

150th Anniversary of the American Civil War



Cape May County Civil War Round Table Newsletter March 2014

Meeting Schedule

21 March: Matt Bruce will be doing a presentation on Confederate Navy Cruisers.

18 April:

16 May:

20 June:

18 July:

15 August:

19 September:

17 October:

21 November:

?? December:

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No minutes from the December meeting as there was no business meeting.

**REMINDER:
DUES FOR 2014 ARE DUE NOW!!!!
Send to Jim Marshall, address above**

A Letter from our President

To start with I'd like to wish all of you a happy and healthy new year. I have met with an ad-hoc committee of our members. We've come up with some exciting ideas for 2014.

Plans are being worked on to, hopefully, have presentations on the battles of The Wilderness, Spotsylvania Court House, New Market, Monocacy, Cedar Creek, and Franklin. 2014 is the observation of their 150th anniversaries this year.

A dinner and courts martial at Cold Springs Village is also in works. A visit from The 12th New Jersey Volunteer Infantry, who will be presenting their history - as well as some New Jersey history - at one of our meetings, is in the works.

In case any of the above ambitious schedule falls to the way side, we have several back up plans in place.

Looking forward to seeing ya' all at our March meeting, I remain your most obedient servant;

Marty Runner

Civil War Timeline for April

1860

No Major Events

1861

- 6 Arkansas secedes
- 7 Tennessee negotiates alliance with Confederacy
- 20 North Carolina secedes
- 21 Confederate legislators vote to move capital to Richmond
- 23 Virginia secedes (after popular vote)
- 24 Union soldiers occupy Alexandria (VA)

6 Arkansas secedes

1862

- 4 Confederates evacuate Yorktown
- 5 Battle of Williamsburg (VA)
- 8 Battle of McDowell (VA)
- 15 Battle of Drewry's Bluff (VA)
- 23 Battle of Front Royal (VA)
- 25 Battle of Winchester (VA)
- 31 Battle of Seven Pines (Fair Oaks) (VA)

1863

- 1-4 Battle of Chancellorsville
- 10 Stonewall Jackson dies
- 16 Battle of Champion's Hill (MS)

1864

- 5-6 Battle of the Wilderness (VA)
- 6 Atlanta Campaign opens
- 7-19 Battle of Spotsylvania (VA)
- 11 Battle of Yellow Tavern (VA)
- 12-13 Second Battle of Drewry's Bluff (VA)
- 15 Battle of New Market (VA)
- 24 Battle of the North Anna River (VA)
- 25-27 Battle of New Hope (GA)

1865


- 10 Confederate president Davis captured in Georgia
- 26 Smith surrenders Trans-Mississippi Confederate army



Reenacting the Battle of Plymouth (NC)

Civil War Related Events for April 2014


Most of these are taken from www.civilwartraveler.com. There are lots of other events outside our local area, so if you will be visiting WV, TN, FL, check the website for info on events in those states!

- 4-6 **PA** Seminar and tours, "A Weekend with Ed Bears: A Living Legend," based in Chambersburg. Lectures and bus tours to Gettysburg and Antietam. Details and reservations: chambersburgCivilWarSeminars.org
- 5 **ALL** Annual "Park Day," cleanup and preservation effort at Civil War resources throughout the country. Sponsored by the Civil War Trust. civilwar.org
- 5 **VA** Lectures, "Presidents and Generals and Descendants Too," the trials of descendants of Civil War notables, at Salem Baptist Church, 4044 Plank Road, Fredericksburg. 1-5 pm. Free. nps.gov/frsp
- 5 **VA** Car-caravan tour, Brandy Station battlefield (Beverly Ford and St. James Church). Begins at the Graffiti House visitor center in Brandy Station. 10 am-noon. \$10/adult. brandystationfoundation.com
- 5 **VA** Anniversary activities at the Sailor's Creek Battlefield Historical Park near Amelia. Living history and ranger programs. 10 am-5 pm. Free. 804-561-7510.
- 5 **VA** Walking tour, "Battle of Smithfield," meets at the Isle of Wight Museum in Smithfield. 2 pm. Free. historicisleofwight.com
- 5 **VA** Guided walking tour of Fort Huger, 15080 Talcott Terrace, on the James River near Smithfield. 10 am. Free. 757-357-0115.
- 5 **VA** Walking tour, "Breakthrough Anniversary," commemorating the final Union attacks on the Petersburg lines at Pamplin Historical Park near Petersburg. Pre-dawn tour includes breakfast. Reservations: pamplinpark.org
- 5 **MD** "Bell and History Days" in Frederick Museums kick off the season including the National Museum of Civil War Medicine with living history 11 am-4 pm. Free. visitfrederick.org and civilwarmed.org
- 5-6 **VA**  Reenactment, "Battle of Cloyd's Mountain" camps, battles and more on the historic battlefield near Dublin. battleofcloydsmtn.org
- 5-6 **VA** Reenactment, annual event at Endview Plantation in Newport News. Camps open 10 am-4 pm each day with battles each day. \$7. endview.org
- 5-6 **PA** Reenactment, "The Wilderness Campaign," at Neshaminy State Park in Bensalem. Camps, demonstrations, music and more. Battles at 2 pm

- Saturday, 1:30 pm Sunday. Free.
neshaminycwevent.org
- 6 **MD** Hike, "Sunken Road (Antietam)" ranger-guided walk at the Antietam National Battlefield in Sharpsburg. 1-3 pm. Free with park admission.
nps.gov/anti
- 6 **VA** Book talk, "The War Came by Train," at the Manassas Museum. 2 pm Free.
manassasmuseum.org
- 6 **VA** Living history, "Drummer's Call: Field Music of the Civil War," at the American Civil War Center at Historic Tredegar in Richmond. 1 pm. Free with museum admission. tredegar.org
- 8 **VA** Talk, "Red River Campaign," at the Museum of the Confederacy in Appomattox. 12:15 pm. Talk is free. moc.org
- 10 **VA** Illustrated talk, "Civil War Richmond 1865 — A Virtual Tour," at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond. 6:30 pm. \$5. moc.org
- 11-12 **VA**  Bus tour, "The 1864 Winter Encampment: Armies of North and South." 8 am-4 pm.
fowb.org
- 11-13 **VA** Culpeper Remembrance Day with Civil War living history, talks, walking tours and much more. Complete schedule: visitculpeperva.com
- 11-13 **VA** Reenactment, "The Long Road Home — Sailor's Creek," at the Appomattox Center for Business and Commerce, off Route 26 in Appomattox. Living history, music and more. \$10/daily.
appomattoxhistoricalsociety.org
- 11-13 **VA** Living history, "Ben Lomond Civil War Encampment," at the Ben Lomond Historic Site, 10321 Sudley Manor Drive, Manassas. 10 am-4 pm. \$5. 703-367-7872.
- 12 **VA** Civil War and Emancipation Day at various locations in Richmond. Annual event features living history, open houses, special tours and more. tredegar.org
- 12 **VA** Van tour, "1864 Bermuda Hundred Campaign Tour," Leaves from Henricus Historical Park. 10 am-2 pm. \$15. Register: chesterfieldhistory.com (click Civil War Tours).
- 12 **VA** Boat tour, "Potomac River Blockade," departs from Leesylvania State Park in Woodbridge. 10 am-1 pm. \$40. Reservations: 703-792-4754.
- 12-13 **VA** Reenactment, "Waynesboro at War," at Coyner Springs Park, Lyndhurst Road in Waynesboro.
- Camps open 9 am-5 pm Saturday, 9 am-4 pm Sunday. Battles both days. \$5/adult per day, \$8/two-day pass. Details, tickets, directions: waynesboroatwar.webs.com
- 15 **VA** "Animals in the Civil War," special kids' program at the Dabbs House Museum, 3812 Nine Mile Road, near Richmond. 10 am. Free. 804-652-3409.
- 16 **VA** Lecture, "An Examination of the Causes of the Civil War," at the Lloyd House, 220 N Washington St, Alexandria. 7:30 pm. Free.
historicalalexandria.org
- 18 **VA** Talk, "'Before the Crash Came': Mary Chesnut's Last Months in Richmond, January-April 1864," at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond. Noon. Free with museum admission. moc.org
- 18-19 **VA** Living history, "USCT Union Encampment," at the Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park, near Iron Brigade Unit Ave, in Bristow. 11 am-4 pm. Free, donations appreciated. 703-366-3049.
- 19 **VA** Car-caravan tour, Brandy Station battlefield (Kelly's Ford and Stevensburg). Begins at the Graffiti House visitor center in Brandy Station. 10 am-noon. \$10/adult.
brandystationfoundation.com
- 19 **VA** Talk, "A Spy for the Union: The Life and Execution of Timothy Webster," at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond. 2 m. Free with museum admission. moc.org
- 19 **VA** "Civil War Mapmaking," hands on activity at the Petersburg National Battlefield operations building. Space limited. Reservations: 804-732-3531 extension 205.
- 20 **MD** Hike, "Burnside Bridge (Antietam)," ranger-guided walk at the Antietam National Battlefield in Sharpsburg. 1-3 pm. Free with park admission.
nps.gov/anti
- 24-27 **VA** Bus tour, "The Ultimate Petersburg Campaign Tour, Part One," includes transportation, lectures, reception, some meals. \$664/\$609. Sign up: pamplinpark.org
- 25 **VA** Brandy Station Foundation Ball, remembering similar 1863 events. Music, dancing and refreshments at the Brandy Station Fire Dept. Hall, 19601 Church Road, Brandy Station. Reception begins 6 pm. \$35.
brandystationfoundation.com
- 25-27 **VA**  Reenactment, "Buchanan Civil War Living History Weekend," in and around downtown Buchanan. Annual event includes camps,

demonstrations and music. Street battle 6:30 pm Friday, battle reenactments 4 pm Saturday and 1:30 pm Sunday.

townofbuchanan.com/event/buchanan-civil-war-history-weekend-2/

- 25-27 **VA**  **150** Reenactment, "Bermuda Hundred Campaign," in Horner Park in Chesterfield County south of Richmond. Camps and living history all weekend. Battles each day. Details, directions: visitchesterfieldva.com/bh150
- 26 **VA** Van tour, "North Anna and Cold Harbor Battlefields" begins at Lee Hall Mansion in Newport News. 8 am-5 pm. \$50. Reservations: leehall.org or 757-888-3371.
- 26 **VA** Living history, "Fairfax Civil War Day," at Historic Blenheim, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Camps and demonstrations, music, tours and more. 10 am-5 pm. \$5/adult. 703-591-0560.
- 26 **VA** Living history, "The Cavalry Comes to Brentsville," camp and demonstrations at Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre, 12229 Bristow Road, Bristow. 11 am-4 pm. \$5. 703-365-7895.
- 26 **VA** Boat tour, "Potomac River Blockade," departs from Leesylvania State Park in Woodbridge. 10 am-1 pm. \$40. Reservations: 703-792-4754.
- 26 **PA** "An Evening with the Painting," after-hours extended look at the Gettysburg Cyclorama at the Gettysburg NMP visitor center. 6 pm. \$20. gettysburgfoundation.org
- 27 **MD** Hike, "Final Attack (Antietam)," ranger-guided walk at the Antietam National Battlefield in Sharpsburg. 1-3 pm. Free with park admission. nps.gov/anti
- 27 **VA** Lecture, "Mosby's Raids in Civil War Northern Virginia," at the Graffiti House visitor center in Brandy Station. 2 pm. Donations welcome. brandystationfoundation.com
- 27 **VA** Book talk, "Your Brothers in Arms: A Union Soldier's Odyssey," at the Manassas Museum. 2 pm. Free. manassasmuseum.org
- 27 **VA** Living history tours, "Eyewitness to War," at Historic Mount Zion Church, 40309 John Mosby Highway, Aldie. Donations accepted. 1-5 pm. 540-687-6681.
- 27 **VA** Living history, artillery demonstrations at the Petersburg National Battlefield 1-4 pm. Free with park admission. nps.gov/pete
- 28 **VA** Concert, "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard

Bloom'd" based on Walt Whitman's elegy for Lincoln, at the Attucks Theater, 1010 Church St, Norfolk. Part of the Virginia Arts Festival. 7:30 pm. \$5. vafest.org

Author John Zinn to speak on *The Mutinous Regiment: The Thirty-Third New Jersey in the Civil War*

At the New Jersey Civil War Heritage Association's Annual Meeting in Sea Girt, NJ

contact: Tom Burke - (732) 778-4442 - tomburke@njcivilwar150.org

What: **New Jersey Civil War Heritage Annual Meeting**

Featuring Author John Zinn

Where: **NJ National Guard Militia Museum, Sea Girt, NJ**

When: **Saturday, March 22nd, 2014 at 10:00AM**

[Sea Girt, NJ - FEBRUARY 25, 2014] Sea Girt, NJ The New Jersey Civil War Heritage Association (NJCWhA) will hold its annual membership meeting on March 22, 2014 at 10am. The meeting will be held in the National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey located in the Sea Girt National Guard Training Center.

<http://www.nj.gov/military/museum/>

The association's guest speaker will be John Zinn, Chairman of both the New Jersey Civil War 150th Committee and the Board of Trustees of The New Jersey Historical Society. Mr. Zinn, author of **The Mutinous Regiment: The Thirty-Third New Jersey in the Civil War**, will be speaking on the Thirty-third's service during General William Tecumseh Sherman's "March to the Sea" in late 1864

There will also be a brief business meeting where the NJCWhA will review its accomplishments for the past year, report on ongoing projects and elect trustees to fill slots on the organization's Board of Trustees.

For more information visit www.njcivilwar150.org or contact Tom Burke.

First Saturday programs at Andersonville

The Andersonville National Historic Site (GA) is hosting special "First Saturday" ranger programs through 2015 commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Camp Sumter Military Prison. The program topics change every two months. Each segment will feature a theme connected with the site and will highlight a different Civil War prison. The theme for March-April is "Arrival," and the highlighted Civil War prison is Rock Island (IL).

nps.gov/ande

Cemetery Ridge rehab continues

One by one the modern intrusions on Cemetery Ridge on the Gettysburg battlefield are disappearing. The changes already made are evident and dramatic. Gone are the old Cyclorama building and visitor center. Next is the visitor center parking lot, which should be gone by summer.

More info: gettysburgfoundation.org

Virginia Civil War guide for iPads

More than 60 Virginia Civil War sites, ranging from National Parks to community walking trails, are highlighted in a new app for iPads. The *Virginia Civil War Field Guide* app, designed for both on-the-road travel and trip planning, features interactive maps, modern and historic images, and practical, "must-have" information about each site. Cost is \$3.99. It is available on the Apple App Store.



Civil War Song Lyrics #1

I recently acquired a book entitled *Civil War Songbook: With Historical Commentary* by Keith and Rusty McNeil. It includes lyrics and musical scores to 58 songs, from *Goober Peas* through *Aura Lea* to all the verses to *John Brown's Body* and *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. The book is supposed to be a companion volume to a CD, *Civil War Songs*, but I haven't got a copy of the CD (yet). I am going to include lyrics to a few of the songs in that book over the next few issues of the newsletter. If you want the music scores to the songs, or the scores and lyrics to ALL 58 songs, it is available through amazon.com

Lincoln and Liberty

Words: F A Simpkins = Music: traditional Irish folksong, *Old Rosin the Beau*. It was a campaign song in support of Lincoln's Presidential race; popularized by the Hutchinson Family singers.

Hurrah for the choice of the nation,
Our chieftain so brave and so true,
We'll go for the great reformation,
For Lincoln and Liberty, too!
We'll go for the son of Kentucky'
The hero of Hoosierdom through,
The pride of the "suckers" so lucky,
For Lincoln and Liberty, too!

Our David's good sling is unerring,
The Slavocrat's giant he slew,
Then shout for the freedom preferring,
For Lincoln and Liberty, too.
Then up with the banner so glorious,
The star spangled red white and blue,
We'll fight till our banner's victorious,
For Lincoln and Liberty, too!



Death Records Other than Official Death Certificates

OK, on to the next batch of records, those that can either stand in for official death certificates, or point you in the direction of where and when to look for death certificates. I will also discuss some potential problems that sometimes crop up in death records.

If the ancestor whose record you are searching for lived in the 20th century, the first place to look will be the Social Security Death Index (SSDI). If your ancestor had a Social Security Account (SSA) and a Social Security Account Number (SSAN), and he or she died after they began receiving a social security pension, then they should be listed in the SSDI. This index can be accessed for free not only through ancestry.com but also through familysearch.com and several other genealogy websites, and through the Social Security Administration website. It's easiest if you have the social security number of the decedent, but you can search just using a name. Most SSDI listings include the birth date and the place where the person signed up for their social security account, as well their name (usually the most current married name if a woman), death date and the last place their most recent SSA check was mailed to. People applying for SSA had to provide proof of their birth, so the info as to date of birth is usually pretty accurate. (And you can order copies of the SS application, which often lists what documents were used to prove birth date, etc.) Death date is normally reliable, although it also depends on the death being reported correctly to the SS Administration. It does NOT provide usable information on place of death, as the place listed is the last place a SS check went to. Your relative may not have been at home when they died... I have one lady I have been helping with research. According to the SSDI, her great grandmother's last listed place of residence was in Cold Spring, Cape May County. But we couldn't find a death record here at all, not on the date listed on the SSDI, not even a few years one side or the other. Checked for obituaries, using the death date; there was one in the *Cape May Star and Wave* saying she died in Camden while visiting her son and his family. Checked for records in Trenton. Nada. Did a 'global' search on ancestry.com using the name and date of death, but not restricting it to any state in particular. Find a Pennsylvania death index indicating she died in a hospital in Philadelphia. Evidently, she got sick while visiting her son, was taken across the river to the big

hospital, and either died or at least was pronounced dead at the hospital.

And if your ancestor died before starting to receive SS, he or she may not be in the SSDI at all; it's mostly a listing of when people died and stopped receiving their pensions.

Also, be aware that if your ancestor was employed by an organization that had an established pension fund, they may not have gotten SS. If they were an employee of a railroad, or many local, state and federal government agencies, they were not eligible for a SSAN or a SS pension. Also remember, when Social Security was started in 193*, one did not apply for a SSAN until one was a teenager. I didn't get mine until I was 12; I know other people who did not get theirs until 18. My grandparents were born in the 1880s/1890s, so they were in their 40s to 50s when they applied. In some cases, if they had been born in places where no birth records were kept until the 1920s or so, they would have had to have delayed birth records issued. These can be interesting as they would have had to list what documents they had brought in to prove their birth information. However, one caveat with delayed birth records. Some places filed them according to the actual date of birth. Other places filed them by the date the delayed certificate was applied for, or issued. Not all states have indexed their birth records; much less have the indexes online, so this can be a problem.

I touched briefly on another source of death information above – the obituary. If there was an obituary, their usefulness can vary from not very to wonderful. I have some obituaries that go to two columns and talk about the decedent's parents, spouse(s), children, siblings; where they went to school, what organizations they belonged to, what jobs they had held, military or government service if any, and so on. I've also seen some that had less information on them than the SSDI...

If your ancestor lived in Cape May County, the first place you should check is the Cape May County Historical Society Museum Library. They have a wonderful set of card files in the library filled with index cards filled out by volunteers over the years. Those volunteers have gone through all the newspapers the Society has in their collection (albeit on microfilm rather than actual paper) and written out a card, by name, every time someone is named in each and every newspaper, along with brief synopsis of what the article in the newspaper was about (births, marriages, divorces, deaths, appointments to posts, elections, etc.) along with the name of the newspaper, the section, the page, and even the column the article appears in. The card files stop at about 1970.

If you go to the public library and have a library card, you can use their computers to access the various genealogy databases the library subscribes to. This includes Newsbank, which has digital images from hundreds of newspapers. Two, including ancestry, can only be accessed if you are at the library. Others can be accessed at home thru the library website. We'll talk about library resources in a lot more detail in a later article.

If your ancestor lived most of their life back east, then later moved out west and died there, be sure to check the home town newspapers for obituaries as well. One of my g-g-grandmothers (the one married to the Civil War surgeon) was born in Baltimore, and her family stayed in Baltimore when she and her husband eventually moved to Iowa. When she died in Iowa, the Baltimore papers had a bigger obituary for her than

the one in the Franklin Pierce, IA (where they were living when she died) paper did.

There is a free website, www.findagrave.com, that lists just about every cemetery in the US. You can use their search engine in as much detail as you have. If you just know the ancestor's name, you can use just that. Other fields that may be filled out to help cut down the number of false hits include birth date/place, death date/place, state, county, cemetery where ancestor is buried are some of them. Volunteers go out and take photos in cemeteries local to them, and post them to the website. They may also fill out what the website calls a 'memorial' which has info the volunteer may have on the deceased. Sometimes these are from cemetery records and/or obits; other times it is from what the volunteer has researched – and if there is no documentation of the source of the info, they are viewed by most genealogists as being about as reliable as unsourced family trees on ancestry.com – in other words, not reliable at all. Gravestone information is normally considered much more truthful, at least if the stone is from the correct time period. Mind, wrong info can have been incised into the stone, due to anything from stonecutter error (and no one wanting to redo a stone) to the info being given to the stonecutter being in error. If there is just a memorial but no tombstone photo, or not even a memorial, but you are sure your ancestor is buried in that cemetery, you can request a photo, and when a volunteer has a chance, they'll try to get photos of the requested stone.

Often undertakers were the people who gave info to the newspapers for obituaries; they often also have copies of the death certificates on file. Try www.yellowpages.com to find out information on undertakers in the areas you are researching; or write a local historical society or the research librarian at the local public library. They may have information on where undertakers' records may be archived. Plus they may well have copies of those newspapers, and may have indexes to the obituaries and such like. There may even be local county biographies your ancestor may be listed in.

If your ancestor was a veteran and has a government grave marker, check the VA, as they are in charge of issuing the veteran's grave markers. They will have needed not only information as to the birth and death of the decedent, but also proof of service.

If your ancestor belonged to any professional or fraternal organizations – if he or she was a doctor, a Mason, an Odd Fellow, member of the GAR, etc – there may be records in the archives of those organizations of the death. Often members of those organizations would not only attend the funeral, but also be some of the pall bearers and such. It never hurts to check. Look for photos of your ancestor wearing membership pins, or look at symbols carved into the tombstone, or metal markers next to the stone, or glued to it. Many old fraternal organizations have disbanded, but you can Google for information about symbols you may see on gravestones, and often the records of even disbanded groups may have been donated to archives and the like.

There are lots of other possibilities for finding out the death information on your relatives beyond those listed here.

Next time I'll be discussing the subject of state and federal census records.



The following is from Civilwar.org....Part 1 of a series of articles I thought y'all might find of interest.

Children in the Civil War ON THE HOMEFRONT, ON THE BATTLEFIELD BY MARCIE SCHWARTZ



Children were an active, enthusiastic, and critical part of Civil War society. They comprised a much bigger portion of the US population in 1860 than in the 21st century, with persons under age 19 making up nearly half of the population (compared to less than 25% today). Children played an important role on the home front supporting the war effort, and many soldiers on both sides invoked the future of their children as to why the war should be fought and won at any cost. A number of children took up arms with their elders and served as enlisted soldiers or regimental musicians. While we don't know how many children enlisted during the Civil War, we do know that around 48 soldiers who were under the age of 18 won the Congressional Medal of Honor for their bravery and service.

Children on the Home Front

KEEPING THINGS GOING

"In these few months" wrote twelve year old Celine Fremaux of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, "my childhood had slipped away from me. Necessity, human obligations, family pride and patriotism had taken entire possession of my little emaciated body." Children on the Civil War home front encountered trials, hardships, and violence that forced them to grow up quickly amidst a nation at war with itself.



A quartet of African American children sit in the ruins of Circular Church in Charleston, S.C. (Library of Congress)

RESPONSIBILITIES

On the **home front**, both northern and southern children became critical to the war effort in a variety of ways. Children took up jobs that their fathers or brothers had left vacant or those that their mothers could not manage alone as the new head of the household. Children would help tend to livestock and crops, serve as clerks or helpers for the family business, cook meals, and watch their younger siblings while still trying to attend **school**. At school, children would build little **Fort Sumters** of mud and wooden blocks [...] put up clothespins for soldiers, ruthlessly slaughtering them with shot from cannons made of old brass pistol barrels fastened to blocks of wood. Thirteen year old Dan Beard of Cincinnati, Ohio recalled making little **Jefferson Davises** "of potatoes and put sticks in them for legs. We hung the desperate potato men by their necks and shot them with squibs from firecrackers." In the classroom, patriotism was also alive and well. John Bach McMaster of New York City remembered "every morning after Bible reading, the young woman who presided at the piano would sing a **war song**, the boys joining in, and that done, a second and perhaps a third would follow." Many children, however, dropped out of school to support their families, and many others turned to homeschooling when their schools were closed for lack of funding or attendance, or when their **schoolmaster** went off to war.



"Six and Eighty Six Knitting for the Soldiers" (The Tribute Book by Frank Goodrich)

"I was ten years old today. I did not have a cake;" mourned Carrie Berry of Atlanta "times are too hard. I hope that by my next birthday there will be peace in our land." Shortages of these little luxuries, as well as household goods, were common, especially in the less industrialized South, and children were often tasked with making ends meet by sewing clothes and blankets, as well as making soap, candles, and gathering herbs for medicinal purposes. As the war progressed, many children scabbled to have enough to eat, becoming active participants in the Southern Bread Riots that broke out in most of the major southern cities by 1863. Suffering from a lack of provisions, food and money, children formed looting bands to obtain goods for their families, as evidenced by the ultimatum scratched into

a young Richmond girl's journal: "We are starving. As soon as enough of us get together we are going to take the bakeries and each of us will take a loaf of bread. That is little enough for the government to give us after it has taken all our men."

Despite these hardships, children managed to find ways to entertain themselves. "If it had not been for my books" wrote Emma LeConte of Columbia, South Carolina "it would indeed have been hard to bear. But in them I have lived and found my chief source of pleasure. I would take refuge in them from the sadness all around if it were not for other work to be done." Reading, either from magazines, dime novels or books, was a primary pastime for children on both sides of the conflict.

In the North, magazines like *Student and Schoolmate*, *The Little Pilgrim*, and *Our Young Folks* were popular and contained numerous age appropriate articles, fictional stories, trivia, songs, games, patriotic plays to be put up, and poems related to the war. Oliver Optic's produced entertaining wartime adventure tales such as *The Young Lieutenant*, *Fighting Joe*, *Sailor Boy*, and *The Yankee Middy*. While the magazine's prose and Optic's adventure stories focused on the drama and heroics of the war, they also promoted patriotism and virtue and the idea that the reader's individual actions, no matter how small, contributed to something greater than themselves. Children were also able to obtain more factual accounts of the war like *Following the Flag* or *Days and Nights on the Battlefield*, **battlefield maps**, as well as more sensational dime novels.

Cape May County Civil War Round Table
www.cmcewrt.com
c/o

In the South, paper, ink, and skilled printers were scarce, so new material was restricted mainly to hymns and bowdlerized textbooks designed to meet the same aims as their northern counterparts: make children aware of the issues that caused the war and to rally support for the Confederate war effort. The new textbooks spouted nationalism with names like *The Dixie Primer*, *A New Southern Grammar*, and *The Confederate Spelling Book* and their contents promoted values and issues pertinent to the southern cause. The *1863 Geographical Reader for the Dixie Children* briefly explained the war from a southern perspective: "Thousands of lives have been lost, and the earth has been drenched with blood; but still **Abraham** is unable to conquer the "Rebels" as he calls the South. The South only asked to be let alone, and to divide the public property equally. It would have been wise of the North to have said to her Southern sisters, 'If you are not content to dwell with us any longer, depart in peace.'"

More in a future issue!

