

Cape May County Civil War Round Table



November 2019 Newsletter

Meeting Dates

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

November 21 = Rita Fulginiti will be discussing the state of Cape May County at the time of the beginning of the Civil War.

PLEASE, friends, send me articles, book reviews, etc to help me fill up the newsletter!

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President's Update

1) Rita Marie Fulginiti, Cape May County Clerk, Adjuster and County Historian will address our monthly meeting on Thursday, November 21 at 7 PM. The title of Rita's talk is "Keep the Home Fires Burning: Cape May County and a Nation at War". Rita will be discussing the history and attitudes of the people of Cape May County at the onset and during the Civil War. She will share the County Clerk's overall responsibilities and their archiving role in particular. In addition to her county clerk functions, Rita has a long-standing interest in Civil War history herself. In addition I will be bringing two noteworthy historical books to the meeting (under the theme of archiving). The first is a 1893 (two volume set edition) entitled "Pennsylvania at Gettysburg" which includes photographs of monuments and speeches given. A similar set is listed on eBay for \$39.99. The second is a two volume set entitled "The Soldier in our Civil War" - 1890. A similar set is listed on eBay for \$300. They will be on display. You can look at but you cannot touch. They are very fragile.

2) This is the last meeting of the year but I am already working on our speakers for next year. I have several Civil War medical re-enactors and/or experts lined up for next year and also a Civil War musician. I also plan

to have a few military battlefield speakers. They are always very interesting. I hope to make our meetings interesting and informative for all. If you have anyone of particular interest to you please pass the name and phone number on to me. I can follow up on it. More on this in the spring.

3) We will vote for our officers for next year at our November meeting. At this point the existing 2019 officers have all agreed to “re-up” for 2020. We are looking for someone to be a recording secretary and take notes at the meetings. Please volunteer if you’d be willing to do this.

4) I attended an interesting meeting on October 30 at Villanova University. It was titled “Revising the Civil War” and focused on how our understanding of the Civil War has changed over time. The meeting was sponsored by the LePage Center which is the history department at Villanova. Three different speakers gave their perspective on this topic. Rachel Sheldon, a history professor from Penn State spoke about the reasons for the Civil War and the implications and meaning of the “lost cause” agenda. Jill Titus, a professor from Gettysburg College and an expert on the Gettysburg battle talked about the 100th anniversary at Gettysburg in 1963. And Steven Phan, a National Park Ranger who specializes in Civil War Defenses of Washington DC, spoke about his experience as a ranger and how the types of questions he receives have changed over time.

5) On Saturday, November 9 three members of our CW Round Table (Andy Lolli, Lou Bishop and I) traveled to Winchester, Virginia for a seminar titled “The Battles and Leaders that Influenced Lincoln’s Reelection in 1864”. Speakers Gary Ecelbarger and Scott Patchan did a fantastic job of explaining Lincoln’s jeopardized election status in 1864; the battle of Atlanta; the story of Blackjack Logan; Phil Sheridan’s leadership in the Battle of Cedar Creek and the Third Battle of Winchester. I will try to get one or both of these speakers to talk at one of our meetings in 2020. Tall order - but I’m going to try.

6) Our round table has frequently contributed to the Shenandoah Battlefield Preservation Foundation. With this trip to Winchester Virginia, I have now seen with my own eyes some of the good works that these people do. We are fortunate to have this dedicated group of

Civil War enthusiast working diligently to acquire and restore historical land and properties and further document and explain the history of the Civil War in the Shenandoah Valley.

Respectfully,
John Herr, President



Civil War Calendar for December

		1860
December	20	South Carolina secedes
		1861
No major events		
		1862
December	11	Union army crosses Rappahannock River into Fredericksburg
	13	Battle of Fredericksburg
	31-Jan 2	Battle of Stone's River (Murfreesboro) (TN)
		1863
No major events		
		1864
December	15-16	Battle of Nashville
	21	Savannah occupied by Union troops



Civil War Related Events in December 2016

- 7 **MD** Lecture, “Active and Efficient: The Stretcher Bearers and Ambulance Drivers,” at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick. Demonstrations 2:30 pm. Free with admission. civilwarmed.org/event/ambulancedrivers
- 7 **MD** Annual Memorial Illumination at the Antietam National Battlefield near Sharpsburg. Driving tour featuring 23,000 candles. Begins 6 pm. Expect delays, long lines. Visitor center closes 3 pm. Free. nps.gov/anti
- 7 **VA** Living history, “Christmas on the Farm,” 1864 at the Bushong Farm on the New Market battlefield in New Market. 10 am-3 pm. Free with park admission. vmi.edu/museums-and-archives/virginia-museum-of-the-civil-war/events
- 7-8 **WV** Living history, “Captain Flagg’s US Quartermaster City, 1864: Prospects for Peace,” at the Harpers Ferry NHP. 11 am-5 pm. Free with park admission. nps.gov/hafe

7-8 **PA** “Holiday at the House, Gettysburg Christmas Festival,” at the Rupp House History Center in Gettysburg. 10 am-4 pm. Free. gettysburgfoundation.org/exhibits-tours-events/special-events#Illumination

14 **VA** Living history, “Victorian Christmas,” at Ellwood on the Wilderness Battlefield near Routes 3 and 20 west of Fredericksburg. Period Santa (9 am-noon), period decorations and kids’ activities. 9 am-2 pm. Free. fowb.org

14 **VA** Living history, “Christmas in Camp,” at Fort Ward Museum & Historic Site in Alexandria. Camp, tours and historic Santa. Noon-4 pm. \$2. apps.alexandriava.gov/Calendar/Detail.aspx?si=27651

14 **VA** Lecture, “Major General John Bankhead Magruder,” at the Mariners’ Museum in Newport News. 2:30 pm. Free with \$1 museum admission. marinersmuseum.org

14 **MD** “Museums by Candlelight,” special programs, exhibits in Frederick museums. Noon-5 pm. visitfrederick.org

21 **MD** Lecture, “Christmas and the Civil War,” at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick. 2:30 pm. Free with admission. civilwarmed.org/event/christmas



What Civil War soldiers can teach us about how trauma is passed from generation to generation

From the *Los Angeles Times*

Union soldiers pose during the Siege of Petersburg in Virginia in 1864. A new study of the descendants of Union soldiers shows how the effects of trauma are passed down from generation to generation.

By [MELISSA HEALY](#) STAFF WRITER

OCT. 17, 2018

An experience of life-threatening horrors surely scars the person who survives it. It also may have a corrosive effect on the longevity and health of that person's children and, in some cases, on the well-being of generations beyond.

The latest evidence of trauma's long shadow comes from the families of American Civil War veterans. Focused on the children of Union soldiers who were held in Confederate prisoner of war camps, it offers tantalizing clues about the means by which a legacy of misery is transmitted from parent to child — as well as a way to disrupt that inheritance.

After tracing the births and deaths of nearly 10,000 offspring of Union combatants, researchers found that the sons of men who served time as POWs lived shorter lives than the sons of men who were not held captive. They also lived much shorter lives than their brothers who were born before the war began, according to a study [published](#) this week in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

UCLA economic historian [Dora L. Costa](#) inherited stewardship of a trove of Civil War service documents in 2013 after the death of her mentor, Nobel laureate [Robert William Fogel](#). She had always assumed the records would tell a story of how education, class and economic differences influenced the adjustment of former soldiers and their families back to civilian life.

"I was wrong," Costa said.

Instead, she found evidence to suggest that no matter how poor or prosperous his background, a father's extreme hardship and privation alter the function of his genes in ways that can be passed on to his children.

In the annals of organized human suffering, the POW camps of the latter half of the Civil War rank way up there. For the first two years of the conflict, the North and the South held informal POW swaps. After the swaps ceased in 1863, desperation among Confederate commanders and indignation among leaders of the Union prompted both sides to deprive their prisoners of food, medicine, sanitation and shelter. As a result, hunger, overcrowding, cold and pestilence killed close to 16% of POWs from the North and 12% of POWs from the South.

The conditions at one of the most notorious Confederate prison camps — [Andersonville](#) in southwest Georgia — were particularly well-documented. Built for 10,000 people, Andersonville held more than 45,000 Union soldiers during the 14

months it operated, and 29% of them died of starvation and disease before they could be released. The camp's commandant, [Capt. Henry Wirz](#), was tried and hanged after the Confederate surrender in April 1865

The fates of the survivors who staggered north to resume their lives as husbands and fathers were also well-documented. And like many large groups of trauma victims studied by researchers, these veterans and their children told a powerful story.

Drawing on thousands of handwritten military and pension records preserved in the National Archives, as well as on U.S. Census data from the era, Costa's team pieced together the fates of the children of Union soldiers who survived the war and lived at least until 1890.

The researchers identified offspring of 1,999 Union soldiers who were held as POWs — more than half of them at Andersonville — before returning home. They also found the children of 7,810 Union soldiers who survived the war without being captured by the South.

On average, Northern veterans who spent time in Confederate POW camps had 3.3 children, while those who avoided the camps had 3.1 children.

The differences between the two groups were stark — at least for the sons.

After reaching the age of 45 — old enough to see the effects of any inherited factors that might influence longevity — the sons of POWs were roughly 11% more likely to die at any given age than were the sons of men who had not been held prisoner.

In an even more telling comparison, the researchers turned up 342 POWs who had at least one son conceived before the war began and at least one more born after the war ended. The researchers found that, at any age after 45, the younger brothers were more than twice as likely to die than their older brothers had been when they were the same age. (With only 1,067 sons in this part of the analysis, the researchers said this finding should be interpreted with caution.)

The shorter lifespans of the POWs' sons didn't become evident until they had reached what, in that period, would have been late middle age. Though death records were not uniformly detailed, these premature deaths were largely attributable to cerebral hemorrhages and cancer, the researchers reported.

The longevity gap remained after Costa and her colleagues accounted for a welter of socioeconomic factors that might drive differences in lifespan, such as family real-estate holdings and occupational class.

None of these patterns were evident among the daughters of the Union soldiers. That led the study authors to dismiss the idea that the psychological legacy of the POW camps could account for the differences. If

a father's trauma resulted in family violence, paternal absence or emotional distance, the effects would likely be seen in daughters as well as sons, they reasoned. And they weren't.

The fact that sons, but not daughters, appeared to have inherited some life-shortening bit of their father's misery does suggest that a genetic actor may be at work — one that is passed along with the Y chromosome, Costa said.

Epigenetics also might be at work here, she added. That's the chemical signaling process by which genes turn on and off in different tissues at different times, often in response to environmental factors like food supply. While epigenetic marks don't alter a person's genetic code, they can profoundly alter how that code is expressed. And they appear to powerfully influence the expression of genes that are passed on to a growing embryo.

Consider the evidence from a [series of studies](#) tracking several generations in the isolated Swedish community of Overkalix, Costa said. That research has linked parents' food availability to the midlife health of their children and grandchildren. Those studies' complex findings have shown that dietary abundance or scarcity at specific points in time exert sharply different influences on men and women and their progeny. They've also furnished evidence that dietary stress may transmit certain vulnerabilities to future generations through paternal DNA.

Other studies of traumatized groups have found evidence that the experience turns genes on and off in ways that are carried down to the next generation and beyond.

In the nine months before the Allies defeated the Nazis in May 1945, Germany blocked all food supplies to the Dutch and caused a famine that killed 20,000 people in the Netherlands. Decades later, [researchers would find](#) that, in middle age, the children of Dutch women who were pregnant during that period — daughters especially — went on to suffer higher rates of heart disease, diabetes and schizophrenia. They also died earlier than their compatriots who were born before or after the famine. Six decades after their birth, the Dutch famine offspring still bore distinctive epigenetic signs of stress linked to poorer health.

Another [study](#) of Finnish children evacuated abruptly from their homes in the midst of World War II found that the daughters of evacuees were more than twice as likely to have been hospitalized for a mood disorder than were their female cousins whose mothers had not been evacuated. (There was no such relationship for sons.)

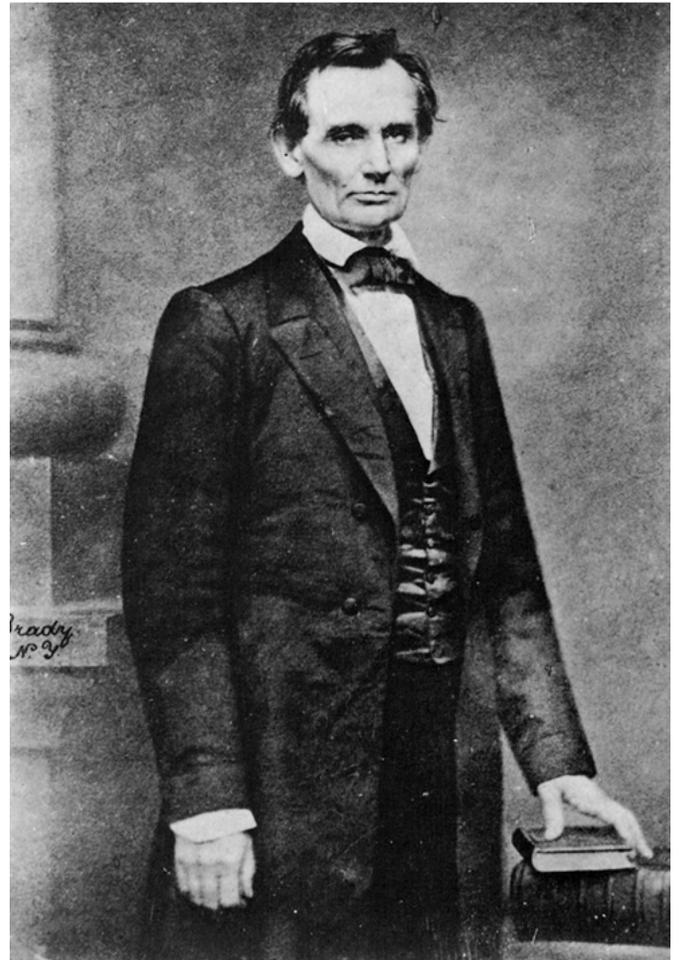
The new research on Civil War soldiers builds on this work by offering an intriguing bit of hope: evidence not only for the corrosive power of paternal stress, but also for the possible role of maternal nutrition in countering it.

The life-shortening effect of a father's POW status was magnified for the sons who were born in April, May and June, when food supplies tended to be leanest. But that effect virtually disappeared among sons born during September, October and November, when harvests are in and food is typically more plentiful.

This disparity jibes with studies in animals that have shown the power of dietary supplementation before and during pregnancy to counter worrisome epigenetic effects, Costa said.

In an era when food is mostly plentiful, the lessons from an earlier America may not seem relevant, Costa acknowledged. But supporting the nutrition of childbearing women in communities under stress seems like a no-brainer, said Costa.

"Maternal nutrition seems like a safe and do-no-harm policy, and it is likely to have positive effects," she said.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN FACTS

1. He was the only president to have a patent: he invented a device to free steamboats that ran aground.
2. He practiced law without a degree. Lincoln had about 18 months of formal schooling.
3. He wanted women to have the vote in 1836.
4. He was a big animal lover, but he wouldn't hunt or fish.
5. He really was a wrestler. Lincoln was documented as taking part in wrestling bouts.
6. He lost in his first bid for a presidential ticket. The unknown Lincoln was an unsuccessful vice presidential candidate in 1856 at the Republican convention.
7. He never belonged to an organized church. Lincoln read the Bible daily, but he never joined an organized church in his lifetime.
8. He didn't drink, smoke, or chew. He was a simple man of tastes, and he never drank in the White House.
9. He didn't have a middle name. Lincoln went through his life with two names.
10. He hated being called Abe. Apparently, he preferred being called by his last name.
11. Lincoln established Thanksgiving as a national holiday.
12. He was the first president born outside of the thirteen original states.
13. Lincoln loved to eat oysters.
14. Lincoln's cat ate at the White House dinner table.
15. His dog was named Fido.
16. His cat was named Tabby.
17. His favorite food was fruit.
18. He was also a big fan of chicken casserole.
19. Lincoln was the first president to use the telegraph.
20. He used the telegraph like email to communicate with generals.
21. Lincoln's mother was killed by poisoned milk.
22. Lincoln's life was saved twice when he was young.
23. Grave robbers were foiled in 1876 when they tried to steal Lincoln's body.
24. He was the first president with a beard.
25. Lincoln argued a case before the Supreme Court in 1849 and lost.
26. Lincoln failed in his first business.
27. Lincoln's shoe size was between 12 and 14.
28. His coffin has been opened five times.
29. Lincoln was estranged from his father and didn't attend his funeral.
30. Lincoln didn't play musical instruments.
31. Lincoln served one term in the U.S. House of Representatives.
32. He ran for the U.S. Senate twice and lost.
33. Lincoln won the popular vote in Senate campaign against Douglas but lost the election.
34. Lincoln was shot on Good Friday.
35. Lincoln was photographed with John Wilkes Booth at his second inauguration.
36. There are no direct living descendants of Abraham Lincoln.
37. Booth's brother saved the life of Lincoln's son on a New Jersey train platform.
38. Lincoln was part of séances after his son died in the White House.
39. Lincoln's animals also died in a White House stable fire.
40. Someone shot at Lincoln in 1864 and put a hole in his stovepipe hat.
41. Lincoln was the first president to be assassinated.
42. He was a judge on the circuit court in Illinois.
43. Lincoln defended the son of his most famous wrestling opponent from murder charges.
44. Lincoln battled depression for much of his life.
45. Lincoln was seemingly obsessed with cats.
46. He was set to take part in a duel, but it was cancelled at the last second.
47. Lincoln kept his important documents inside his hat.
48. Lincoln's dog Fido was killed by a drunken assailant a year after Lincoln died.
49. Lincoln's suit was made by Brooks Brothers.
50. Lincoln's guest at Ford's Theater was Ulysses S. Grant, who cancelled at the last second.

<http://blog.constitutioncenter.org/2014/02/50-shades-of-abraham-lincoln-2/>



Fort Delaware

July 17, 1863

The Battle of Honey Springs

Union and Confederate troops had frequently skirmished in the vicinity of Honey Springs Depot. The Union commander in the area, Maj. Gen. James G. Blunt, correctly surmised that Confederate forces, mostly Native American troops under the command of Brig. Gen. Douglas H. Cooper, were about to concentrate and would then attack his force at Fort Gibson. He decided to defeat the Confederates at Honey Springs Depot before they were joined by Brig. Gen. William Cabell's brigade, advancing from Fort Smith, Arkansas. Blunt began crossing the swollen Arkansas River on July 15, 1863, and, by midnight on July 16-17, he had a force of 3,000 men, composed of whites, Native Americans, and African Americans, marching toward Honey Springs. Blunt skirmished with Rebel troops early on the morning of the 17th, and by midafternoon, full-scale fighting ensued. The Confederates had wet powder, causing misfires, and the problem intensified when rain began. After repulsing one attack, Cooper pulled his forces back to obtain new ammunition. In the meantime, Cooper began to experience command problems, and he learned that Blunt was about to turn his left flank. The Confederate retreat began, and although Cooper fought a rearguard action, many of those troops counterattacked, failed, and fled. Any possibility of the Confederates taking Fort Gibson was gone. Following this battle, Union forces controlled Indian Territory, north of the Arkansas River.

Frightful Realities of the Civil War

Head-Tilting History • October 18, 2019 • Updated October 15, 2019



October is the season for ghost stories, but sometimes reality is even more chilling. There are grim truths and gory details from the Civil War that may sound like the stuff of horror films, but for many Americans during our nation's defining conflict, they were reality.

When the Cure Is Worse than the Disease.

Fortunately for the wounded and sick, the "heroic era" of bloodletting, purging, and blistering to rebalance the humors of the body was on its way out by the time of the Civil War. Still, toxic "remedies" like mercury, lead acetate, and turpentine were commonly used to treat illness. In 1863, Union Surgeon General William Hammond attempted to remove calomel, a mercury-based compound, from standard military medical kits but lost his position instead. The approximately 50,000 amputations performed during the Civil War might seem like another extreme cure, but medical historians agree that, in fact, [amputations are something Civil War medicine got right](#).

The Invisible Assassin.

The deadliest killers in the Civil War wouldn't be identified until after the fighting was over. While germ theory was in the works at the time, it was in its early stages and virtually unknown to medical practitioners in the field. Poor sanitation and hygiene in camps and hospitals meant that [illnesses like dysentery, typhoid fever, pneumonia, mumps, measles and tuberculosis](#) were more dangerous to soldiers than their human foes. For every three soldiers killed in battle, [five died of disease](#).

Agony in the Aftermath.

Many soldiers who survived battle faced a host of horrors in the aftermath. Hypothermia. Hunger. A night spent alone among the dead (or fighting off wild hogs as in one account from Gettysburg) on newly hallowed ground while officers negotiated arrangements for recovering their casualties. Capture and imprisonment in [overcrowded, disease-ridden prison camps](#). Bones

shattered by Minie ball bullets. Phantom limb syndrome. Many wounded Civil War soldiers succumbed to their injuries well after the fighting was over – and those who didn't often faced a long and painful recovery process.

The Sheer Magnitude.

It's hard to overstate [the devastation of the Civil War](#). About 2% of all Americans alive at the time, [an estimated 620,000 soldiers](#), lost their lives in the line of duty. That figure is more than the combined total of Americans who died in WWI, WWII, and the Vietnam and Korean Wars. One in four soldiers who left home to fight in the war never returned. The young nation lacked the institutions and infrastructure to cope with so much death and destruction. Both North and South would struggle [to honor and bury the dead](#), take care of the wounded, locate the missing, and comprehend so much loss.

For more about how U.S. culture and infrastructure adapted to deal with death on such an unprecedented scale, read Drew Gilpin Faust's [This Republic of Suffering](#). For more frightful facts, watch the Trust's [Halloween Facebook Live](#) at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine.

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



Abandoned Confederate defenses at Atlanta (GA)

