



The Dispatch
Newspaper of the

CAPITAL DISTRICT CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

PO Box 14871 Albany, NY 12212
www.capitaldistrictcivilwar.org



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LEST WE FORGET



In May 2008, the Frederick County Board of Supervisors voted to allow Carmeuse Lime and Stone to expand its existing operation on the Cedar Creek Battlefield. The vote permitted Carmeuse to mine 394 acres of core battlefield land at Cedar Creek. In response to this decision, an alliance of national and local preservation groups formed the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove Coalition to increase public awareness about the impact of the new mining on the battlefield, as well as to promote future preservation efforts at Cedar Creek.

More than 1,450 acres of the Cedar Creek Battlefield are preserved with much of the land owned by nonprofit preservation groups.

JUNE MEETING

FRIDAY, JUNE 9, 2017

WATERVLIET SENIOR CENTER

1541 BROADWAY

WATERVLIET, NY

Battlefield Preservation at Cedar Creek and Saratoga

By Amy Bracewell

Social Hour	6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Business Meeting	7:00 p.m.
Presentation	7:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Questions & Answers	8:00 – 8:30 p.m.

The regular meeting of the CDCWRT will be held at the Watervliet Senior Center on Friday, June 9, 2017. Our special speaker is Amy Bracewell, who will talk about Battlefield Preservation at Cedar Creek and the NPS at Saratoga.

Amy Brooke Bracewell is the Superintendent of the National Historical Park at Saratoga. Bracewell has a Bachelor of Arts degree in anthropology and German studies from Emory University in Georgia, a master's degree in art history from the University of Texas at Austin and a master's degree in historic preservation from the University of Georgia. She did course work with Harvard University's Archaeological Field School in Copan, Honduras. She previously worked as historian and education coordinator for Mount Rushmore National Memorial.

Amy's previous assignment was at Cedar

Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park, in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley, where she was the site manager and oversaw the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Cedar Creek.

Her goals and the activities of our CWRT match up very well.

GORE BOOK DUE THIS SUMMER

Long-time member of the CDCWRT, Gene Gore, has spoken to the Round Table in the past about the members of his family who fought in the Civil War.

Gene has written a book titled "CALEB – The Heroic Story of A Union Soldier Who Was a Prisoner in Four Confederate Camps." The book is being published by The Book House of Troy (NY) and will be out on Amazon in late June or early July. I am sure Gene will have some for sale at the annual picnic, so make sure you bring some cash! The publisher has not yet established a price.

BOARD MEETING

At the May 22nd meeting of the Board, a \$500 donation from the preservation account was made to the Civil War Trust for a \$76.26:1 match for the purchase of land at Reams Station, Bristoe Station and Trevilian Station. Our \$500 was leverage to \$38,130.

This brought our total cash or cash value donation total to \$271,089 and our total matched or leveraged donation to:

\$1, 503, 064

Yes, that is correct, over one and one-half million dollars. Most of our revenues have come from sales of books, raffles, sales of t-shirts, and most of all, commemorative envelopes. We do not believe that any other round table in the country can make that claim, including Chicago, New York, Philadelphia or Richmond.

UP-COMING MEETING/EVENTS.

On Friday, September 8, the regular meeting of the CDCWRT will sponsor Ron Beaver who will talk about Civil War Railroads.

On Friday, October 13, the regular meeting of the CDCWRT will sponsor Judee Synakowski who will talk about Mary Todd Lincoln.

On Friday, November 10, the regular meeting of the CDCWRT will sponsor Dave Dixon who will talk about the Lost Gettysburg Address.

SPECIAL BOOK SALE!

The CDCWRT is sponsoring a special book sale at the JUNE meeting. Members can bring their own books to sell (the books do not need to be limited to the Civil War) so members can clean out some of their collections. Details of the sale were announced at the May meeting. Members will need to register in advance by sending Round Table President, Erin Baillargeon, an email (embailargeon@hotmail.com and subject should be "CDCWRT books") so we know how many tables to set up. We ask that members donate a small percentage of their sales to the Round Table.

This will be a chance to clear out those shelves of the five books you bought several years ago about Teddy Roosevelt. You can then buy at a great price five new books about George Washington!

BUFORD'S VIEW – JUNE

(A column by our Program Chair by Matt George.)

On June 9, four members of the CDCWRT including myself will be traveling to Chattanooga for the Civil War Trust Conference. It is regrettable that we will have

to miss our regular meeting with Superintendent Amy Bracewell of the Saratoga Military Park, talking about battle field preservation at both Saratoga and Cedar Creek (her previous post). However, upon arriving at Chattanooga we will be proud to report to the CWT that with the newest contribution to the CWT of \$500.00 with a 76.26 to 1 matching grant, our lifetime donations to battlefield preservation have crossed the \$1.5 million mark. Hopefully the book sales at the next meeting are financially successful allowing us to continue our long record of being the premier Round Table in the country in respect to battlefield preservation.

On June 29, I'll be leaving for Gettysburg for our annual fund raising Commemorative postal cancelation. Matt Farina designed the cancels and the envelopes feature actual photographs of the young men who fought (including two local soldiers – one from the 134th N. Y. and the other from the 18th N. Y.). These photos were made possible by the kind permission of former Conference speaker and author Ron Coddington.

One of my favorite Civil War historians is Eric Foner. I met Eric and heard him speak in Peekskill six years ago at a Lincoln dinner. He has been writing books and magazine articles since the 1970's. These works include: **Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men; Forever Free: The Story of Emancipation and Reconstruction; Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution** and **Fiery Trial - Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery**. A recent book has compiled a number of the articles he has written for the Nation Magazine from 1977 to 1999 (**Battles For Freedom**). In an article he wrote on November 8, 1999, he addressed a controversial issue being discussed today. In a spirit of discussion I will present parts of that article in this and the column continuing in September. Anyone wishing to respond in agreement or disagreement is more than welcome.

From the article – Our Monumental Mistakes –

Foner writes, "What really concerns historian James Loewon (of the U. of Vermont) is not so much misrepresentations.....but lies of omission." Nietzsche spoke of 'creative forgetfulness' as essential to historical memory; what isn't memorialized, tells us as much about a society's sense of the past as what is. For Loewon, the great scandal of our public history is the treatment of slavery, the Civil War and the country's long history of racial injustice.

Amnesia best describes America's official stance regarding slavery. Visitors to Washington, D.C. will find a national museum devoted to the holocaust, funded annually with millions of dollars of taxpayer's money, but, nothing related to slavery, our home-grown crime against humanity" (it should noted that this was written 8 years ago, before the new African-American museum – Matt). "Tours of historic plantations ... ignore or sugar coat the lives of slaves. No whips or chains or other artifacts of discipline are on display, and presentations by guides focus on the furniture, gardens and architecture rather than the role of slave labor in creating the wealth they represent."

"The slave trade, a central element of the pre-Civil War Southern economy, has also disappeared from public history." (Again this was written before the movie Twelve Years a Slave – Matt) "In Alexandria, Virginia, the Franklin and Armfield Office bears a plaque designating it as a National Historic Landmark. That this elegant building served as headquarters for the city's largest slave dealer is conveniently forgotten."

This does awaken some memories I have of a tour of Civil War Memphis I took at a CWT Conference there a few years ago.

To be continued....

MUMMIES, NEWSPAPERS, PATRIOTIC COVERS & THE CIVIL WAR

By Wayne Youngblood

It's possible there are mummies lurking in your collection — or at least parts of them.

We frequently don't give much thought to the paper our stamps and covers are produced on, but papermaking has a long, colorful, and somewhat sordid history involving various crimes, body snatching, and — now — confirmed evidence of perhaps widespread use of mummy wrappings for pulp.

For many years, the idea of mummy paper has been debated and was thought by many in the world of papermaking to be little more than urban legend.

Mummy paper includes any number of products created using (at least in part) the linen wrappings of mummies imported from Egypt. As it turns out, from a relatively recent discovery, a number of our philatelic artifacts might contain traces of mummies.

Due to many reasons, including a rapidly growing literacy rate and the rapid expansion of the newspaper industry, the demand for paper spiked during the mid-19th century. At the time, most paper was made with a high percentage of rag content, and demand for rags far outstripped the available supply.

By the mid-1850s, papermaking in America was approaching a crisis, with no significant new source of rags in sight. In Britain, it was not uncommon for criminals to dig up the recently deceased, sell the bodies for medical dissection, and peddle the clothing as rags for papermaking. In the United States, however, another scenario began playing out.

Isaiah Deck, an archaeologist, geologist, explorer, and physician, gave thought to mummy paper after having visited Egypt in 1847 searching for Cleopatra's lost emerald mines. While there, he noted the huge number of mummies and parts (human and animal) that were frequently exposed in "Mummy pits" after sandstorms.

By Deck's calculations in 1855 (from his "On a Supply of Paper Material from the Mummy Pits of Egypt," in *Transactions of the American Institute of the City of New York*, for the year 1854), there were enough easily accessed mummies providing linen of the "finest texture" to sate the papermaking needs of America for about 14 years (at the average consumption of 15 pounds per person per year).

Besides, the bones of animals (and, he presumed, humans) were already being extensively used for creating charcoal for Egyptian sugar refineries. Linens for paper, he reasoned, should be obtainable for "a trifling cost."

Even earlier, in its Dec. 17, 1847, issue, the *Cold Water Fountain*, a temperance newspaper in Gardiner, Maine, ran an article regarding the potential use of mummies for paper. "The latest idea of the Pacha of Egypt for a new source of revenue is the conversion of the cloth which covers the bodies of the dead into paper, to be sold to add to the treasury," the article states. The paper went on to describe the fine quality of the linen and its superior suitability for papermaking.

One of the earliest reports of mummies as paper pulp comes from the Aug. 12, 1858, issue of the *Northern Home Journal*, when a visitor to the Great Falls Mill in Gardiner, Maine, complained about the smell of rags, noting that "the most singular and the cleanest division of the whole filthy mess ... were the plundered wrappings of men, bulls, crocodiles and cats, torn from the respectable

defunct members of the same ... [to be mingled] with the vulgar unmentionables of the shave-pated herd of modern Egyptians."

An example of a locally produced folded letter mailed from Gardiner in 1860 is shown below. It bears an example of the 1857 3¢ George Washington stamps (Scott 25). Dard Hunter, in his *Papermaking: The History and Technique of an Ancient Craft*, documented a paper mill in Gardiner, Maine (likely Great Falls), that — in 1863 — used mummy wrappings due to a shortage of rags during the Civil War.



A History of the S.D. Warren Co., produced in 1954 to celebrate the centennial of the papermaker, discussed the shortage in a chapter detailing the transition to wood pulp. For rags, "one of the most unusual sources was Egypt, where many yards of cloth wrapped around thousands of mummies were stripped and shipped to paper-hungry countries."

Unfortunately, the oft-repeated legend that mummy linens caused multiple outbreaks of cholera in part led to the general acceptance that mummy paper was only a myth and not a reality. However, it is well documented that in Europe mummies were being ground up for a snuff-like "medicine" and for use as a paint pigment (named "mummy").

It certainly is not only conceivable, but probable, that linens were used for papermaking in multiple U.S. locations. However, likely due to prevailing religious sensibilities regarding corpses, the use of

these imports was not widely publicized.

The prime piece of physical evidence is the existence of a broadside discovered by mummy researcher S.J. Wolfe in the Brown University archives, reinforced by the example, illustrated here, which I located several years ago, the only one known in private hands.

The item was created for the Norwich, Conn., bicentennial celebration in 1859 and features an ad for the Chelsea Manufacturing Co. of Greenville, Conn., at the bottom, “the largest paper manufactory in the world.”

The text, enlarged in the final illustration, reads (in part): “The material of which it is made, was brought from Egypt. It was taken from the ancient tombs where it had been used in embalming mummies.”



“The largest paper manufactory in the world. The material of which it is made, was brought from Egypt. It was taken from the ancient tombs where it had been used in embalming mummies. A part of the process of manufacturing is exhibited in the procession. The daily production of the Company’s mills is about 14,000 pounds.”

It’s entirely possible that a good number of U.S. envelopes manufactured during the 1850s and 1860s from multiple factories (if not stamps themselves and stamped envelopes) may very well contain traces of mummy paper.

What might be hiding in your collection?

THE BAYONET IN THE GREAT WAR (From the Roads to the Great War Series)

In the Revolutionary War, the bayonet was the weapon of terror used by British forces. By the time of the Civil War, the rifled musket had changed that. Yet the bayonet continued to be used in subsequent wars.

The soldier should not be taught to shrink from the bayonet attack, but to seek it. If the infantry is deprived of the arme blanche, if the impossibility of bayonet fighting is preached, and the soldier is never given an opportunity in time of peace of defending himself, man to man, with his weapon in bayonet fencing, an infantry will be developed, which is unsuitable for attack and which, moreover, lacks a most essential quality, viz., the moral power to reach the enemy's position.

Colonel William Balck, Tactics: Introduction and Formal Tactics of Infantry, 1911

Looking into the obsolescence of the bayonet during the First World War is a complicated issue. As a direct killing weapon the bayonet was certainly past its prime, though it is debatable whether or not it ever had history. At best, a fraction of a percentage of total casualties were inflicted by the bayonet during the Great War, though unfortunately we will never know the true account for many deaths on any battlefield in modern numbers.

Simple statistics, however, belie the true uses of the bayonet before and during the fighting. As discussed in this paper, bayonet assault doctrine was the result not of wistful nostalgia among the high commands—though it would have satisfied traditionalists—but of deliberate strategic decisions made to overcome existing difficulties. The problem of moving men forward through the fire-swept zone dominated tactical thinking at the turn of the 19th century, and after. In the Russo-Japanese War it was sincerely believed that such problems could be overcome by morale and the mass bayonet charge. During the war itself, the bayonet found use as a psychological tool, capitalizing on a natural human revulsion at the thought of being stabbed to both frighten the enemy and carry soldiers wielding it forward. Allied units

with a reputation for closing with the enemy and engaging in hand-to-hand killing, such as the "savage" non-white colonial troops, were feared by the Germans out of all proportion to their success in the line.

So while doubt can (and should) be cast on the bayonet's efficacy as a killing weapon, it was never intended as an anachronistic substitute for firepower, but rather as a solution to defensive fire. Given the theoretical difficulty of integrating fire and movement in the doctrines of the time, the bayonet charge was a rational—if not entirely successful—solution in overcoming it in infantry doctrine. Even when the *coude à coude* (elbow to elbow) formations failed, though, the "offensive spirit" engendered by the bayonet was held in high regard by commanders and military theorists during the war, and it saw frequent use as a morale booster and component of the war's many infantry advances. Given all of this, a serious reassessment needs to be made of how the bayonet is portrayed and demonized in the histories of the Great War, and the bolstering of the moral power of soldiers in pitting steel against fire demands broader acknowledgment in the literature.

The rarity of bayonet fights does not prove the uselessness of the bayonet, but shows that opponents will rarely be found who are equally capable of making use of it. Indeed, the bayonet cannot be abolished for the reason, if for no other, that it is the sole and exclusive embodiment of that will power which alone, both in war and in every-day life, attains its objective, whereas reason only tends to facilitate the attainment of the object.

Lt. Colonel Dave Grossman, On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society, 2009)

SHERIDAN'S RIDE

By Thomas Buchanan Read

Up from the South, at break of day,
Bringing to Winchester fresh dismay,
The affrighted air with a shudder bore,
Like a herald in haste to the chieftain's door,
The terrible grumble, and rumble, and roar,
Telling the battle was on once more,
And Sheridan twenty miles away.

And wider still those billows of war
Thundered along the horizon's bar;
And louder yet into Winchester rolled
The roar of that red sea uncontrolled,
Making the blood of the listener cold,
As he thought of the stake in that fiery fray,
With Sheridan twenty miles away.

But there is a road from Winchester town,
A good, broad highway leading down:
And there, through the flush of the morning light,
A steed as black as the steeds of night
Was seen to pass, as with eagle flight;
As if he knew the terrible need,
He stretched away with his utmost speed.
Hills rose and fell, but his heart was gay,
With Sheridan fifteen miles away.

Still sprang from those swift hoofs, thundering south,
The dust like smoke from the cannon's mouth,
Or the trail of a comet, sweeping faster and faster,
Foreboding to traitors the doom of disaster.
The heart of the steed and the heart of the master
Were beating like prisoners assaulting their walls,
Impatient to be where the battle-field calls;
Every nerve of the charger was strained to full play,
With Sheridan only ten miles away.

Under his spurning feet, the road
Like an arrowy Alpine river flowed,
And the landscape sped away behind
Like an ocean flying before the wind;
And the steed, like a barque fed with furnace ire,
Swept on, with his wild eye full of fire;
But, lo! he is nearing his heart's desire;
He is snuffing the smoke of the roaring fray,
With Sheridan only five miles away.

The first that the general saw were the groups
Of stragglers, and then the retreating troops;
What was to be done? what to do?—a glance told him
both.

Then striking his spurs with a terrible oath,
He dashed down the line, 'mid a storm of huzzas,
And the wave of retreat checked its course there,
because

The sight of the master compelled it to pause.
With foam and with dust the black charger was gray;
By the flash of his eye, and his red nostril's play,
He seemed to the whole great army to say:
'I have brought you Sheridan all the way
From Winchester down to save the day.'

Hurrah! hurrah for Sheridan!
Hurrah! hurrah for horse and man!
And when their statues are placed on high
Under the dome of the Union sky,
The American soldier's Temple of Fame,
There, with the glorious general's name,
Be it said, in letters both bold and bright:
'Here is the steed that saved the day
By carrying Sheridan into the fight,
From Winchester—twenty miles away!'

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Created in 1984, the Capital District Civil War Round Table is an incorporated non-profit educational organization. Meetings are held monthly in various locations in the Capital District. This newsletter is published eleven times per year. Annual dues are \$30. The purpose of the organization is to promote, educate, and further stimulate interest in, and discussion of, all aspects of the Civil War period.

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