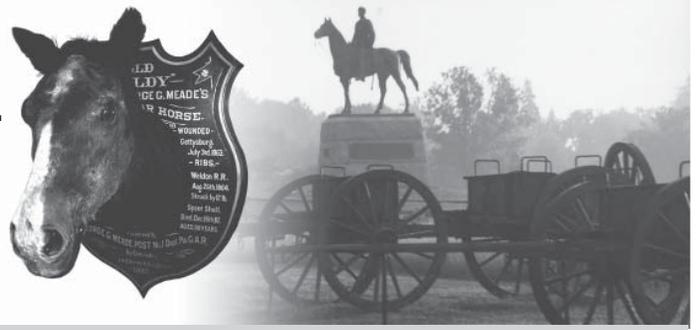


Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia



December 5, 2012, The One Hundred and Fiftieth Year of the Civil War

"A Sword in the Attic: Searching for Thomas Hall"



Thomas Hall
and
Bill Cannon



Join us on **Wednesday, November 7th at 7:15 PM at Camden County College, Blackwood Campus** when historian **Bill Cannon** will present a program entitled "A Sword in the Attic: Searching for Thomas Hall". His program will focus on his desire and search to find an ancestor's participation in the Union Army, his Civil War activities and life as a soldier. How it all started with finding an old sword. We should learn some insight into searching and finding a history of our ancestors.

Bill Cannon is a freelance writer and blogger working in the automotive, health care and animal advocacy fields. He is the former editor-in-chief of Motor Age magazine, where he garnered three national writing awards, and also is the editor of the recently released book, "Meet the Presidents," by Walter Eckman. Bill's articles on the social aspects of gray wolf families have appeared on web sites around the country, including that of the Living with Wolves Foundation in Sun Valley, Utah. He holds bachelor and master's degrees from West Chester University, and a business accreditation from the Automotive Management Institute in Bedford, Texas. He also has written and recorded a CD of his own music called, "In Time." Bill is the great, great, great nephew of Thomas Hall by marriage, and has been researching Hall's life in his spare time for about ten years.

**Wednesday, December 5, 2012 - 7:15 PM,
Blackwood Campus
Camden County College**

Notes from the President...

Hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving holiday weekend. Thanks to the nor'easter we get to enjoy one more meeting this year. **Bill Cannon** will give us his presentation on December 5th in Blackwood. The Board recent met to review the ballots on the Old Baldy name. The membership voted to retain the name. Funds were distributed to worthwhile organizations and plans made for the coming months. See the notes on the meeting in this newsletter. Please submit your dues to fund the great programs we will host in the coming year. If you have suggestions for topics or presenters please let us know your ideas. Congratulations to our friend **Albert El** on receiving the well-deserved Award of Merit from the Del-Val Civil War Round Table for his work over the years with the 3rd Colored Troops, the GAR Museum, and the Meade Association. He had a display set up at the College during the November 14th lecture.

On December 10th **Allen Guelzo** will present *Fateful Lighting* at the Union League, the details are on page x. At 11:30 on December 31st at Laurel Hill Cemetery will be the General Meade's 197th Birthday celebration. Let us know if you are interested in attending these events so traveling groups can be organized. The Civil War Institute has posted a new slate of classes for the spring. Ask **Bob Russo**, at our meeting, as he is a current student there.

During the coming months our round table will reorganize as we settle into a location accommodating our new members. We are planning a social event in January for members to get to know each other and will hold elections in February. Next year will be a key period of commemoration of the Sesquicentennial. Be sure to get out, enjoy them and write it up in a future newsletter. The literature from the New Jersey 150th Committee makes great holiday gifts, look for them at our meeting.

Happy holidays to those who will not be able to join us on the 5th. Enjoy Hanukah, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and New Year's. We look forward to seeing many of you at an upcoming event.

Look forward to seeing you next week.

Rich Jankowski, President

Board Happenings

At the post-Thanksgiving Board meeting in addition to reviewing the comments members wrote on their ballots, Our mailing address was changed to:

1671 Marla Place, Vineland, NJ 08361

The membership application was updated to include this and a line was added to indicate the \$10 fee for hard copy of the newsletter. After reviewing the proposals and some discussion, the Round Table made donations to the following organizations: New Jersey National Guard Museum in Sea Girt (which suffered major damage during Hurricane Sandy); the Confederate Museum in New Orleans; the GAR Museum in Grissom Street; and Woodlands Cemetery in Philadelphia. A special thanks was extended to Mike Cavanaugh [in absence] for his years of service in issuing our membership cards and sending out hard copies of the newsletter. Plans were discussed for the coming months at our Blackwood location including some possible trips for members. The Board wishes all members current and future a safe and joyous holiday season.

Homefront Hero... Thomas Nast (1840 -1902)

Article, Photos
by Kerry Bryan

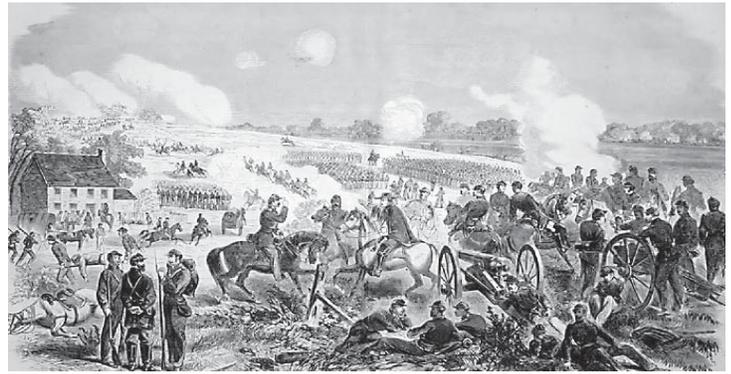
Thomas Nast has been called the “Father of American Caricature.” He was born in Landau, Germany on September 26, 1840. His father, although a musician in a regimental band, was a man with liberal leanings during an era of political tensions and unrest in that part of Europe. Thus, to ensure the safety of his family, in 1846 he sent Thomas with his mother and sister to New York City in 1846, and then followed them to America in 1849 at the end of his enlistment.



Thomas Nast
Source: library.syr.edu

Young Thomas' prodigious artistic talents soon

became evident. As a young teenager he studied art with Theodore Kaufmann, after which he was an apprentice at the Thomas Jefferson Bryant Gallery of Art. At age 15 he was hired as a reporter-artist for Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper. Four years later he transferred to the staff of the New York Illustrated News, which sent him to



One of Thomas Nast's battlefield drawings of Second Bull Run
Source: sonofthesouth.net

Europe in 1859. After covering a major sporting event in England, Thomas Nast went on to Italy, where he became a war reporter, following the military campaigns of Giuseppe Garibaldi as the General led Italy toward unification.



Nast's Palm Sunday tribute of April, 1865.
Source: sonofthesouth.net

Nast returned to the United States in 1861 at the beginning of the Civil War. He did freelance work for a while before joining the staff of Harper's Weekly in the summer of 1862.



Election Day 1864 by Nast
Source: sonofthesouth.net

Some of Nast's most famous works were and still are those that were published in Harper's in the Civil War years, starting with his illustrations of the Second Battle of Bull Run and continuing through to the surrender of Confederate General Lee at Appomattox on April 9, 1865 and then the aftermath of the War. In the years between, his sketches captured many iconic scenes of both field and homefront, of soldiers and ordinary citizens, as well as the powerbrokers of the era.

He often used clever caricatures to render the images of politicians, including Lincoln, although Nast was himself a Republican. Nast's sense of irony is often apparent in his political cartoons, and during the Presidential election of 1864, his caricatures denigrating McClellan and the Democratic platform served as powerful propaganda tools that served Lincoln and the Republican agenda well.

Continued on page 3



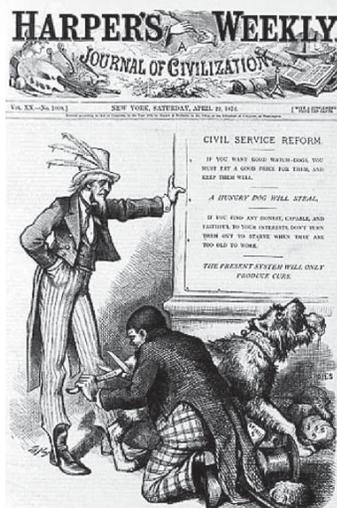
Lincoln's Casket by Thomas Nast
Source: sonofthesouth.net

Nast was an ardent supporter of the Union, and he often expressed his patriotism through allegorical images that could evoke powerful sentiments. Especially moving are his wartime Christmas scenes and his tributes to Lincoln after the President's assassination.



Drawings by Thomas Nast
Source: sonofthesouth.net

Moreover, Thomas Nast is credited with creating the image of our modern Santa Claus, the roly-poly old man with flowing white beard, merry grin, and red suit. Other famous Nast caricatures that became national symbols include the Democratic Donkey, the Republican Elephant, Uncle Sam, elegant be-robed Columbia, and the Tammany Tiger.



That last icon, the Tammany Tiger, is associated with the infamous William "Boss" Tweed and the rampant corruption of his Tammany Hall government of New York City. Nast strongly supported the efforts of Harper's and The New York Times to expose and bring down Tweed and his toadies. But Tweed was a dangerous man to have as a political enemy, so in 1870 Nast relocated his family, his wife Sarah (Sallie) nee Edwards, whom he'd married in 1861, and their young children to Morristown, NJ where they could be more secure.

Although he continued to commute and sometimes stay overnight in New York to continue his work for Harper's,

Nast's caricature and a photograph of Boss Tweed
Source: sonofthesouth.net



Nast's depiction of the Tammany Tiger
Source: sonofthesouth.net

Nast involved himself with his new hometown. He supported local charity works, became an honorary member of the fire department, and often used scenes of Morristown for the background of his drawings.



Villa Fontana, the Nast home in Morristown, NJ.
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Thomas_Nast_Home.jpg

Villa Fontana, the Nasts' stately Victorian home at 50 Macculloch Avenue, was across the street from a fine Federal-style mansion belonging to the descendants of George Macculloch, a Scotsman born in Bombay who had immigrated to the United States from London in 1806 and then became a highly successful businessman and leading citizen. The neighboring families became close friends, and thus years later, when "The



Maccullough Hall today
Source: <http://www.maccullochhall.org/home/>

Old House" of the Maccullochs became today's Muculloch Hall Historical Museum, the museum became a repository for an extensive collection of Nast's drawings. (Villa Fontana, although designated a National Landmark, is privately owned).

Thomas Nast's later years were difficult. After a falling out with the editors of Harper's Weekly, he left that journal in 1886 to do freelance work for a variety of magazines. He attempted to establish his own periodical in 1892, but Nast's Weekly failed in less than six months. Nast's fortunes continued to spiral downward to the point of bankruptcy. Thus in 1902, he jumped to accept President Theodore Roosevelt's offer for him to serve as consul general to Ecuador. Six months after his arrival in that

South American country, Nast contracted a fatal case of yellow fever and died on December 7, 1902. He was 62 years old.

Although Thomas Nast died relatively young, he left a prodigious legacy. Over the course of his career he had provided the illustrations for some 110 books, as well as innumerable drawings for magazines. He had also painted 38 huge (8 x 12 ft.) allegorical paintings depicting the history of his beloved adopted country, the United States, during the Civil War. And again, he left us with some of our best-known national symbols. He brought patriotism to his art and vice-versa. Thomas Nast was a very special kind of homefront hero.



Allen Guelzo

"Fateful Lightning"

Don't Forget Monday, December 10 - 5:30 PM Fateful Lightning; A New History of the Civil War and Reconstruction The Civil War is the greatest trauma ever experienced by the American nation, a four-year paroxysm of violence that left in its wake more than 600,000 dead, more than 2 million refugees, and the

destruction (in modern dollars) of more than \$700 billion in property. The war also sparked some of the most heroic moments in American history and enshrined a galaxy of American heroes. Above all, it permanently ended the practice of slavery and proved, in an age of resurgent mon-

archies, that a liberal democracy could survive the most frightful of challenges. In Fateful Lightning, Union League member and two-time Lincoln Prize-winning historian **Allen C. Guelzo** offers a marvelous portrait of the Civil War and its era, covering not only the major figures and epic battles, but also politics, religion, gender, race, diplomacy, and technology. And unlike other surveys of the Civil War era, it extends the reader's vista to include the postwar Reconstruction period and discusses the modern-day legacy of the Civil War in American literature and popular culture. Guelzo also puts the conflict in a global perspective, underscoring Americans' acute sense of the vulnerability of their republic in a world of monarchies. He examines the strategy, the tactics, and especially the logistics of the Civil War and brings the most recent historical thinking to bear on emancipation, the presidency and the war powers, the blockade and international law, and the role of intellectuals, North and South. Copies of the book will be available for purchase and signing. Reception: 5:30 PM Program: 6:00 PM Dress Code: Coat & Tie men, No Jeans please

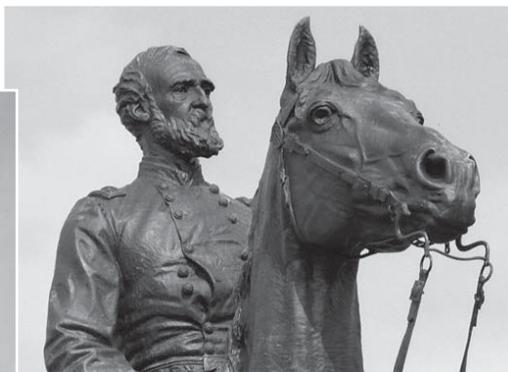
General Meade's Birthday

The annual General Meade Birthday Celebration will mark the 197th anniversary of the birth of General George G. Meade, commander of the Union Army at the Battle of Gettysburg. A parade of Civil War re-enactors, civilians in period attire, special dignitaries, heritage groups and participants will advance to Meade's final resting place and memorialize his services to his nation.

A 21-gun salute and champagne toast will cap off the program at graveside, and will be followed by a reception in the Cemetery Gatehouse. A tour of historic Laurel Hill will be offered following the festivities (weather permitting). This year holds special significance as we continue to commemorate the Sesquicentennial of



Major General George Gordon Meade



the American Civil War. Dr. Andy Waskie, president of the General Meade Society of Philadelphia, will serve as master of ceremonies. Beer and full

refreshments will be served after the service, and tours of Laurel Hill will be available.

The event is FREE and open to the public. Additional information may be obtained by calling 215.228.8200, or online at <http://www.facebook.com/l/pAQH2r46G/www.generalmeadesociety.org>. December 31st at 11:30 AM at Laurel Hill Cemetery.

The General George Meade Society
generalmeadesociety.org

Rebel and Yank Snowball Wars: Fighting Winter Boredom

By John E. Carey

At least four rare wintertime Civil War engagements remain footnotes in history, even though the scope and ferocity of these battles received mention in many diaries and journals of the soldier-participants.

The Yankee Fight...

The following is an after action report of a snowball fight between the Third & Fourth Vermont and the Twenty-sixth New Jersey. Black eyes, bloody noses and all!

A snowball Battle – A soldier of one of the New Jersey regiment writes as follows:

“You are probably aware that the Second Brigade of this division consists of four Vermont regiments, besides the Twenty-sixth. During the late heavy fall of snow, the Vermonters twice made an attack on the encampment of the Twenty-sixth, sending a perfect shower of snow balls at the head of every luckless Jerseyman who made his appearance without his tent. The first attack was a complete surprise to us; but we essayed a sally from the camp, and drove the attacking party back to their reserves. Being heavily reenforced, they charged on us again, and after a desperate resistance we were driven back into camp, fighting absolutely from the shelter of our tents until darkness put an end to the contest. Our casualties were quite heavy, but those of the enemy, it is thought, exceeded ours. A few days afterwards the attack was renewed, but we took up a strong position on a hill in the rear of the camp and repulsed every assault of the foe. The snow crimsoned with blood issuing from the olfactory organs of the Vermonters, and the appearance of the battle-field indicated the fierce nature of the contest. The enemy raised a flag of truce, an armistice of a few hours was concluded, and then ensued that novel spectacle of war – men, who but a few minutes previous were engaged in one of the most sanguinary battles of modern times, harmonizing and fraternizing with clasped hands.

“But the matter did not rest. The night of the 24th had enveloped terra firma with its dusky shades. Many a waxen nose in the camps of the Second brigade snored sonorously, happily unconscious of its ruby discoloration on the morrow. Many an eye placidly closed in slumber was to be violently closed in battle ere the approach of another nightfall. And many a phrenological bump sparsely developed on the night in question was to be suddenly brought to an age of puberty on the approaching day. The eventful morning opened. Colonel Morrison sent a challenge to Colonel Seaver of the Third Vermont to engage in the open field at three o'clock P.M. The challenge was accepted, on the condition that the Fourth Vermont should be included with the Third. This was agreed to by the Colonel. Before the appointed time some of our men were detailed on fatigue duty, and at the time of the engagement we were only able to muster some three hundred men.

“Nothing daunted by the superiority of numbers, Colonel Morrison ordered Lieutenant McCleese of Company C (Captain Pemberton being sick) to fortify a small hill on

our right, make as much ammunition as possible, and pile the snow balls in pyramids. This arduous duty was hastily performed. It was a strong position, a swollen brook at its base answering the purpose of a moat – too strong, in fact, for the Vermonters. The hills were covered with spectators, and the eagerness to witness the novel contest knew no bounds. Companies A and B were thrown out as skirmishers. Company E occupied the right, C was given the centre, and H rested on the left. The Colonel dashed over the field in all directions, encouraging the men to stand fast, amid the blue wreaths curling from a ‘brier wood’ nonchalantly held in his left hand, and the Adjutant danced about on a spirited charger, apparently impatiently awaiting the hour of contest, the light of battle dilating within his eyes, and a quid of ‘navy plug’ reposing beneath his cheek. Lieutenant Woods, of the ambulance corps, and Lieutenant __ acted as mounted aids to the Colonel, while the ‘Sergeant’ and John K. Shaw, an aspiring Newark youth of eighteen, acted as perambulating aids. The line being formed and everything in readiness for the contest, a red flag was raised as a signal, and in a breath of time a strong body of the enemy drove in our skirmishers, and fiercely attacked our centre. At the same moment another strong force advanced against our right, but only as a feint; for they suddenly wheeled to the right, and joined their comrades in a furious charge on our centre. Major Morris ordered up Company E from our right, but too late to be of any advantage, and they were completely cut off from the main body of our army. Although flanked and pressed in front by overwhelming numbers, our centre heroically contested the advance of the enemy. Animated by the presence of the Colonel, they fought like veterans, and the white snowballs eddied through the air like popping corn from a frying pan. But the enemy were madly surging upon us in superior force, and it was hardly within power of human endurance to stand such a perfect feu d’enfer any longer. Gradually the centre fell back inch by inch, the line then wavered to and fro, and finally the men broke in confusion and rolled down the hill followed by the victorious Vermonters. In vain the Colonel breast the torrent; in vain the Major urged the men to stand fast; in vain the Adjutant White, the chivalric De Bayard of the Twenty-sixth, implore the gods for aid.

“The boys never rallied. Lieutenant Woods made an attempt to rally them and form them in hollow square on the fortified hill to the right, but he was mistaken by the boys for a Vermonter, and unceremoniously pelted from their midst. But the Colonel was not totally deserted by his men. The Vermonters seized his horse by the bridle, and made a desperate attempt to take him prisoner. The fight at this point was terrific beyond description. The men fought hand to hand. Colonel Seaver, the Achilles of the day, dashed through the combatants, seized Colonel Morrison by the shoulder, and called upon him to surrender. But his demand was choked by the incessant patter of snow-balls on his ‘physog.’ Around the rival chieftains the men struggled fearfully; there was the auburn-haired Hodge, alias ‘Wild Dutchmen’ fighting manfully. There was the fierce Teuton Captain of Company E, dropping the foe right and left

at every swing of his arms; but all in vain. Amid the wild excitement consequent upon the shouting, the rearing, and plunging of horses, the Colonel was drawn from his saddle and taken by the enemy. Most of his 'staff' followed him as prisoners. A desperate attempt was made to rescue him, but it proved of no avail. Major Morris fared no better. Adjutant White, however, made a bold attempt to retrieve the fortunes of the day. Dashing into the dense ranks of the foe, he seized the bridle of Colonel Stoughton's Bucephalus, and gallantly attempted the impossibility of capturing the Colonel, who was the acting Brigadier of the attacking party. But the adjutant had 'caught Tartar,' for the Vermonters rushed around him like the waves beating upon some lone rock in the ocean, and vainly clamored for his surrender. He fought like an Ajax mounted on a 'Black Bass', retaining his position in the saddle by resting his knees against the pommel. This was at last observed by a shrewd Yankee, who dexterously slipped between the two horses, detached the supporting knee, and the Adjutant fell from his lofty position like a tornado-stricken oak. This fall disheartened the Twenty-sixth, and only detached parties of a dozen, scattered over the field, persisted in an obstinate resistance. The 'Sergeant' received a solid shot in the back of the head, and was borne to the rear a captive, and then

'The bugles sang truce.'

"Thus ended the great battle of Fairview; unequalled in desperateness, and the theme of many a future poet's cogitations. Our loss was very heavy, and we were severely defeated. The spectators, acting on the well-known principle of kicking a man when he is down, pitched into us most unmercifully when our centre was broken, and prevented us from re-forming in line of battle. The slaughter of the enemy was fearful, and the prowess of the Newark ball players and fireman was displayed on their battered visages. Colonel Stoughton was honored with a black eye, and the gallant Seaver fared but little better. The following is a fair recapitulation of the casualties on both sides:

"Bloody noses, fifty-three; bunged peppers, eighty-one; extraordinary phrenological developments, twenty-nine; shot in the neck after the engagement, unknown.

"The Vermonters fought with the determined energy characterizing them when engaging Jeff's myrmidons."

p. 310-311 *The Civil War in Song & Story* by Frank Moore P. F. Collier, Publisher [1889]

American Armies in snow, mud and rain:
<http://www.weatherbook.com/early.html>

The Rebs Fight... January issue...

Today in Civil War History

Thursday December 5, 1861 Stone Ships Sink Savannah

Even with the severe shortage of vessels for the use of the U.S. Navy, which required the purchase of private ferryboats and the like for troop and supply transports, there were still some old wooden ships that were just plain

useless for any sort of warfare. They were being put to use, however, as part of the "Stone Fleet". They were loaded with rocks until they would barely float, then taken up into the inlets of Southern rivers as far as practicable and then sunk as impediments to blockade-runners. Flag Officer Samuel duPont had more of these than he knew what to do with at Savannah, Ga. "With Wassaw that city is more effectively closed than a bottle with wire over the cork. One good thing they did, I have not a doubt they were taken for men-of-war and led to giving up the Wassaw defenses." DuPont decided to ship them to Capt. James Lardner at Charleston, to see if they might do the same there.

Friday December 5, 1862 Severn Site Of Schooner Scuffles

The United States Naval Academy was no longer located "where the Severn meets the Sea", having been moved North at the outbreak of the war. That the Severn River was heavily infested with Confederate ships was proven today by Comdr. E. A. Parker of the USS Mahaska and Lt. Blake of the USS General Putman. They sailed their little fleet up this waterway almost to Annapolis, Md., and along with their ship's boats did some damage. "Several fine boats" were taken and sunk, they reported. The small boats then ventured up even smaller branches of the river and bagged a schooner and two sloops, also destroyed. Finally they succeeded in capturing the schooners Seven Brothers and Galena, and these were now undergoing a change of management and flags.

Saturday December 5, 1863 Several Skirmishes Shake Soldiers

It was a day of considerable activity for this late in the year, but each individual action was small and more or less incidental to armies being on the move. In Tennessee it was the corps of James Longstreet marching away from Knoxville and toward planned winter quarters in Greenville, Tenn. This led to skirmishes around the Clinch River, particularly at Walker's Ford. Other unpleasantness occurred at Raccoon Ford, Va., and Crab Gap, Tenn. Far to the east, another misfortune befell the U.S. Navy at Murrell's Inlet, S.C. A party sent ashore in a small boat from the USS Perry was set upon and captured. An almost identical incident had befallen a party from the USS T. A. Ward a few days earlier.

Monday December 5, 1864 Sherman Sets Sorry Style Scene

Gen. William T. Sherman had had episodes of nervous instability before in his life. A term as administrator of the huge Department of the Ohio had been so frustrating that he asked to be relieved, then suffered a nervous breakdown. He was now engaged in the campaign of his life, that history would call the March to the Sea. He was not, however, sleeping very well. One of his officers, Maj. Henry Hitchcock, wrote in his diary that he often saw Sherman come out of his tent late into the night, perhaps to walk around or just to sit by the fire. He was clad in a style perhaps best concealed by the dark of night: "Bare feet in slippers, red flannel drawers," Hitchcock recorded, ".woolen shirt, old dressing gown with blue cloth (half-cloak) cape." He had eccentricities of dress even in daytime: while riding on march he never wore boots, preferring low-cut shoes. He wore only one spur, never two.

www.civilwarinteractive

Civil War Christmas

Dec 27th 1864

Camp 4th Del Vol 3 Brg 2 Dev 3 Corps

Dear wife I will send you a few lines stating how we are I have bin down with the diarier for about a weak it has bin the most sevar that I hav ever ha but I feel better to day & I hav washed all of my cloaths & I borrowed some cloathes while mine are drying I cant write you mutch this time but if I keep wel I will try and write you a interesting leter some of those days we hav got houses built up wonce more but Christmas was a very dul day hear we have not had it yet but the war news is good we have had a despatch from G Shairman he has done more than we could of asked of him I hope this will find you all wel Samey is not very wel he had a cold we hav bin very mutch exposed but I dont want to write about You can sea the reason why I hav not wrote I send my love to all from you ever true and loving Husband

Levi McCormick

good by send on your box Jim sais we will have some soope

On December 24, 1861, Captain Robert Goldthwaite Carter of the 22nd Mass. Vol. Inf. 4th U.S. Cavalry wrote:

"Christmas Eve, and I am on duty as officer of the day, but I am not on duty to-morrow. As much as I desire to see you all, I would not leave my company alone... ...I give my company a Christmas dinner to-morrow, consisting of turkey, oysters, pies, apples, etc.; no liquors."

On December 25, 1864, J. C. Williams, 14th Vermont Infantry

"This is Christmas, and my mind wanders back to that home made lonesome by my absence, while far away from the peace and quietude of civil life to undergo the hardships of camp, and may be the battlefield. I think of the many lives that are endangered, and hope that the time will soon come when peace, with its innumerable blessings, shall once more restore our country to happiness and prosperity."

John H. Brinton, a Major and Surgeon U.S.V. wrote:

"[1861] During the days preceding Christmas, I received some boxes from home, full of nice comfortable things, and the letter which came to me at that time, you may be sure, made me feel homesick. On Christmas night, I left for St. Louis as my teeth were troubling me, and greatly in need of the services of a dentist. I was fortunate in finding a good one, and in a day or two the necessary repairs were made."

From the Diary of An Enlisted Man, by Lawrence VanAlstyne 2nd Lieutenant, 90th United Sates Colored Infantry December 24, 1863

"As to-morrow is Christmas we went out and made such purchases of good things as our purses would allow, and these we turned over to George and Henry, for safe keeping and for cooking on the morrow."

From the diary of Private Robert A. Moore, a Confederate soldier. Tuesday, Dec 24th, 1861, camp near Swan's.

"This is Christmas Eve but seems but little like it to me"

Wednesday, Dec. 25th, 1861, camp near Swan's.

"This is Christmas & and very dull Christmas it has been to me. Had an egg-nog to-night but did not enjoy it much as we had no ladies to share it with us."

From the diary of Robert Watson of Key West, Florida. December 25, 1862 in Tampa, FL as an orderly sergeant of Co. K, 7th Florida Regt.

"Christmas day and I was in bed all day from chills and fever. I ate nothing and as there is no liquor in the place of course I drank nothing."

December 25, 1863 at Dalton, Georgia after action at Chickamauga

"Christmas day and a very dull one but I find a tolerable good dinner. I had one drink of whiskey in the morning. There was some serenading last night but I took no part in it for I did not feel merry as my thoughts were of home..."

December 25, 1864 at Charleston, S.C. following his transfer to the Navy

"Christmas day. Turned out at 6 AM, very cold. We were ordered to hold ourselves in readiness to leave at moments warning... ...This ends Christmas day. The poorest I ever spent."

In a letter to his sister Anna Simpson, Tally Simpson wrote:

Dec. 25th

My dear sister,

"This is Christmas Day. The sun shines feeble through a thin cloud, the air is mild and pleasant, a gentle breeze is making music through the leaves of the lofty pines that stand near our bivouac. All is quiet and still and that very stillness recalls some sad and painful thoughts. The day, one year ago, how many thousand families, gay and joyous, celebrating Merry Christmas, drinking health to absent members of their family and sending upon the wings of love and affection long, deep, and sincere wishes for their safe return to the loving ones at home, but today are clad in the deepest mourning in memory to some lost and loved member of their circle..."

"When will this war end? Will another Christmas roll around and find us all wintering in camp? Oh! That peace may soon be restored to our young but dearly beloved country and that we may all meet again in happiness."

From the Civil War diary of General Josiah Gorgas 1864:

"December 26th A despondent Christmas has just passed, yet people contrived to eat hearty and good Christmas dinners. The soldier unfortunately have not even meat, and have had none for several days. The Commissary General has singlely failed in his duties; while there is plenty of food in Georgia there is none here. There is no sufficient excuse for this. The food must be brought here, and the means to so provided and organized.."

Camp near Dinwiddie Court House
December 26, 1864

Dear Martha,

Your letter came to hand a few days since and I am now seated to answer. I have but little news times is very

dull out here yesterday was the most quiet day we have had for some time. The soldiers all look sad and lonely. We have nothing spiritual or refreshing in camp. Have not see one case of intoxication during our Christmas holiday. All is calm on the lines in front of Petersburg and Richmond, except some little picket firing on Saturday night. I have a splendid cain and am living quite comfortable at present. Rations are rather scanty. I have not heard from your Pa since he went to hospital at Staunton. I saw him on the cars, he had measles, but was getting on fine, he told me he would write to me as soon as I wrote to him. I have wrote but have not had time to get an answer.

Mat - I hope you are having a good time today taking Christmas. I am passing it off writing my friends. We had drill this morning. What has become of Fannie? I have not heard from her in some time. You must offer my highest regards to all the girls. I hope I will get off home before the winter breaks. I want to come home very bad this Christmas. Tell "Tee" if I get to come home he and I will start up some Christmas--if it is only to go out and hunt rabbits and know there is a heap of squirrels and other wild game up there. Robert you must be a smart boy while your Papa is gone. How is my little namesake getting on? Is he most as large as you "Tee"? Polly, your brother Calvin is in my company well and harty, except he sometimes complaining with reumatism in his legs. He seams to be pretty well satisfied for a soldier. I hope you are well. I must close as I have nothing worth notice on hand. My love and best wishes to all the children. Remember me kindly to all who make an inquiry if there be any. May heavens best blessings be always with you all.
Yours affectionatly,
Jasper

Letter from Jasper Cockerham to His Niece
(Co A 28 Reg NC) Camp of the 28th Regiment

MVS Wilmington, New Hanover County December 18 AD 1861

Dear Mother,
I received a letter from you on the 14th which pleased me very much to know that you were all well and doing well. I received a letter from Cousin Martin Whitaker* on the the 6th of December stating that you had been down to see Grandmother. In your letter you had had some wood and pine hauled. Jesse Stanley will let you have his oxen to haul with. I do not want my oxen to be worked at all. I got \$33.00. That is what I drew and I sent \$30.00 home by Thomas Anthony. Sarah, I want my oxen to be well wintered. Do not let any person have any salt. I will want it before you get any more. I can send you plenty of paper if you cannot get it there. Mother, I found you some tobacco to chew. Smith Dobson is at home if you want to send me anything you can send it by him. We have any amount of sweet potatoes here. I have some that I brought from home to eat at Christmas. Also some sweet cakes Mrs. Gilliam sent me. John Cave has a discharge and has come home. Sarah, Uncle Silas and Mrs. Harbour. Write whether you have heard from Sian and Calvin and Nancy and Mark or not. Write to Calvin and Nancy by all means. Give Miss Susan Adeline and Sarah Stanley my best respect. Oliver, when I write home, I also write to you and family. Sarah, if William wants any money he must have it when he needs it. William I would like to see you very much. I will home sometime in the spring if I live. Mary, you spoke about some persons not agreeing very well. It has not suprised me at all. Say but little about it.
Artha Bray

*Martin Whitaker is the son of Silas Whitaker. Artha Bray's mother, Mary Whitaker Bray, is the sister of Silas.
Letter from Artha Bray, Jr. To his widowed mother Mary Whitaker Bray.

On the home front, the homes were mostly decorated with different kinds of pines, holly, ivy and mistletoe. While there were many families who spent lonely Christmases during the war, they still had a Christmas Tree which was the centerpiece for the home. Most trees were small and sat on a table. The decorations were mostly home made, such as strings of dried fruit, popcorn, pine cones. Colored paper, silver foil, as well as spun glass were popular choices for making decorations. Santa brought gifts to the children. Those gifts were home made, such as carved toys, cakes or fruits.

Sources <http://www.bitsofblueandgray.com/>

**Schedule of Old Baldy CWRT
Speakers and Activities for 2012/2013**
**December 5 – Wednesday “A Sword In The Attic:
Searching for Thomas Hall”**
Writer/Historian: Bill Cannon
Next Scheduled meeting - January 16, 2013
Questions to Rich Jankowski at 856-427-4022 or
jediwarrior11@verizon.net
You're Welcome to Join Us!

**Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia
Camden County College
Blackwood Campus - Connector Building
Room 101 Forum, Civic Hall, Atrium**
856-427-4022 oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net
Founded January 1977

Annual Memberships	President: Richard Jankowski
Students: \$12.50	Treasurer: Herb Kaufman
Individuals: \$25.00	Secretary: Bill Hughes
Families: \$35.00	Programs: Kerry Bryan

Notice

Bill Hughes is trying to assemble information on the history of Old Baldy that we can share with everyone. So if you have copies of old photos, newsletters 2004 and back to the first one they did, any stories you may remember and can put into words, please get them to Bill Hughes at:

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