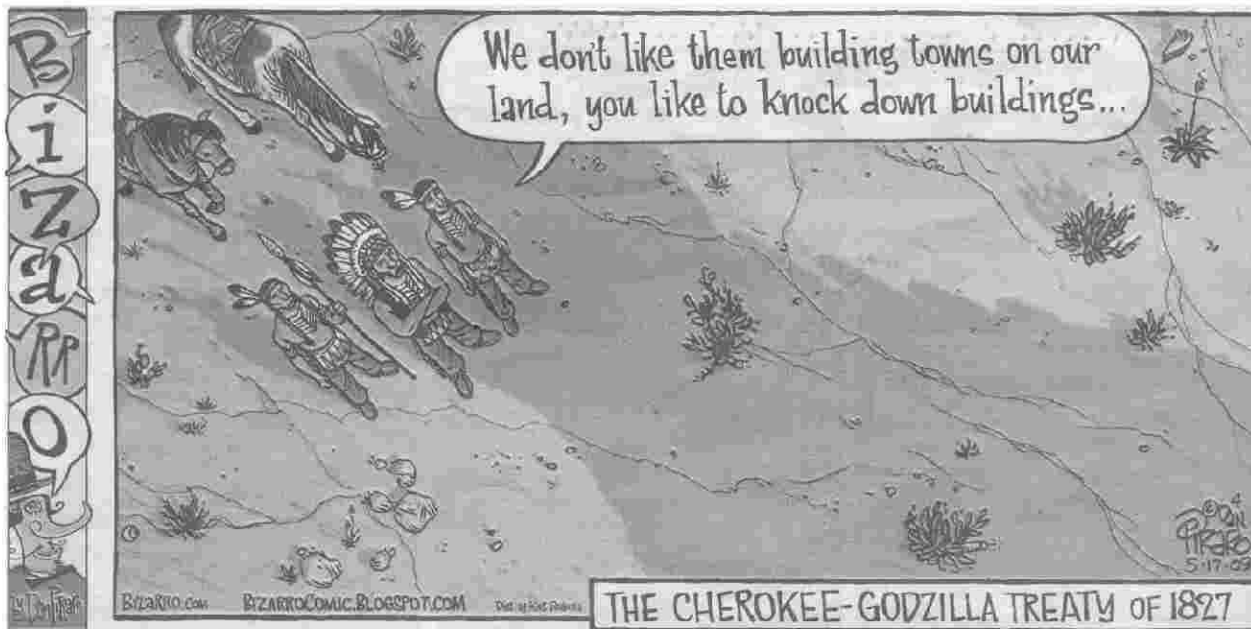
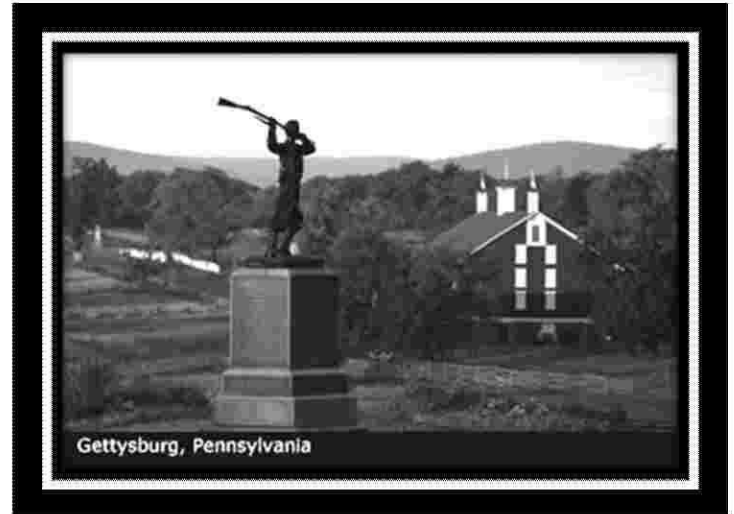
About six months ago, the post reached out to the township's Historic District Preservation Commission for help. One of its members had been working on a similar project, reviewing newspapers from the 1800s and taking notes on Civil War veterans buried in the cemetery. They compared lists and came up with more names.

The American Legion is trying to meet a Memorial Day deadline, the last weekend in May. Huresky and Hebert want to locate the graves and put up the markers in time for celebrations planned to mark the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.

Jay Wanczyk, chairman of the historic district commission, was eager to help, saying the project to find veterans' grave sites is a way of "honoring the past and honoring their service."

"It's in no way a glorification of war," Wanczyk, said. "It's a glorification of the person's sacrifice, and you hope it's a reminder to people of sometimes the futility of war. Unfortunately, they are necessary, and people who step up are worthy of being held up as an example to other people." _____

Information from: The Record,
<http://www.northjersey.com>





TRAPPING BEER GUESSILLAS OF THE WEST.