



Cape May County Civil War Round Table Newsletter = June 2018

Meeting Dates

Meetings are at 7pm at the Cape May County Museum and Historical Society, in the Military Room in the old barn.

21 June: **Speaker** will be Bob Heinly from MAC on *Causes of the Civil War & the Victorians*. **Refreshments:** Hank Heacock & Charlie Gruff

19 July: Bob Heinly: *Battles & Major Events of the Civil War*.
Refreshments: John Herr

16 August: Herb Kaufman on *Civil War Medicine*, including samples of Victorian medical equipment. **Refreshments:** Mike & Barbara Golla

20 September: Bob Heinly on Col Henry Sawyer; **Refreshments:** Eddie Vargo

18 October: Jake Miller, Park Historian at Fort Delaware, on the uses of the Fort during the war. **Refreshments:** Mimi Wheaton

15 November: OPEN

NOTE: My apologies for the newsletter being MIA these past months, but yours truly has had severe medical issues and the chemotherapy has really knocked me on my backside since October. I'm now starting to feel better as they had to change my chemotherapy meds. **PLEASE folks, send me articles, book reviews, etc to help me fill up the newsletter!**

Pat Munson-Siter

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PLEASE NOTE: DUES ARE DUE!

Please mail your dues to our Treasurer, John Herr. His address is above. Dues help pay for speakers for the group. Those who want hard copies of the newsletter pay more to help defray copy and postage costs. Dues are: \$30 for electronic newsletter and \$35 for snail mailed hard copy; \$40 for a family membership. Our dues help pay for our speakers! So far less than TEN members have paid their dues.

NOTE: The CWRT voted at the May meeting to donate \$100 to the Shenandoah Battlefield Fund to help preserve the landmark. – via John Herr

Important Civil War Events that Occurred in July

1861	
11	Battle of Rich Mountain (now WV)
21	Battle of First Manassas (Bull Run)
1862	
1	Battle of Malvern Hill (VA)
1863	
1-3	Battle of Gettysburg
4	Vicksburg surrenders to Grant
13-16	New York City draft riots
1864	
9	Battle of Monocacy (MD)
20	Battle at Peachtree Creek (GA)
22	Battle of Atlanta
24	Second battle of Kernstown (VA)
30	Battle of "The Crater" at Petersburg
30	Confederate cavalry burn Chambersburg (PA)

Re-Enactments and Other Civil War Related Events for July 2018

1 VA Anniversary commemoration of the Battle of Malvern Hill at the battlefield, 9175 Willis Church Road,

near Richmond. Special tours and living history.
nps.gov/rich

1-3 PA Anniversary activities including special tours and living history at the Gettysburg NMP. Free. nps.gov/gett

5-8 PA Reenactment, “Gettysburg,” annual big event in Gettysburg. Camps, demonstrations and programs all weekend. Battles each day. Daily pass \$35/adult, four-day ticket \$90. Schedule, details: gettysburgreenactment.com

6 VA Walking tour, “Evolution of a Park: Saunders Field,” meets at the Wilderness Battlefield exhibit shelter, 353247 Constitution Highway, west of Fredericksburg. 7 pm. Free. nps.gov/frsp

7 PA Anniversary activities at the Monterey Pass Battlefield Park, off Route 16 near Blue Ridge Summit. Details, directions: montereypassbattlefield.org/events

7 MD “Salute to Independence,” annual concert and fireworks at the Antietam National Battlefield near Sharpsburg. 7:30-10 pm. Visitor center, some park roads close 3 pm. Free. nps.gov/anti

7-8 MD Anniversary activities at the Monocacy National Battlefield in Frederick. Living history, kids’ activities, ranger talks. 9 am-3:30 pm. Free. nps.gov/mono

9 MD Car-caravan tour of the Monocacy National Battlefield in Frederick. 9-11:30 am. Free. nps.gov/mono

11 IL “Tales from the Vault — Civil War Music,” special exhibit at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield. 12:30-1:30 pm. Free with admission. presidentlincoln.org

13 VA Walking tour, “Hospitals and Forgotten Graves in the Wilderness: The Carpenter Farm,” meets at the Walton League, 12400 Herndon Road, Fredericksburg. 7 pm. Free. nps.gov/frsp

13 VA Car-caravan tour, “The Remnants of the Stonewall Brigade,” on the Cedar Creek battlefield. Meets at the NPS Contact Station, 7712 Main St, Middletown. 7-9 pm. Free. nps.gov/cebe

14 PA Living history and special tours. “Civil War Saturday,” at Fort Mifflin, 6400 Hog Island Road, near Philadelphia. 10 am-4 pm. \$10/adult. fortmifflin.us

14 VA Lecture, “CSS *Arkansas*,” at the Mariners’ Museum in Newport News. 2:30 pm. Free with admission. marinersmuseum.org

14 VA “A Reconstruction Headquarters and Its Commanders,” special program at the White House of the Confederacy in Richmond. 2 pm. \$10. acwm.org

14 VA Van tour, “Hampton’s Cattle Raid,” leaves from Lee Hall in Newport News. 8 am-4 pm. \$50. Registration, more info: leehall.org

14 VA Car-caravan tour, “Prelude to First Manassas,” begins at Ben Lomond Historic Site, 10321 Sudley Manor Drive, Manassas. 9 am-noon. \$20/vehicle. 703-367-7872.

20 VA Walking tour, “Absolutely Hopeless: May 18 at Spotsylvania,” meets at the Bloody Angle stop (Stop 3) on the Spotsylvania battlefield near Spotsylvania Court House. 7 pm. Free. nps.gov/frsp

21 VA First battle anniversary activities at the Manassas National Battlefield Park. Ranger programs, tours and living history. 8:30 am-5 pm. Free. nps.gov/mana

21 VA Walking tour of Fort Huger, a Confederate fort on the James River, 15080 Talcott Terrace, near Smithfield. 10 am. historicisleofwight.com

21 VA Walking tour, “Battle of Smithfield,” begins at the Isle of Wight Museum, 103 Main St, Smithfield. 2 pm. historicisleofwight.com

21 MD Canoe/kayak tour through the Monocacy National Battlefield in Frederick. Guided tour on the Monocacy River. More info, pricing: recreator.com

21 MD Lecture, “The Civil War Through an Artist’s Eyes,” at the Surratt House Museum in Clinton. 4 pm. Free. surrattmuseum.org

21-22 WV Living history, “‘I Will Follow Them to the Death’: Sheridan’s Soldiers, 1864,” at the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. 11 am-4 pm. Free with park admission. nps.gov/hafe

21-22 VA Anniversary activities, Second Battle of Kernstown, at the Kernstown Battlefield, 610 Battle Drive, south of Winchester. kernstownbattle.org

21-22 VA Living history, artillery and infantry camps and demonstrations at the Manassas National Battlefield Park. 11 am-3 pm. Free. [nps.gov/mana](https://www.nps.gov/mana)

21-22 VA “Ben Lomond Civil War Hospital Weekend,” living history, talks and tours at Ben Lomond Historic Site, 10321 Sudley Manor Drive, Manassas. 10 am-4 pm and 6:30-8:30 pm Saturday, 10 am-3 pm Sunday. Free for daytime activities. Saturday evening luminary \$5. 703-367-7872.

24-29 PA Seminar and tours, “Roads to Gettysburg,” based in Chambersburg. Lectures and tours. Complete package \$745. [civilwarseminars.org](https://www.civilwarseminars.org)

27 VA Walking tour, “Legends, Lives, and Stone: Fredericksburg in Stories and Granite,” meets at the Fredericksburg battlefield visitor center, 1013 Lafayette Blvd, Fredericksburg. [nps.gov/frsp](https://www.nps.gov/frsp)

27 VA Walking tour, “‘Stirring times’: Harrisonburg During the Civil War.” 10 am-noon. Free. Registration, exact tour location: 540-740-4545 or [shenandoahatwar.org](https://www.shenandoahatwar.org)

28 VA Conference, “The Rise and Fall of Confederate Icons,” at James Madison University in Harrisonburg. Begins 9 am. Details: [shenandoahatwar.org](https://www.shenandoahatwar.org)

28-29 MD Living history, “Union Artillery Weekend,” at the Antietam National Battlefield near Sharpsburg. Camp with demos 11 am and 1, 2 and 3 pm Saturday, 11 am, 1 pm Sunday. Free with park admission. [nps.gov/anti](https://www.nps.gov/anti)

A History of Small Arms in America's Wars

Out of all the weapons and tools on a battlefield, the infantryman’s musket or rifle is the most important. In the century spanning the American Revolution to the Civil War, small arms technology underwent significant changes, while remaining incredibly similar. Because of this, linear warfare still dominated Civil War battlefield tactics a century after almost identical tactics were used during the Revolution.

Smoothbore weapons dominated the battlefields of the Revolution and War of 1812, even seeing service on the early battlefields of the Civil War. The Civil War, however, would begin the era of the rifle, and rifles began to be standard issue to infantry units. Rifles did see action in the earlier conflicts, but were fewer and reserved for specialized units rather than the average infantryman.

The Revolution

The American Revolution was dominated by the smoothbore, flintlock, muzzle loading, musket. Infantry tactics of the time favored speed over accuracy, and the small arms reflected this. Projectiles, round balls “rounds,” were smaller than the barrel, adding speed to the cumbersome reloading process, and alleviating the fouling caused by black powder residue. A trained soldier was expected to fire three rounds a minute in massed volleys.

Most muskets were lethal up to about 175 yards, but was only “accurate” to about 100 yards, with tactics dictating volleys be fired at 25 to 50 yards. Because a portion of the powder in a cartridge was used to prime the pan, it was impossible to ensure a standard amount of powder was used in each shot. This meant that muzzle velocity widely varied, and there are even some stories of soldiers being struck by round balls but suffering no more than a deep bruise.

The British Redcoat was armed with the Short Land Pattern musket, often called the “Brown Bess.” German units serving with Great Britain often carried the same muskets as the British Regulars, but were also equipped with German made weapons, especially light infantry weapons such as the Jäger Rifle. The limited cavalry that saw action in North America carried shorter carbine versions of infantry weapons, and occasionally flintlock pistols.

The Continentals, both regulars and militia, carried a motley assortment of small arms. Where possible, units attempted to acquire either British Short or Long Land Pattern muskets, or French Charleville muskets. The Continental Congress was able to produce a limited amount of “Committee of Safety” muskets, often clandestinely made by the revolutionary committees to avoid British prosecution.

Militias, particularly Continental militias, often carried whatever weapons they had at home. This included a wide range of military style muskets from the British, French, Dutch, or Spanish, some dating back to the early colonial period. In addition, many hunting style weapons found their way onto Revolutionary War battlefields, including, hunting muskets, fowling pieces, and in rare cases, rifles.

War of 1812

With only a short thirty years spanning the end of the Revolution and the War of 1812, small arms changed little. Smoothbore, flintlock, muzzle loading, muskets were still the primary weapon carried by both sides.

Standardization increased between the wars, and a smaller variety of weapons saw action during the War of 1812.

For the British, the Land Pattern “Brown Bess” was still the standard infantry small arm. The Land Pattern had undergone another modification in 1797, this Third Model or India Pattern, was shorter and lighter than the Short Land used during the Revolution. The rise of Light Infantry tactics saw purpose built muskets, and in growing numbers rifles, issued to specialist troops. The best example of this was the New Light Infantry Land Pattern muskets carried by the 43rd Foot at the Battle of New Orleans.

While the Springfield Armory, founded in 1777, traces its origins to the Revolution, it was not until the War of 1812 that American small arms manufacturing hit its stride. The Model 1795 musket borrowed heavily from the Model 1763 and 1766 French Charleville musket, and was the first mass produced American military small arm. Like its French predecessors, the Model 1795 was a smaller caliber than the British Land Patterns, and the ball fitted more snugly in the barrel, giving it a slight advantage in range and accuracy, and giving the United States a slight edge on the battlefield. So important was the Model 1795 to the US Army, it appears as the infantry’s branch insignia.

The War of 1812, and the Napoleonic Wars, can be seen as the rise of the rifle. Seeing the efficacy of similar British units during the early years of the Napoleonic Wars, specifically the 60th and 95th Rifles, the United States decided to follow suit. In 1808, Congress formed the Regiment of Riflemen and armed them with the Model 1803 rifle produced at Harpers Ferry. These troops saw action in Canada and in the Western Theater, with their major actions taking place at Tippecanoe, York, and Big Sandy Creek.

Civil War

The American Civil War was a time of rapid technological advancement, and small arms were no different. Early in the war, some of the weapons on the battlefield had also seen action during the War of 1812, fifty years earlier. Most were converted from flintlock to the newer, more reliable, percussion cap. Some had even been rebored and rifled. The Civil War was when the rifle, augmented by the Minié Ball, came to dominate and devastate the battlefield.

The Springfield Model 1855, the first rifled musket, was the first to use the new type of ammunition, as well as the Maynard tape priming system. This extended the effective

range out to 300 yards, with accurate fire up to 100 yards. The Model 1855 saw service on both sides, especially after the Confederates captured Harpers Ferry and moved the machinery, which was producing the Model 1855, to Virginia.

With the outbreak of war, the Union realized that it needed arms on a scale never before seen in United States history. Springfield armory quickly moved to simplify the Model 1855, creating the workhorse of the Civil War, the Model 1861. The only major change being a return to the percussion cap system.

Over a million Model 1861s were produced, and saw extensive action with both sides. In the hands of a skilled soldier, the Model 1861 could accurately hit a target 500 yards away, a fact emphasized by the sights that came standard with every weapon. The technology of war was advancing rapidly, and tactics were lagging behind, with the average engagement range of 60 yards on a Civil War battlefield it is easy to see why casualty numbers became so horrific.

For the Confederacy, chronic arms shortages led to purchasing weapons overseas. The English made, Pattern 1853 Enfield rifled musket was the second most used firearm of the war, and coveted by Confederate infantrymen. The Enfield was almost identical to the 1861 Springfield, but imported Enfields were often not of the highest production quality, resulting in a difficulty repairing and replacing parts. In the hands of a trained soldier, the Enfield was as lethal as the Springfield.

Like the in the previous wars, it was the specialist troops that had access to the cutting edge of small arms technology. For the Civil War, this meant the move towards multi-shot, often breech-loading, weapons. The need for an effective cavalry weapon drove much of the technology. While a plethora of weapons saw action during the war, the two most important were the Sharps and Spencer rifles.

Designed in 1848 the Sharps rifle can be seen as the beginnings of the transition from muzzleloaders to breechloaders. The Sharps utilized a “falling block” mechanism that lowered the breech and allowed a cartridge to be loaded from the rear of the gun. A percussion cap was still needed to fire each time, and was placed after cocking the hammer. While still a single shot weapon, moving from muzzle to breech loading increased the rate of fire to between eight and ten rounds per minute. Sharps carbines, shorter and lighter versions of the rifle, also saw action with cavalry forces.

Renowned for its accuracy and range, Sharps rifles were famously used by the 1st U.S. Sharpshooters. Formed by Hiram Berdan, the Sharpshooters were the premier light infantry of the Union Army, and were armed with the Sharps after May 8, 1862. In the hands of one of the green-coated Sharpshooters, the Sharps rifle was lethal at long range, and the high rate of fire compounded the damage the Sharpshooters could do.

The Spencer rifle was the pinnacle of military technology during the Civil War, the world's first military repeating rifle. Utilizing a lever action and a magazine holding seven brass rimfire cartridges, a Spencer rifle were capable of firing up to twenty rounds per minute, seven times faster than the standard infantry rifled muskets. The use of a magazine, which was a tube inserted into the butt of the rifle, was revolutionary, and greatly affected the rate of fire.

The Ordnance department resisted any use of repeating rifles, fearing that the average infantryman would waste ammunition by firing rapidly, resulting in a lack of supply. The cost of the new breechloaders also was a major factor. Because of this, the Spencer saw limited action during the war. Some Union cavalry, most famously at Gettysburg, carried the smaller carbine version and Spencers saw larger usage in the Western theater.

At the end of the Civil War, new small arms technology had proven their efficacy on the battlefield. Tactics, however, still lagged behind, with Civil War battlefield still looking similar to those of the American Revolution. The next generation of leaders would have to tackle how to utilize the new technology on the battlefield. One only has to look forward fifty years to the First World War to see the impact of new technology on the battlefield, and the carnage that it would wreak.

J.E.B. Stuart's Troubled Ride to Gettysburg By Daniel Landsman



J.E.B. Stuart, who was considered to be the "eyes and the ears" of the Lee's army, was known for his cavalier inspired uniform complete with an ostrich plume and red lined grey cape.

Library of Congress

By the Civil War, the strategy behind cavalry had changed drastically from the Revolutionary War. Due to the advancement in rifled weapons, cavalry charges were no longer as effective as they had been in earlier wars. The role of the cavalry became largely one of reconnaissance, often being asked to scout enemy forces in order to retrieve information and to screen their own armies as they marched to their destination.

J.E.B. Stuart commanded the cavalry wing of **Robert E. Lee's** Army of Northern Virginia and, as noted in a letter addressed to Stuart from Robert E. Lee, served as the "eyes and ears" of the army. By the time of the Gettysburg Campaign during the summer of 1863, J.E.B. Stuart had established himself as both a skilled cavalryman and, as Jeffrey Wert describes him, the "Confederacy's knight-errant... who clung to the pageantry of a long gone warrior." Unfortunately for Stuart, his ride during the Gettysburg Campaign was plagued by surprise attacks and unknown Union movements that redirected Stuart's path.

In preparation for the upcoming ride to the north, Stuart had his men bivouacked 6 miles outside **Brandy Station**, screening the Confederate army along the Rappahannock River. On June 8, 1863, Stuart held a review of his soldiers for Robert E. Lee at his camp. Following the review, Lee ordered Stuart to cross the Rappahannock and raid the Union forward positions.

However, Union cavalryman **Alfred Pleasonton** had anticipated the attack and massed his own forces on the opposite bank of the Rappahannock River. Pleasonton called for two attacks, one by Brig. Gen. **John Buford** in the north at Beverly's Ford and a coordinated effort from Brig. Gen. **David Gregg** in the south at Kelly's Ford.

Buford and his men began their attack at 4:30 am on June 9th, scattering the surprised Rebel pickets at Beverly's Ford. Hearing the gun shots from the Union troops, Confederate soldiers from the camp at St. James Church joined in on the fight and were able to stall Buford's advance. The Confederate efforts, while costly, bought the artillery enough time to deploy and unleash a deadly assault on the Union column.

After overrunning the Confederate guns, but failing to maintain position, Buford refocused his efforts on capturing the guns by moving around the Confederate left by Yew Ridge. While Buford struggled with the

Confederate artillery, Gregg's attack was delayed by a small Confederate force at Kelly's Ford. At 11:30 am, Gregg was finally in position at Brandy Station. Gregg's artillery opened fire on Stuart's headquarters at Fleetwood Hill and surprised the Virginian once again, as he had given his full attention to Buford's attack.

Stuart, thanks to the success of the Confederate troops at Yew Ridge, was able to shuffle more troops to defend Gregg's attack. The two lines clashed for another five hours, and at around 5 p.m., upon hearing news of Confederate reinforcements, Pleasonton called off the attack. While Stuart was able to hold off the Union attack, it came at a great cost to his cavalry forces and his reputation, as he had been caught off guard by two surprise attacks during the battle.

Following the Battle of Brandy Station, an embarrassed Stuart led his cavalry corps as they screened the northbound Confederate infantry through the Shenandoah Valley. From June 17 to June 21, Stuart's cavalry clashed with their Union counterparts at **Aldie**, **Middleburg**, and Upperville. The fighting began at Aldie, where a brigade of Stuart's cavalry crossed paths with Union forces and engaged in four hours of stubborn fighting.

The fighting continued two days later at Middleburg, where Stuart was unable to maintain his advantageous position on Mount Defiance. However, Stuart's expert parrying of Union attacks kept the Union cavalry from gaining any insight on the position of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia.

The final day of the ongoing fighting occurred on June 21 at Upperville, where Stuart's defensive efforts were successful once again in preventing the Union forces from gaining any information on Lee's position as he advanced his army towards Maryland.

After the various engagements with the pursuing Union cavalry, Stuart received orders regarding his role as Lee's Army of Northern Virginia began their invasion of the North. While the exact nature of Lee's orders remain a point of contention, it is believed by many that the purpose of Stuart's cavalry in the Gettysburg campaign was to cross the Potomac River and screen the right flank of **Richard Ewell's** Second Corps.

Instead of taking a direct route to Ewell's Second Corps, Stuart decided to take the brigades of **Wade Hampton**, Fitzhugh Lee, and John Chambliss north toward Rockville, Maryland, moving between the Union Army, who were marching north through Virginia about 50 miles east of Lee's army, and Washington, D.C. However, by

the time Stuart began his ride on June 24, Union movement was underway and Stuart's desired route was blocked by columns of Union soldiers. This unexpected obstacle forced Stuart's cavalry further east than originally planned and not only hindered Stuart's ability to reach Ewell's right flank, but also deprived Lee of vital intelligence that a more conventional cavalry screen would have provided.

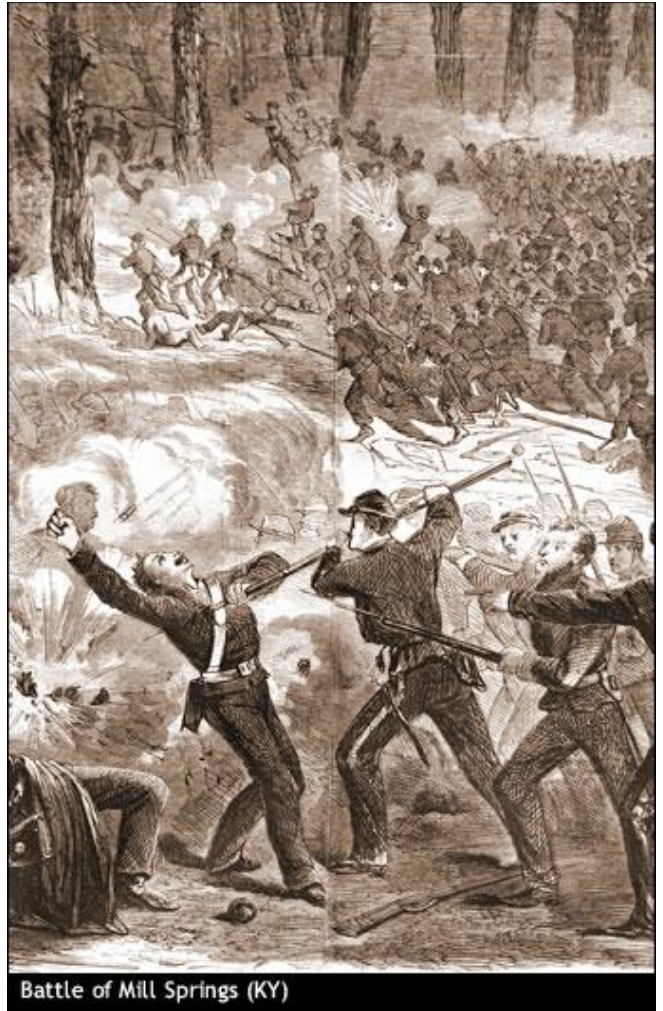
On June 28th, Stuart's cavalry crossed the Potomac River into Rockville, Maryland, where they captured a wagon train of more than 100 fully loaded wagons. The size of the wagon train would further hinder his march to screen Ewell's right flank. While critics of Stuart believe this to be a tactical error, the wagons were loaded with fodder which would become increasingly important as the strenuous ride took its toll on Stuart's horses.

For the next two days Stuart and his troops proceeded towards the Pennsylvania border, taking time to sabotage Union communications. On June 30th, the cavalry corps crossed over into Pennsylvania and headed northeast toward Hanover. Upon reaching Hanover at 10 a.m., Stuart's men were surprised to encounter Judson Kilpatrick's Union cavalry forces. The Confederates engaged, with the battle spilling into the streets of Hanover. The battle continued throughout the day, eventually ending as both Kilpatrick and Stuart withdrew their units from the battle field. While not a tactical loss, J.E.B. Stuart lost more time and a total of 215 men.

From Hanover, Stuart continued north, arriving in Dover on July 1, 1863, just as the fighting began at **Gettysburg**. At this point, having been cut off from communication with Lee's army, Stuart was unaware of the Army of Northern Virginia's position. Stuart had grown worried and sent out various officers in an attempt to locate the army he was supposed to have reached already. By midnight on July 2, Stuart received word that Lee's army had made their way to Gettysburg and were engaged in battle with the Army of the Potomac. By 3:00 am, the weary column was on its way to Gettysburg, with General Stuart leading the way.

The exhausted corps arrived at Gettysburg on July 2, with what artilleryman Henry Matthews described as "a grateful sense of relief which words cannot express." Immediately upon arrival, Stuart reported to Robert E. Lee. While no firsthand accounts exist of the interaction, second hand reports from Lee's staff officers suggest that Lee reprimanded Stuart for his failures up to that point in the campaign. Following the meeting, Stuart was ordered to ride to Ewell's flank northeast of town.

On July 3, Stuart and his men engaged in a bloody battle with Union cavalry forces, led by Brig. Gen. David Gregg, at what has become known as East Cavalry Field. The battle began with a cavalry charge from the Confederate forces, which was countered by the 7th Michigan. The two forces engaged in intense point-blank fighting along the fences of Rummel Farm. In effort to turn the tides in his favor, Stuart sent a second charge led by Wade Hampton, during which Hampton received multiple slashes to his face at the hands of Union sabers. Eventually Union forces were able to surround the Confederates on three sides, forcing Stuart to withdraw, but Gregg's men were in no condition to pursue them further. The withdrawal at East Cavalry Field brought an end to Stuart's troubled ride to Gettysburg.



Battle of Mill Springs (KY)



Cape May County Civil War Round Table
www.cmccwrt.com

