

Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia

Kevin M. Hale Award
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August 13, 2020 The Civil War: April 12, 1861 - August 20, 1866

"Searching for Black Confederates: The Civil War's Most Persistent Myth"



Kevin M. Levin

Join us at **7:15 PM** on **Thursday, August 13** on **Zoom**. This month's topic is **"Searching for Black Confederates: The Civil War's Most Persistent Myth"**

More than 150 years after the end of the Civil War, scores of websites, articles, and organizations repeat claims that anywhere between 500 and 100,000 free and enslaved African Americans fought willingly as soldiers in the Confederate army. But as Kevin M. Levin argues in this carefully researched book, such claims would have shocked anyone who served in the army during the war itself. Levin explains that imprecise contemporary accounts, poorly understood primary-source material, and other misrepresentations helped fuel the rise of the black Confederate myth.

Kevin M. Levin is a historian and educator based in Boston, Massachusetts, who specializes in the history and memory of the American Civil War. He holds M.A. degrees in Philosophy from the University of Maryland at College Park and in History from the University of Richmond.

Notes from the President...

August is here with heat and storms in addition to the challenges we continue to face in this historic time in which we are living. As we advance during our time apart, we encourage you to use the roster **Arlene** sends out to check

on another member you miss seeing at our meetings. Vice President **Kathy Clark** had successful knee surgery and is recovering at home, send your best wishes her way. Welcome to our new members, be sure to like our Facebook page and visit our website.

At our July Zoomcast meeting, **Roseann Bacha-Garza** shared her knowledge and research on the "War on the Rio Grande." It was a very fresh topic that was well received by all who tuned in. If you missed it you can view it when it is posted on our YouTube channel. Did you hear she lived in New Jersey before moving deep into Texas? Later in the month, **Dr. Michael Birkner** from Gettysburg College and the Dwight D. Eisenhower Society told us about Eisenhower. Dr. Birkner gave some background on Ike, his time at Gettysburg and information on the Eisenhower Society. It was a rewarding Tuesday night.

This month **Kevin M. Levin** will visit to present his research on the how misrepresentations and poorly understood primary-source material helped fuel the rise of the black Confederate myth. His book *"Searching for Black Confederates: The Civil War's Most Persistent Myth"* is well documented and researched and is very readable. In the last week of this month, **Paul Prentiss** will be coordinating a book night where you will tell us about a book you read during your time at home. Send him a note of which book you want to share with us.

There is news on the horizon for the Fall. The Soldiers Weekend at Fort Mott will be held on September 26-27. We will start signing volunteers to staff our display at our meeting on the 13th. Consider coming out for fresh air to tell folks about our Round Table and recruit new members. Based on your feedback to our recent survey in the Spring, we will be planning more member events. We will schedule an outdoor event, possibly on September 19th, for those interested to gather and chat while social distancing. Details to come soon. In the beginning of next year, we will have

Continued on page 2

Today in Civil War History Page 2 • Andersonville Page 2 • Book Review Page 4 • New Members Page 4
Loreta Velázquez Page 6 • July 1 Gettysburg Page 8 • July 9 Meeting Page 9 • July 28 Meeting Page 10
Red Legged Devils Page 11 • Events Page 14 • 2020 Speaker Schedule Page 14

our postponed “member sharing” night and a group discussion, the topic will be announced last this year. Thank you again for telling how we can better serve you.

Our 45th anniversary is just 18 months away; planning will begin soon. Let us know if you are interested in assisting. We are still booked to host the CWRT Congress at the College next September. In the meantime, you can tune into lectures and other events listed on the Congress website. Take a few minutes to jot down what you have been doing or write a review of one of the books you read. Then send the article to **Don Wiles** for a future newsletter.

Make sure to eat well, exercise and get fresh air. Join us on August 13th for Kevin Levin at our monthly meeting.

Stay safe and invite a friend.

Rich Jankowski, President

Today in Civil War History

1861 Tuesday, August 13

Eastern Theater

The chaos in the Union Army makes the still firmly held belief by the populace that the rebels can be defeated in the field within two or three months unreasonable. Indeed, those in the know say that it will take the army longer to learn how to build a single pontoon bridge than the people seem to think it will take to settle the Confederacy once and for all.

1862 Wednesday, August 13

Eastern Theater/Naval Operations

Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia begins to advance on Gordonsville, even though McClellan's Army of the Potomac is still within 25 miles of Richmond. It is clear, however, that the Union Army is preparing to withdraw from the peninsula, and the threat from Pope's army is much greater.

Eastern Theater/Naval Operations

Eighty-three die in a collision between the Federal steamers George Peabody and West Point on the Potomac River.

Western Theater

A large Union force drives Morgan's raiders out of Gallatin, Tennessee.

Trans-Mississippi

Four days of skirmishing that started at Grand River, Missouri come to an end. The 9th Missouri Militia have suffered 100 casualties, but Confederate losses are not recorded. Further south, Union General Alvin P. Hovey's division captures 700 rebels at Clarendon, Arkansas.

1863 Thursday, August 13

Eastern Theater

EBattery Wagner's guns continue to duel with the Union

heavy cannon dug in on Morris Island. The Confederate position began as a simple field battery covering the south of the island. It now holds 11 guns, of which only two, a pair of 10-inch Columbiads, are capable of effective counter-battery fire. The battery's single 32-pounder rifle burst and cannot be repaired. The rest of the guns are 32-pounder caronades (short cannon designed to repel infantry assaults or sweep a ship's deck at close range), and 12-pounder mortars. Ceaseless labor by the defenders improves the defenses to incorporate a bomb-proof shelter to hold 750 of the 1000-strong garrison.

1864 Saturday, August 13

Eastern Theater

Sheridan's cavalry discover Early's men strongly posted around Fisher's Hill, with an unknown number of reinforcements joining him. On the James River, the Confederate ironclads Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Virginia engage in a long-range duel with Union monitors.

Andersonville Shall Not Have Me!

By Joe Wilson, Member OBCWRT

By August of 1864, the soldiers in the Union army had already learned of the horrible conditions prevailing inside the newest Confederate prison. Shocking reports of terrific death sweeping through the Andersonville Stockade quickly filtered back to the north.

One Pennsylvania soldier recently captured outside of Petersburg had no intention of boarding a crowded rail car for a long trek to the notorious Andersonville Prison. This determined Yankee wasn't ready to pass from this world in a vile prison camp. What he did next earned him the Medal of Honor.

In June, the U.S. Sanitary Commission released photos taken at Camp Parole in Maryland of some of the skeletal prisoners released from southern prisons. Many suffered from severe deprivations at Belle Island in Virginia and the Andersonville Stockade in Georgia.

At the Georgia prison the Confederates held their Union captives despite their lack of food and shelter necessary for survival. Soldiers knew that if captured their chance of surviving Andersonville Prison wasn't likely. A soldier's odds of living through an actual battle rated much higher than coming out alive from the repulsive and foul smelling stockade.

Private Solomon F. Hottenstein of the 107th Pennsylvania Volunteers clearly understood the reality of the situation more than his fellow prisoners.

Solomon was taken prisoner at the Battle of Weldon Railroad on August 19, 1864, along with 6 officers and 147 men of the regiment. The 107th Pennsylvania Volunteers saw their place in line of battle deteriorate quickly as both flanks collapsed. A desperate attempt to fight their way out proved only partially successful.

Dejected Yankees marched to the rear under the armed guard of the 18th North Carolina Regiment. Along with other prisoners added to their group, the Union prisoners numbered approximately 300 captives. The 100 18th North Carolina boys guarding the Yanks kept them at bay with loaded muskets at the ready. All the Union soldiers sulked knowing they would soon be boarding trains bound for the squalid Andersonville Prison.



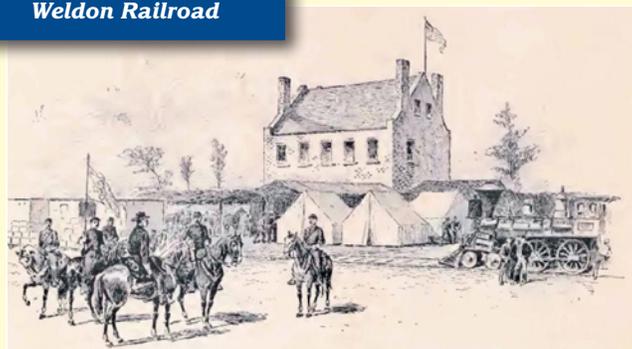
But Private Hottenstein wasn't planning on any train ride. The young defiant 20 year old private recognized that a stay in Andersonville Prison equaled death. Solomon saw heavy action with the 107th Pa. as the regiment took massive casualties at 2nd Bull Run, Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Gettysburg. Being killed in battle was always present. Fighting and dying for his country was an honor. Considering it his noble and patriotic duty, Solomon gladly took the risk. But rotting in Andersonville Prison seemed to lack any such nobility.

Solomon Hottenstein grew up in Mauch Chunk, Pennsylvania. Today, the town is known as Jim Thorpe. Those who knew him described him as a youth who had always showed a determination for whatever job was at hand. Being diminutive in size, all who knew him called him "Little Solly." Maybe small in stature, but young Solly had big ideas. Solomon's biggest idea came after his capture. First, he had to call on his powers of persuasion. After carefully assessing their predicament, Solly suggested to his fellow prisoners that they should rush their guards and overpower them. The sizable disadvantage presented by 100 muskets didn't faze Solly. Most thought the scheme the folly of a wayward and imaginative youth.

Never one to give up, Hottenstein persisted in talking up the ploy with anyone who listened. He pointed out they had a 3 to 1 advantage. Others noted the loaded muskets. Such a stunt would surely result in many being killed. If nothing was done, he assured his fellow prisoners their fate would be a plot of ground in a graveyard outside of Andersonville Prison. Solly was determined not to leave his bones in Georgia. He'd risk escape or die trying.

Finally, his persistence paid off. Word starting spreading of the plot amongst the Union captives.

Weldon Railroad



More prisoners started agreeing that if they boarded the trains heading south they would never see their loved ones again. Now they had to devise a strategy. All looked to their youthful leader.

The plan was simple. Solly had a group of 50 prisoners mingle off to one end of the group. At his signal, the group was to whoop and holler as if Union troops coming to their rescue suddenly appeared in the nearby woods. The other 250 prisoners would then spring into action.

When Solly gave the word, the faction near the woods started cheering wildly in delight at the approach of the non-existent Yankee army. The Rebel guards took the bait. The ruse worked. Startled at the loud Huzzahs, the Confederates locked eyes on the woods looking for the ghost troops advancing to free the Yankee prisoners. In an instant, all hell broke loose.

Solly had already determined to take down the flag bearer of the North Carolina Regiment. Besides his freedom, the brash private wanted the rebel flag. Like a coiled a snake, the young leader unleashed his fury and pounced on the unsuspecting flag bearer as both fell to the ground locked in a struggle. Hottenstein succeeded in ripping the gun from the rebel's holster. Fighting for his life, the tough pint-sized Yank delivered swift punishment by continually slamming the pistol against the guard's head. Recognizing defeat, the Carolina soldier surrendered and gave up the colors.

Hand to hand combat swirled as the prisoners battled with their armed guards for the coveted muskets. The brawl won't go down in the history books as a battle, but it was life or death for the unarmed Yankees fearing a one way trip to Andersonville. When the dust settled, the Union boys had won the day. The tide had turned. The captors were now the captives. Not only did Solomon's hastily organized legion secure their liberty, the boys in blue had 100 stunned North Carolinians staring down the barrels of their own muskets. Indeed, the bottom rail was now on top.

Freedom was still not totally secured. With the contest won, the Union prisoners now had to extricate themselves from deep inside the Confederate lines. Not satisfied with the victory, the audacious Little Solly decided his rebel prisoners would be going with them. Evading the Confederate Army with 100 prisoners in tow wouldn't be easy. Not knowing if they would reach the Union lines, Solly ripped a star off the Carolina flag and hid it in his shirt. At least, he'd have a souvenir of the adventure.

But the young leader prevailed once again. After a long tramp through enemy territory, the stars and stripes finally came into view. The danger subsided. Loud cheers erupted at the sight of Old Glory as boys danced gleefully before the demoralized Confederates. Many sought out Solly to offer a much deserved pat on the back.

Hottenstein and company escorted the Confederate prisoners all the way back to the Union lines where he presented the colors of the 18th North Carolina to division commander, General Samuel Crawford. The unlikely tale

of adventure swept through the Union camp like wildfire as soldiers gathered around the campfire to hear every last detail of how Solly and the boys foiled the Confederates.

Such an act of bravery always bring promotion. "Corporal" Solomon Hottenstein now had stripes on his sleeve. Sergeant's stripes came shortly thereafter. But in February, 1865, came the well-earned reward for the courage and gall that went above and beyond the call of duty. Solomon was awarded the Medal of Honor. Lehigh County in Pennsylvania had a new hero.

Along with the Medal of Honor came a 30 day furlough. But it wasn't meant to be. At the Battle of Hatchers Run on February 6th, 1865, Hottenstein took a musket ball in the hip. The furlough had to wait. Not until the following June did he emerge from the hospital.

Shortly after the hospital stay Solly mustered out of the army. After the war he married his sweetheart and fathered 7 children. The wound pained him for the rest of his life. In 1896 he died at the young age of 52. But his family tree has sprouted many branches that may never have happened had he entered the gates of the Andersonville Stockade.

The remarkable tale of Solomon Hottenstein falls into a category of its own. Not only did Solly escape from his captors, but he brought his 100 Confederate guards back with him along with the prized battle flag of the 18th North Carolina. In the end, the undersized Solly stood tall when it counted most.

Andersonville Cemetery holds 12,920 Union soldiers who went into the trenches naked and without coffins with little fanfare or reverence. All perished from starvation, disease, and exposure. The boys of the 107th Pennsylvania Volunteers always remembered how a similar fate nearly transpired for them. But one anonymous soldier stepped up to seize the spotlight.

Many of Solomon Hottenstein's comrades expressed eternal gratitude

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Military Affairs		RECORD OF SERIAL PLACE OF VETERAN		Bradford County	
NAME Hottenstein, Solomon		DATE OF BIRTH Sept. 9, 1838	DATE OF DEATH Nov. 3, 1864		
VETERAN OF Civil		SERVED IN WAR ARMY (X) NAVY () MARINE CORPS ()			
DATES OF SERVICE Oct. 20, 1862 Nov. 3, 1864		ORGANIZATION (S) Co. "I" 163 Regt. 18th Cav.		RANK Corporal	
CEMETERY NAME OR PLACE OF INTERMENT St. Paul's Reformed Church, Overton Township		# 191			
LOCATION OF GRAVE IN CEMETERY SECTION D RANGE 42 GRAVE No. # 8		HEADSTONE MEMORIAL GOVERNMENT () COUNTY (X) FAMILY ()			
INFORMATION GIVEN BY Project No. 21176		REMARKS Died in Florence Prison			
DATE April 13, 1999		DATE Nov. 3, 1864			

Solomon's Death Record and Grave

for his bravado in saving them from a cemetery plot in Georgia where family members could never hope to visit or place a flower. Without the bravery and leadership of Private Solomon Jefferson Hottenstein, the Andersonville Stockade would've devoured many more Union soldiers and left their remains moldering into dust far from home like the other helpless victims.



Being dumped unceremoniously in the burial pits outside of the wicked Andersonville Prison wasn't going to be the final story for "Little Solly." **Of that, he was certain!**

This war story is one of many in the writer's upcoming book, "Obscure Tales of the Civil War." Joef21@aol.com

Book Review
The Three-Cornered War
by Megan Kate Nelson
The Union, the Confederacy, and Native Peoples in the Fight for the West

People's stories that are interwoven throughout this book:

General Henry Hopkins Sibley: Confederate Commander of the Army of New Mexico. Began his career as a Union officer but before long he decided to switch sides and become a Confederate General. The Confederate officers brought their slaves. It was a chance for some of the slaves to escape their position to become free.

Colonel Richard Canby: Commander for the Union army who was the leader of the army in Santa Fe. He came to the territory with his wife, Louisa, and daughter Mary. Louisa worked as a nurse and managed their household.

John Baylor: Texas legislature who established the Confederate state of Arizona for ranchers.

Bill Davidson: Lawyer who fought for the Confederacy. He worked with General Sibley to invade New Mexico Territory.

James Carleton: Union colonel who engineered campaigns against the Navajos and Apaches.

Almonzo Ickis: He came to the West to become a gold miner. Then decided to join the Union and fight with the Union troops.

John Clark: an abolitionist and Republican, appointed by Abraham Lincoln to go to the New Mexico Territory as Surveyor General. He would examine and map the Southwest. His role was particularly important to Lincoln's plan to gain political influence and power to the Pacific coast.

Kit Carson: led a regiment of volunteers against Texans, Navajos, Kiowas, and Comanches. The regiment of volunteers were recruited from Hispano militiamen.

Juanita: Navajo weaver

Mangas Coloradas: worked to expand Apache Chief,

Welcome to the new recruits

Honorary - Dr. Michael Birkner
Gettysburg College
Gettysburg, PA

Michael DiPaolo
Wenonah, NJ



Apaches Navajos' territory in Arizona.

The New Mexico Territory in 1861 extended from the Rio Grande to the California border. California became a free state in 1850 and New Mexico became a territory with the expansion of slavery. By March, the expansion of Colorado and New Mexico Territory was now from Texas to California. Jefferson Davis and Brig. General Sibley met to talk about recruiting an army of Texans to go West to fight for the New Mexico Territory. The South desperately needed resources and money and with the success of this operation would access the gold and silver mines in Colorado, Nevada, and California. Davis' plan also included building a transcontinental railroad with the southwest becoming the heart of Confederate slavery. At this time, the Confederacy had cotton and no way of exporting it, there was a Union blockade, but by expanding into the West would be able to export their cotton all over the world. Once the Confederates won, they would be well-positioned to expand slavery, export cotton and gain wealth from the mines all the way to the West.

At the same time the Lincoln administration knew that to win the war they had to retain control of the West. But the North needed troops to fight in the East too. Dispatches were sent to California, Oregon, and Western Territories to enlist army regulars from frontier forts to go to the East to fight. Those men were sent to camps around Washington D.C. The Union army continued to recruit Texans from around the area to join the Union fight. Examples of this recruiting were Kit Carson who found a group of Hispano men who became militiamen and Almonzo Ickis who came to find gold and ended up a soldier fighting for the Union cause.

The goal for John Baylor, Confederate, was to occupy Mesilla where the Confederacy could control access to the silver, gold, and copper mines. The 2nd Texas in November 1860 was not happy with Lincoln's election and held a mock election in the town plaza for Kentucky's John C. Breckinridge. When Texas seceded the miner, teamsters, and businessmen wanted to create an independent territory called "Arizona" with Mesilla as its capitol. John Baylor established his headquarters in the center plaza and raised the Confederate flag. The Union troops who were occupying Mesilla were stripped of their guns and horse, staying in San Augustin Springs to recover from dehydration and exhaustion. The Confederate army ordered the prisoners to march to Fort Craig and into Fort Leavenworth to muster out of the army, pledging not to bear arms against the Confederacy ever again. There were a group of Union soldiers who did pledge to fight for the Confederacy. This was a way to get more Confederate troops fighting for their cause to keep the wealth found in this land in Confederate hands. Baylor's next target was the Arizona Apaches, finding and killing the Indians.

The Western Territories had a forbidding landscape with deserts, followed by volcanic mountain ranges and mesas. It was also 5700 feet above sea level with a semi-arid climate. When people came to settle, they usually clustered

around the Rio Grande, the Colorado, and Gila rivers. While the Navajo and Apache nations were used to the climate and air quality, the Indian nation were seeing a change coming to the southern part of the New Mexico Territory. The Chiricahua Apache chief Mangas Coloradas began seeing Americans moving through his territory, called "Apacheria". Trappers, traders, US soldiers during the Mexican War, families in wagon train going toward the gold mines and US Soldiers who came to the area and stayed were crossing their territory all the time. Mail stage drivers and miners were building towns using the Indian lands, cutting down trees and killing their mule deer. The Apaches retaliated by attacking those wagon train that cut through their territory. The Union goal was to prevent Confederate occupation of New Mexico Territory and stopping the Indian attacks to American who were coming to make their claim in this new territory. The Union soldiers wanted the Apache and Navajo off their lands so they could create an empire of liberty which meant free laborers from coast to coast. It was also well known that the land the tribes occupied was very fertile to grow crops and graze their animals. Between 1861 and 1862 concern over the states and territories west of the Mississippi came to the forefront. Even before the war began, expansion into this western area had been driving North and South apart. Power in the Southwest was why this battle was a goal for the South but something the North wanted to avoid. The Confederate troops

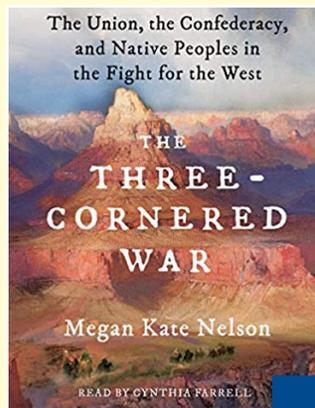
began their travels through desert, underground growth, and finally into a canyon floor lined with live oak trees. They were not seeing water for miles. Davidson and 5th Texans went through a snow-storm so brutal that the wind blowing "so hard as to almost pull the face of a man". At this point the Texan's were outnumbered! The troops wanted the battle over quickly because of the lack of water and food. The troops continued to march from one environment

to another, facing many challenges along the way. This march became

the longest single march that a Confederate Army had ever undertaken during the war. The toll on the men and animals would affect the rest of the Confederate campaign for the West.

Brigadier General Henry Sibley was experiencing low supplies by the fall. Sibley's Texas soldiers were using squirrel guns, bear guns, sportsman's guns, shot guns both single and double barrels. Sibley had an idea to purchase 200 lances topped with the original Texas flag. As the fight was going in the direction of Valverde, passing Mesa De La Contadera, Captain Willis Lang and his troopers clashed with the Union in hand-to-hand fighting with Lang's Lancers. (Sibley had made for his troops back in San Antonio) It was a sight to see! It seemed like the battle was going to the Union side in the middle of the day but by the afternoon the Confederate forces were winning. Canby ordered his men to retreat. Now the road to Albuquerque and Santa Fe was open to the Confederate troops.

Fort Union and Santa Fe were eleven miles of valleys, can-



Megan Kate Nelson

yons, creeks, wooded ridges, and cultivated fields known as La Glorieta Pass in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. From March 26-28, 1862 the battle between the troops continued but with a different ending. It was the Union forces on the trail who finally made it to Johnson's Ranch, the main Confederate camp. There were supply wagons, 500 horses and mules in a corral, a field hospital, and had a gun pointed toward the Apache Canyon. The unassuming Texans were playing games, doing races etc. The Union fired two shots and the troops in the camp fled by horseback. The Union forces came into the area and burned wagons, released livestock, and freed prisoners.

The Union forces had accomplished their goal of harassing the Confederates. As a result of burning their supplies, the opportunity to capture New Mexico Territory was gone. As Bill Davidson wrote..." leaving our train without a heavy

guard was a terrible blunder". Glorieta Pass was so disastrous to Confederate hopes that some historians have called this battle the "Gettysburg of the West". The hopes and dreams for the Confederacy was never thought about again for the remainder of the war.

Megan Kate Nelson's detail of the various battles and strategies for the Western territories opened another aspect of the Civil War that is part of Megan's story. The Indian territories were also being taken advantage of during this time. The three-cornered war came together as the Union, Confederacy and the Native Americans fought for power over the region's natural resources, their livelihood along with their hopes and dreams. The ending of some of these stories did not turn out like they had planned.

It is a good read of an area of the Civil War that is not talked about very much. I enjoyed the story and I hope you do too.

Spotlight on Loreta Janeta Velázquez

Loreta Janeta Velázquez (June 26, 1842 – 1923), was a woman who claimed to have masqueraded as a male Confederate soldier during the American Civil War, though her story has been brought into question by recent scholarship. The book she wrote about her experiences claims that after her soldier husband's accidental death, she enlisted in the Confederate States Army in 1861. She then fought at Bull Run, Ball's Bluff, and Fort Donelson, but was discharged when her gender was discovered while in New Orleans. Undeterred, she reenlisted and fought at Shiloh, until unmasked once more. She then became a Confederate spy, working in both male and female guises, and as a double agent also reporting to the U.S. Secret Service. She remarried three more times, being widowed in each instance. According to William C. Davis, she died in January 1923 under the name Loretta J. Beard after many years away from the public eye in a public psychiatric facility, St. Elizabeths Hospital.

The Woman in Battle

Velázquez recorded her adventures in her 600-page book, *The Woman in Battle: A Narrative of the Exploits, Adventures, and travels of Madame Loreta Janeta Velázquez, Otherwise Known as Lieutenant Harry T. Buford, Confederate States Army (1876)* to support her son.[1] The Confederate general Jubal Early refused to accept her memoirs as fact, and modern scholars have cast doubt upon the veracity of the book's claims.

Birth and family

According to her book, Loreta Janeta Velázquez was born in Havana, Cuba, on June 26, 1842, to a wealthy Cuban official and a mother of French and American ancestry. She also used the name Alice Williams. According to her own account, Velázquez was of Castilian descent and related to Cuban governor Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar and artist Diego Velázquez.

Her father was a Spanish government official who owned plantations in Mexico and Cuba. He felt a deep resentment towards the United States after losing an inherited ranch in the Mexican-American War at San Luis Potosi. This

animosity perpetuated the estrangement between Velázquez and her father after her elopement with an American soldier.

Velázquez learned the English language at school in New Orleans in 1849, while living with an aunt. Her father's wealth as a plantation owner allowed her this opportunity to travel and continue her education. While in New Orleans, Velázquez took to fairy tales and stories of heroism, citing Joan of Arc as a particular inspiration.

Velázquez was engaged young to Raphael, a Spaniard, in what she referred to in her memoir as a "marriage of convenience." At fourteen years old, she eloped with a Texas United States Army officer known only as John Williams (also often referred to in various sources as simply "William") on April 5, 1856 despite the threats to be sent to a convent or back to Cuba from her family. Her decision to elope was poorly received by her family, causing their estrangement.



Loreta Janeta Velázquez

She initially continued to live with her aunt, but after a quarrel with her she moved in with her husband and lived at various army posts, estranging herself further from her family by converting to Methodism.

American Civil War

At the outbreak of the American Civil War, Velázquez claims her husband resigned his U.S. commission and joined the Confederate Army. The couple became more interested in the Civil War after the early deaths of three of their children. At first, Williams actually aided Velázquez in her endeavors to cross-dress and to enlist. He agreed to a night out together with Velázquez disguised as a man, assured that upon seeing the behavior of other men she would be dissuaded. Velázquez's desires to enlist, however, were only strengthened. Velázquez failed to convince her husband to let her join him, so she acquired two uniforms, adopted the name Harry T. Buford and moved to Arkansas. There she recruited 236 men in four days, shipped them to

Continued on page 7

Pensacola, Florida, and presented them to her husband as her command. Her husband died soon after in an accident while he was demonstrating the use of weapons to his troops. Velázquez turned her men over to a friend and began to search for more things to do.

Her first experience in combat was as an independent soldier in the First Battle of Bull Run. She eventually grew tired of camp life, however, and again donned female garb to go to Washington, D.C., where she spied for the Confederacy. She claimed to meet Abraham Lincoln and Secretary of War Simon Cameron on this excursion. When she returned to the South, she was assigned to the detective corps. She later left for Tennessee.

In Tennessee, she fought in the siege of Fort Donelson until the surrender. She was wounded in battle, but was not exposed. She fled to New Orleans, where she was arrested, suspected of being a female Union spy in disguise. After she was released, she enlisted to get away from the city. At Shiloh, she found the battalion she had raised in Arkansas and fought in the battle. As she was burying the dead after a battle, a stray shell wounded her. When the army doctor who examined her discovered she was a woman, she again fled to New Orleans and saw Major General Benjamin F. Butler take command of the city. She gave up her uniform at that point.

Afterwards, in Richmond, Virginia, authorities again hired her as a spy and she began to travel all around the US. At that time, she married a Captain Thomas DeCaulp; he reportedly died soon after in a Chattanooga hospital. (An officer of that name is known to have survived the war.) She then traveled north where officials hired her to search for herself. In Ohio and Indiana, she tried to organize a rebellion of Confederate prisoners of war.

Travels

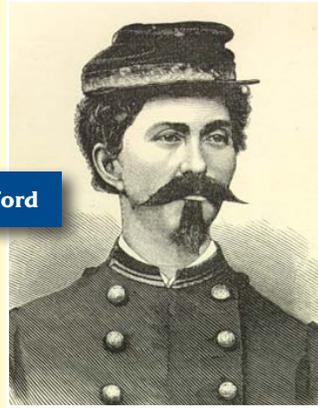
After the war, Velázquez traveled in Europe with her brother, as well as throughout South America and the southern United States.[12] She married Major Wasson and emigrated with him to Venezuela. When he died in Caracas, she returned to the United States. During her subsequent travels around the U.S., she gave birth to a baby boy and met Brigham Young in Utah. She arrived in Omaha, almost penniless, but charmed General W. S. Harney into giving her blankets and a revolver. Two days after her arrival in the mining area of Nevada, she received a proposal of marriage from a sixty-year-old man, which she refused. After eventually marrying a younger man, whose name is not known, Velázquez soon left Nevada, travelling with her baby.

Reception of her book

Her book appeared in print in 1876. In the preface, Velázquez stated that she had written the book primarily for money so she could support her child, perhaps to combat the notion of her profiting from the war. The veracity of the account was attacked almost immediately, and remains an issue with scholars. Some claim it is probably entirely fiction, others that the details in the text show a familiarity with the times that would be difficult to completely simulate.

Shortly after its appearance, former Confederate General Jubal Early denounced the book as an obvious fiction.

Lieutenant Harry T. Buford



In 2007, The History Channel aired *Full Metal Corset*, a program that presented details of Velázquez's story as genuine. However, the overall truthfulness of her account remains indeterminate and highly questionable.

Career after the war

She became very active in public life and politics, and was particularly involved in grand speculative schemes around mining and railway building, as well as being involved in journalism and

writing. Her biographer William C. Davis suggests that her actions were generally fraudulent, intending to raise money for herself and associates, although such schemes were typical business practices at that date. Some press accounts were impressed by her vitality and business acumen, such as in an 1891 account from the *New York Herald* reprinted in the *Saturday Evening Mail Terre Haute*. Here Velázquez was described as "a woman of business, a woman who can 'run things like a man.'"

Death

Loreta Janeta Velázquez is said to have died in 1897, but historian Richard Hall states that her death is unknown and the place and date of her death are also unknown. Hall, in *Patriots in Disguise*, takes a hard look at *The Woman in Battle* and analyzes whether its claims are accurate or fictionalized. Elizabeth Leonard, in *All the Daring of the Soldier*, assesses *The Woman in Battle* as largely fiction, but based on real experience. A newspaper report mentions a Lieutenant Bensford arrested when it was disclosed that "he" was actually a woman, and gives her name as Alice Williams, a name which Loreta Velázquez apparently also used. In popular culture

María Aguí Carter directed *Rebel*, an investigative documentary, examining the story of Loreta Velázquez. The film is a detective story exploring Velázquez's claims and the politics involved in erasing her from history. It was produced in 2013 and has a run-time of 73 minutes.

Revisionist biography

In October 2016, William C. Davis has published a detailed biography of Velázquez entitled *Inventing Loreta Velázquez: Confederate Soldier Impersonator, Media Celebrity, and Con Artist*. His account is based on newspaper and archival research which claims that the whole of *The Woman in Battle* is fiction. Davis asserts that Velázquez was neither Cuban nor a Confederate soldier, but was a thief and a prostitute, possibly born in New York, and eventually a swindler and con artist. Velázquez used many aliases and he is uncertain of her actual name, age, and place of birth, and thus unable to be certain of her family background or ethnicity. The woman he ultimately identifies as Velázquez served terms in jail for theft and other minor offenses, and subsequently invented more glamorous origin stories, having learned to lie while working as a prostitute. Davis's work not only views his subject in a negative light, but also expresses doubt whether women ever served effectively as military personnel in the Civil War, his specific doubts around Velázquez's service. Davis does, however, provide a definite date for her death as Loretta J. Beard on January 26, 1923, at St. Elizabeths Hospital for the Insane, Washington. In his final chap-

Continued on page 8

ter, Davis critiques feminist and Hispanic historiographical approaches to Velazquez as well as post modernist literary theory, all of which he says have failed to accurately evaluate Velázquez and have perpetuated her lies to promote their own agenda. *Wikipedia*

Gettysburg – July 1 Action Along the Chambersburg Pike

By Jim Heenehan, Member OBCWRT

As the calendar turned to July, I engaged in several Gettysburg activities as a distraction from my COVID-19 cabin fever (still, the preferable type of coronavirus fever). I saw several Gettysburg Battlefield Guide walks PCN broadcasts each year on the battle's anniversary (these were from 2015). In addition I re-watched the movie Gettysburg which I like to do in early July. But my most fun activity was taking down my Antietam diorama and building a Gettysburg Day 1 scene along the Chambersburg Pike which I did on July 1st.

I decided to portray the action with General Reynolds directing the Iron Brigade into McPherson Woods against Archer's brigade, while the 14th Brooklyn and 95th NY face off against the 5th Alabama battalion (in skirmish formation) at McPherson's barn, with Hall's battery deployed on the other side of the Pike. The scene is just before Reynolds' untimely death.

I have two dozen named Civil War figures, among whom are Reynolds and A. P. Hill (using artistic license, I included Hill here as his Corps is doing the fighting). Other figures see double duty as Joshua Chamberlain takes over the role of the 24th Michigan's colonel while a mounted General Hancock pinch-hits for Abner Doubleday.

My Iron Brigade features the 24th Michigan, 7th Wisconsin and 2d Wisconsin. The 24th Michigan and 7th Wisconsin flags are of their namesake units while I used a 9th Connecticut flag for the 2d Wisconsin as the Connecticut flagbearer's Hardee hat is consistent with Iron Brigade attire. The 14th Brooklyn flag is also theirs while I used the 56th Pennsylvania flag for the 95th NY (both are in the same brigade).

The soldiers are a mix of professionally painted metal soldiers and plastic figures that I painted (I did six of the nine 14th Brooklyn, for example). Some of the soldiers are from the Marx Civil War set my mom got my brother and me for Christmas in 1960 (the Marx Civil War centennial set).

The diorama is 5' x 2.5'.

The 5 photos are:

1. A scene showing the action with the 14th Brooklyn near the Pike at the McPherson barn. I got the barn in Gettysburg which is a flat of the actual barn;
2. General Reynolds directing the Iron Brigade into McPherson Woods;
3. The 24th Michigan and 7th Wisconsin advancing into

the woods;

4. Hall's battery on the other side of the Chambersburg Pike; and

5. General A. P. Hill on the right surveying the action. The figure crawling on the ground is one of the soldiers from the 1960 Marx set.

Even though I can't go anywhere right now, this was a fun way to spend the first day of July.



“CIVIL WAR on the RIO GRANDE 1846-1876”

July 9th Meeting

Presentation by Roseann Bacha-Garza

Rio Grande Valley Civil War Trails was a project started by program director Roseann Bacha-Garza, Professor of History and Anthropology at the University of Texas. Russell K. Skowronek, Christopher L. Miller, Samantha Bernard who researched the information for this project and contributors who sent a group of stories from 1846-1876 to the researchers. The idea was to expand the research from the Mexican War into reconstruction. One of the motivating factors was Ken Burns who told the story of the Civil War and its battles east of the Mississippi River but west of the Mississippi there was no talk about the Rio Grande or facts pertaining to the Rio Grande Valley.

There were 53 lieutenants who served in the US Army against the Mexican Army at the Battle of Palo Alto in 1846 who became generals in the armies of the Union and Confederacy during the American Civil War. In fact, Ulysses S. Grant was one of those generals. During the Mexican American War, this area was important training for officers. Before the American Civil War, Colonel Robert E. Lee, visited Ringgold Barracks in Rio Grande City in 1860. At that time, he was investigating Mexican land grants. The barracks was a wooden building which still stands today, exceedingly rare indeed. Along the area of the barracks was borderland families who enlisted in both the Union and Confederate armies.

The 2nd Texas US Cavalry was one of many troops who were trying to stop the import of cotton and other war supplies along the Rio Grande. This cavalry unit offered a horse and pay to any skilled horsemen from either side to protect the property of the farmers and their possessions. The highest-ranking Spanish-speaking officer in the Confederate army was Colonel Santos Benavides of Laredo. While the US Cavalry was protecting the people of Texas, the 33rd Texas Cavalry was in the town of Laredo protecting it from a Union takeover. On March 19, 1864 Colonel Benavides and his troops turned the Union forces away from the city. His troops traveled the Rio Grande to protect the cotton trade for the Confederacy. In 1864 there were over 5000 bales of cotton sitting in St. Augustin Plaza instead of going to Brownsville.

During this time, many mixed-race families settled along the newly formed US-Mexico international border along the Rio Grande. There was some underground railroad activity among the ranches to help slaves get into free Mexico. At the time there were slave catchers in the area, and it was the ranch owners who wanted to protect their slaves from being caught. African American in the Civil War enlisted in the USCT between 1862-1866. The troops fought at the Battle of Palmito Ranch, which was the last battle



Colonel Santos Benavides

of the Civil War, living in segregated camp sites while they fought. After the Civil War, the African American troops rebuilt and served at Fort Brown, Ringgold, and McIntosh.

Cotton trade was especially important to the Confederate cause as it helped keep the Confederacy in money to continue fighting in this war. If the Union troops could have stopped this trade from the beginning of this war it would have

saved hundreds of thousands of lives. Merchants were able to trade cotton, salt (white gold), ammunition and medicine. This was the most important way to make money for the cause which was critical to their survival. The Union was aware of the Confederate strategy. To stop the cotton trade, a Union blockade was set up from 1864-1865 where only the port of Bagdad was still open. The Port of Bagdad played an especially important role for the profit and employment of the Confederacy. Many men and boys worked as teamsters to get cotton to port by using blockade runners, merchants, and bankers. The cotton goods went across the Rio Grande River into Mexico then by ox cart to a steamboat then to the Port of Bagdad and to markets across the Atlantic. This export became a part of a global trade war.



Palmito Ranch Battlefield

The last land battle of the Civil War in the Rio Grande area was Palmito Ranch, May 12-13, 1865, 34 days after Lee surrendered. Jefferson Davis wanted to go

back to this area to resume the war again. That was not going to happen, Jefferson Davis was caught, May 10-12, 1865. The Union troops continued to protect the trade and revenue from getting back into Confederate hands.

What an interesting topic! With not a lot of knowledge of the Civil War along the Rio Grande this was a wonderful presentation about an area that we may not be as familiar



**Private John J. Williams
34th Indiana
Final Combat Death**

in Civil War history. Thanks to Roseann Bacha-Garza for Rio Grande Valley Civil War Trails and her fine group of colleges who researched the topic and came back with so much exciting information. We are thankful for having a ZOOM presentation with Roseann which leaves the door open for additional interesting topics from other parts of our country. Thanks, also, to Dave and his ability to bring such interesting topics to our roundtable.

“Eisenhower: The Necessary Man”

July 28 Meeting



Dr. Michael Birkner

Presentation by
Dr. Michael Birkner

Dr. Birkner’s presentation focuses on the circumstances surrounding Dwight D. Eisenhower’s decision to run for president in 1952, and how his distinctive style of leadership proved efficacious and popular. Ike went from being ranked 22nd out of 34 American presidents in 1962 by a panel of presidential experts, to 5th out of 44 in 2018.

He will also discuss the history and experiences of the Eisenhowers in Gettysburg, as well as the mission and works of the present-day Eisenhower Society.

Dr. Michael J. Birkner is professor of history at Gettysburg College, and a Trustee of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Society of Gettysburg. His scholarship focuses on aspects of 19th- and 20th-century America. His many books include *The Governors of New Jersey: Biographical Essays* (2013), *McCormick of Rutgers: Scholar, Teacher, Public Historian* (2001), an edition of *The Papers of Daniel Webster: Correspondence Series* (1986), a social history of his home town of Bergenfield, New Jersey (a CHOICE outstanding academic book, 1994), and three edited volumes on President James Buchanan. His latest, co-edited work is entitled *The Worlds of James Buchanan and Thaddeus Stevens* (2019).

Dr. Birkner is recognized for his work on Dwight D. Eisenhower. In 2018 he led a Gilder-Lehrman summer seminar at American University on Eisenhower’s presidential leadership. He has published a biography of Eisenhower for middle-school students, an illustrated history of the Eisenhowers titled *Encounters With Eisenhower* (2015), and numerous scholarly and popular articles on aspects of the Eisenhower presidency. From 1998-2016 he collaborated with the Eisenhower National Historic site supervisory historian in running a summer institute for secondary school teachers focused on Eisenhower’s presidency. He consulted on the e-Eisenhower Project of the Eisenhower Memorial Commission, and the revamping of the Eisenhower Museum in Abilene, Kansas, and to the multi-part documentary on Eisenhower’s generalship and presidency produced by Starbright television. He has been an on camera presence both for the Eisenhower documentary segment on the presidential election of 1952, and to the film introducing visitors to James Buchanan’s home, Wheatland, in Lancaster, PA.

Dr. Birkner served twice on the Pulitzer Prize jury for History, the second time in 2006 as jury chair. From 2014-2016 he served as President of the Pennsylvania Historical Asso-

ciation. He received his bachelor’s degree from Gettysburg College and his master’s degree and doctorate from the University of Virginia in American history.

1918
Ike at Camp Colt
Ike and Mamie



1918
First House
Second House



1944
D-Day



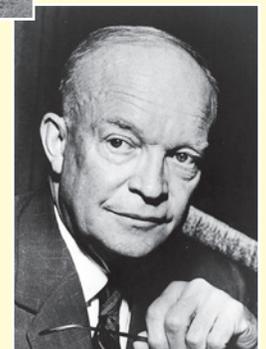
Retirement



Eisenhower Farm
and Marker



Eisenhower
Office
and Marker
(Gettysburg
College)



Red-Legged Devils from Brooklyn

By Anthony Battillo, CWTI, February 72

Among the 130 fighting regiments of the Civil War with the highest casualty rates was the 14th New York Infantry Regiment—volunteers in red pants who earned from their enemies the hard-won nickname “Red-Legged Devils from Brooklyn” because of their performance at the otherwise disastrous First Battle of Bull Run.

The ferocious charges of the Red Legs, their tenacity in taking and defending a position, and their ability to fallback in disciplined order when necessary won for the Brooklyn Militia Regiment an immortal place of honor. The saga of the Red-Legged Devils is one of staunch camaraderie, aggressiveness, patriotism, and unselfish devotion to duty. Born of hardship, these qualities rapidly grew into a spirit which maintained itself throughout the entire history of the fighting 14th.

In response to President Lincoln’s call for 75,000 three-month troops shortly after the attack on Fort Sumter, the ranks of the 14th were quickly filled. Colonel Alfred M. Wood, its commanding officer, telegraphed Washington on April 18, 1861, giving notice that his men were ready for the field, but the Government’s reply signified that no more short-term troops would be accepted; the commitment had to be for “three years or the war.” Almost to a man, the 14th accepted these terms.

Plans to move the regiment were immediately underway. The people of Brooklyn proudly outfitted their militia unit with new uniforms, *chasseur-a-pied* (straight red trousers, white leggings, blue blouse, and red cap trimmed with blue), modeled after the French *chasceurs*.

However, going off to war meant first hurdling certain political barriers, especially in the state government. Governor E. D. Morgan of New York had delayed calling up the 14th, and if the regiment was to see action, drastic steps had to be taken. Colonel Wood went to Washington to confer with military officials while Moses O’Dell, Brooklyn’s influential Congressman, spoke to President Lincoln, who finally ordered the regiment to move to Washington, circumventing Governor Morgan.

Indignant that the 14th had made ready to move without his order, the governor sent a harsh and querulous dispatch to Wood, demanding to know by what authority the regiment had been ordered to proceed to Washington. The colonel’s prompt reply was: “By authority of the President of the United States and, I hope, with your approval.”

Thus, on May 18, the 14th Regiment, eight line companies and one engineer corps, broke camp in Brooklyn’s Fort Greene section and set out for the Capital. The colorfully dressed *chasseurs* wound their way through streets lined with cheering citizens. Amid this display of patriotic fervor, the regiment boarded the Fulton Street Ferry, and,

as the band played “The Girl I Left Behind Me,” lines were cast off. In Jersey City, the send-off rivaled that in Brooklyn as another crowd waited patiently to see the red-legged soldiers entrain for the Capital.



The 14th was officially mustered into U.S. service by General Irvin McDowell in Washington on May 23, 1861. Later, at Camp Wood on Meridian Hill, two additional companies from Brooklyn joined the regiment, and on July 2 the 14th crossed the Potomac and bivouacked in the vicinity of Arlington House. The regiment, totaling 960 officers and men, was assigned to the brigade of Brigadier General Andrew Porter.

Routine drilling and picket duty came to an abrupt end on July 16, when the *chasseurs* were ordered to the front. After an all-day march, the regiment made camp in Annandale, Virginia. Gathered around the evening camp fires, the Brooklyn men sang songs of home, of country, and of loved ones. Their spirit was contagious, and before long they were joined in song by other members of Porter’s brigade on “that last night before the curtain was raised and the horror of war became a reality.”

On Sunday, July 21, the 14th went into its first battle, engaging the 33d Virginia at Bull Run in the area around the Henry House known as the “slaughter pen.” Later in the day they were attacked in a wooded area by the 7th and 8th Georgia, where they “behaved with a gallantry worthy of the old guard of Napoleon,” and held their ground heroically. In five hours the regiment sustained 145 casualties, and earned its everlasting nickname, “The Red-Legged Devils,” bestowed by the Confederates it fought. It was well deserved. Wood received a serious wound, was captured, and later was paroled and discharged for medical reasons. Lieutenant Colonel Edward B. Fowler assumed command of the regiment. Sergeant Frank Head, the 14th’s color bearer, was mortally wounded in the heat of battle. When assistance was offered to move the 21-year-old soldier to the rear, his last words were “take care of the colors and never mind me.” Wounded and captured by the Virginia cavalry, Sergeant John McNeill was taken before Colonel E. B. Stuart. The interrogation was brief, for the Brooklyn soldier flatly refused to reveal the location and strength of the Union troops. Stuart stared intently at his young prisoner, returned his watch, complimented him on his soldierly appearance, and calmly offered him a mount in his cavalry and the opportunity for promotion. McNeill stared straight ahead as he gave his reply: “You can offer me no inducement great enough to make me fight against the Union.” McNeill was later paroled and returned to his regiment, where he rose to the rank of captain.

Clearly, the Confederates well realized the aptness of the sobriquet they had bestowed upon the 14th. Describing a skirmish with the 14th in Northern Virginia, Lieutenant Colonel Fitzhugh Lee, 1st Virginia Cavalry, wrote on

November 19, 1861, at Camp Cooper, Virginia:

The enemy were a portion of the Fourteenth New York State Militia of Brooklyn, and fought with much more bravery than the Federal troops usually exhibit. It is the same regiment that so thickly dotted the field of Manassas upon the 21st with red.

Vigorous protests rose throughout the ranks of the 14th in December 1861, when its regimental number was changed by the state to 84th New York Volunteers. The effect on morale was quickly noticed, and General McDowell, speaking to the regiment at Camp Arlington shortly after, said:

You were mustered by me into the service of the United States as . . . the Fourteenth. You have been baptized by fire under that number and you shall be recognized by the United States government by no other number.

"Baptized by fire!" The phrase revitalized the spirit of the regiment and was quickly adopted as the regimental motto, which was to endure throughout the long history of the Fighting 14th and its successors.

The Red Legs saw their second commander fall in battle at Groveton, Virginia, on August 29, 1862. A severe wound put Fowler out of action, whereupon Lieutenant Colonel William H. DeBevoise, a regular member of the regiment, took command. This able soldier, who was to face almost unbearable hardship and prolonged adversity, led the 14th from the second battle of Bull Run through South Mountain, Antietam, and Fredericksburg.

After the second defeat at Bull Run, the 14th fell back through Centreville, Fairfax, Falls Church, and Upton's Hill. On September 4 the Red Legs crossed the Potomac over the Aqueduct Bridge, passed through Washington, and reached Rockville, Maryland, on September 9. There, the depleted ranks were filled with new recruits from Brooklyn.

In his War Papers, Rufus R. Dawes, Brevet Brigadier General of Volunteers, described the action of the 14th at Antietam.

The Fourteenth Brooklyn Regiment, red-legged Zouaves, came into my line on the run, closing the awful gaps. . . . Men and officers of New York and Wisconsin are fused into a common mass in the frantic struggle to shoot fast. Everybody tears cartridges, loads, passes guns, or shoots. . . . furious in his energy and eagerness to win victory. Many of the recruits who are killed or wounded only left home ten days before.

Of unusual interest is Dawes' mention of the new recruits, who, because of their limited training, were not required to enter the line. Yet, at their own insistence they had participated in the fighting.

With poignant memories of the staggering losses at Antietam, the bloodiest day of the war, the 14th pushed on into Virginia. By December 9, the Red Legs were on the banks of the Rappahannock River, opposite Fredericksburg, where General Burnside rashly decided to cross,

sending his army head-on into the face of the enemy. In spite of the severity of the battle, the 14th came out of Fredericksburg with relatively few casualties.

Spirits ran high in the ranks of the 14th at Chancellorsville. Victory appeared to lie within their grasp. Then, to their dismay, the order was given to fall back. The disorder in which the Union forces retreated is described by Gerrish and Hutchinson in *Blue and Gray*: "The open field around Chancellorsville at this time presented a terrible appearance. Men, horses, guns, caissons and baggage wagons went crashing along in the utmost confusion toward the fords of the Rappahannock."

Colonel Fowler, fully recovered from the wounds sustained at Groveton, was again in command of the regiment. Brigadier General James S. Wadsworth, the 1st Division commander, sensing the uneasiness of the troops in retreat, ordered Fowler to halt his regiment and form a line of defense at the bridge. The 14th staunchly maintained this position and was the last unit to cross the river.

Until mid-June 1863, the Red Legs were occupied with little more than drilling, picket duty, and passing in review. On June 12, however, the regiment broke camp near White Oak Chapel, Virginia, and proceeded on a long march northward. Covering as much as twenty miles a day, without knowledge of the events taking place around them, the Red Legs passed through Maryland and crossed into Pennsylvania.

At 7 o'clock on the morning of July 1, the 1st Division buglers sounded the call to pack and the 1st Division of the First Corps was ordered to move forward with speed. The enemy was advancing in great force: The Battle of Gettysburg had begun!

The 14th, bivouacked in a quiet field along the Emmitsburg Road, was promptly alerted to the situation and made a five-mile forced march north. The Red Legs joined the 1st Division near the Codori House and marched to a point near the Lutheran Seminary, where they received orders to load muskets, and moved into a position on McPherson Ridge. Here, with the 95th New York, the 14th formed on the left of the 2d Brigade of the 1st Division. Other

units rapidly came into position. The 2d Brigade, composed of the 76th and 147th New York and the 56th Pennsylvania, formed to the right of the Chambersburg Pike near an unfinished railroad cut. Separated by a cluster of trees, the Iron Brigade of Wisconsin took its position on the 14th's left.



Confederate sharpshooters, hidden in the woods to the left of the Union battle line, lost no time. A volley of bullets poured into the Federal line. Major General John F. Reynolds, busily placing units and forming lines, fell dead just to the left of the 14th's position.

From that point on the Red Legs remained in the battle line until the fight ended. For three days and two nights they subsisted largely on crackers and water. They were to see half their number killed, wounded, or missing as they fought the enemy in what is described as the longest continuous engagement of the war. On this morning of July 1, while serving with the First Corps, the Red Legs participated in the repulse of Davis' Mississippi brigade and in the capture of a large portion of the unit. The First Corps bought time for the Union army that day, "and what the First Corps was to the . . . Union Army, the Fourteenth Regiment, at several critical moments, was to the First Corps."

On the second day of the battle, as the 14th was desperately fighting to hold the trenches on Culp's Hill in front of Major General Edward Johnson, a shot shattered the flag staff and the regimental colors fell to the ground. Captain Ramon Cardona of Company I hastily spliced the pieces of the pole and, under a hail of enemy fire, he and several of his comrades reset the colors in place. The entire regiment was inspired by that valiant act. The flag was carried on that spliced staff throughout the remainder of the war, and the splice has been preserved to this day.



Nightfall on that memorable second day at Gettysburg found the 14th in the vicinity of Spangler's Spring, where rest was not given to the battle-worn soldiers. Out of the darkness came a burst of bullets. Privates Cox and McQuire, two volunteer scouts for the 14th, investigated and reported the shots had come from the 10th Virginia. Colonel Fowler gave the order to attack.

This Virginia regiment was the advance of Johnson's division of Ewell's corps, which was at that moment close to capturing or destroying the reserve ammunition train of the Union army. Action by the 14th and by Greene's brigade not only saved the ammunition train but prevented Johnson from effecting a damaging flank movement.

At daylight on the third day of battle, and throughout most of the morning, fierce infantry engagements were taking place in the XII Corps sector, where the 14th was assigned. Johnson reopened his attack of the previous day.

Before long, intense musket and artillery fire raked the surrounding woodlands. Branches and the bark of trees, literally shot to splinters, were strewn about as if swept by a hurricane. The 14th fought desperately until almost noon, when the attack was finally repulsed.

The nearly two-hour silence that fell on Gettysburg late

that morning was ominous and unnerving to the thousands of tired combatants on both sides. At 1 o'clock the silence was broken, and the Union forces on Cemetery Ridge were exposed to murderous fire from Lee's cannons. With Cemetery Ridge to their rear, the Red Legs on Culp's Hill were subjected to little direct artillery fire; only a few exploding shells fell among them. Following that fearful barrage came Pickett's Charge. The 14th, among other units, was left to defend Culp's Hill while regiments that could be spared rushed to the Union center to repulse the attack. Spread thin along the line, the 14th drove back wave after wave of Confederate attackers, ' keeping them from breaking through and attacking the Union center from the rear. "It was as if every man deemed the success of the day depended on him. . . . Between the two deadly fires the Fourteenth held grimly to its post."

That night the men of the 14th rested on Culp's Hill. Everywhere about them could be seen the death and destruction of the three-day carnage. "I consider every officer and man who passed through that trying ordeal," wrote Colonel Fowler in his *Recollection-of Gettysburg*, "is justly entitled to the name of hero."

The 14th was at Culpeper early in 1864 and, as relief from the pressures of war, prepared a theatrical performance which was given at the Culpeper Academy of Music. Skits and songs by soloists, minstrel groups, and instrumentalists were well received. In fact, the performance of February 5 was so enthusiastically applauded that repeat performances were given on March 9 and 10 for the benefit of the New York State Militia Veterans and Charitable Association of Brooklyn. Admission was 25 cents, with reserved seats at 50 cents. Skits included: "Scene at Fred Eggert's Barber Shop" and "Scene at Sherman's Portrait Gallery." Songs included "Mother Would Comfort Me," "Johnny Gill Hooley," and "Yes, A Soldier is My Beau." There were banjo and violin solos and Irish songs sung by C. T. Pearce. The program sheet stated: "The evening's entertainment to conclude with wonderful and dangerous feats, introducing the celebrated HAR-NIC-KLE-ONIAN COUSINS"

The grim business of war continued. A showdown in the spring was imminent. General U. S. Grant, called from his successful campaigns in the West, reviewed the newly consolidated corps, divisions, and brigades, and the 14th was selected to welcome him on his arrival and to serve as his guard during his stay in camp.

On May 4, the army moved out on its way to The Wilderness. In less than 24 hours, 100,000 Union soldiers, led by Warren's corps, had crossed the Rapidan at its lowest fords and turned the left flank of Lee's line. The advance consisted of two huge columns: Warren and Sedgwick on the right crossed at Germanna Ford; Hancock's corps crossed at Ely's Ford, six miles below. The 14th crossed with Warren's corps, having been assigned the duty of guarding the army's enormous wagon train.

In The Wilderness, where "it was almost impossible to distinguish friend from foe," the Red Legs faced the ferocity of Longstreet. The Federals had a hard time of it, but the line held and Longstreet's advance was stopped and shattered. Under cover of darkness, the 14th moved up to the Union's first line of defense in the dense woods and remained there until the battle ended.

Continued in Next Issue

Thursday August 27th Old Baldy Book Discussion

Hosted by Paul Prentiss



Hello to all our members – I hope this note finds you well and cabin fever hasn't dampened your summer spirits. With all the "extra time" on our hands, many people have finally been able to get to those books we've been meaning to read. With such a diverse and inquiring membership, many of us like suggestions of good books. To that end, Old Baldy has scheduled My Favorite Book night on Thursday August 27th at 7:15 PM. We would like members to take 5 to 6 minutes to describe a book they would like to share with friends and the reason why. We will then allow a minute or two for members to ask questions. It doesn't have to be a Civil War book but something you think will be of interest to the Round Table members. The meeting will take place on Zoom and be moderated by yours truly – Paul Prentiss. Hopefully we can have a dozen or so members share their titles.

Please send me (pprentissfamily@gmail.com) your name, book title, author and very brief description of the book (no more than 2 sentences). We will provide the list of books being discussed to the members with the Zoom meeting notice.

We are really looking forward to hear what folks have read.

**New Digital Display at
CAMDEN SHIPYARD AND MARITIME MUSEUM
1912 Broadway, Camden NJ
www.camdenshipyardmuseum.org
856-541-7447**

Camden Shipyard and Maritime Museum has a new digital panel display of Camden's maritime past. It is a sequence of panels, in words and photos, about ships produced at New York Shipyard, other area shipyards and other maritime topics. Please come by and see it once we are allowed to open, hopefully soon!

USS Indianapolis was a cruiser built by New York Shipyard and commissioned in 1932. It had eight boilers, four geared steam turbines and four propellers. It was 610 foot long, beam of 66 feet and capable of 32 knots speed. During WWII the ship served from Aleutian Islands to South Pacific. It was part of task force that bombed Japanese home island military facilities in February 1945. On 31 March 1945, while supporting the invasion of Okinawa a Japanese

plane bombed the ship causing flooding and extensive damage. The ship made it back to Mare Island Naval Shipyard in California under its own power for repairs.



The Spanish Flu in Haddon Township (1918)

Prohibited Gatherings, Home Confinements, Canceled Events, Face Masks-sound familiar? The Spanish Flu (a misnomer suggesting that this virus originated in Spain, which it did not) pandemic of 1918 infected millions of people worldwide, including over 600,000 Americans. We do not have an exact count of Haddon Township citizens who contracted or died from this deadly virus, but we can find several articles in local newspapers about its impact.

View and read articles about the Spanish Flu in Haddon Township at:
www.facebook.com/haddontwphistoricalsociety

Schedule of Old Baldy CWRT Speakers and Activities for 2020

August 13, 2020 – Thursday
Kevin M. Levin

"Searching for Black Confederates, The Civil War's Most Persistent Myth"

August 27, 2020 – Thursday
Paul Prentiss

"Old Baldy Book Discussion "

September 10, 2020 – Thursday
Amy Murrell Taylor

"Embattled Freedom – Journeys through the Civil War's Slave Refugee Camps"

October 8, 2020 – Thursday
Mark Brewer

"Swim, Surrender or Die: The Union Army at the Battle Ball's Bluff"

Questions to
Dave Gilson - 856-323-6484 - dgilson404@gmail.com.

Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia
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