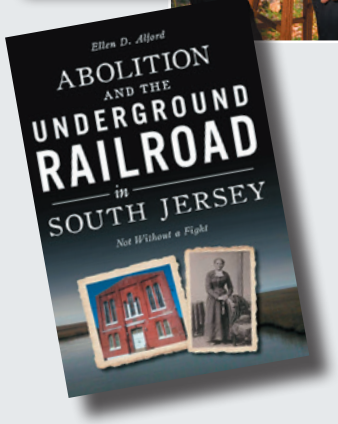
November 13, 2025 The Civil War: April 12, 1861 - August 20, 1866

Ellen Alford on : "Abolition and the Underground Railroad in South Jersey: Not Without a Fight"

Ellen Alford



Southern New Jersey was a hotbed of slave fugitives, freedmen and abolitionists in the Civil War era. The proud 22nd Regiment of the United States Colored Troops included hundreds of Black New Jerseyans ready to fight for emancipation and the Union cause. Abolitionists such as Harriet Tubman, Abigail Goodwin and Benjamin Sheppard operated among key landmarks of the Underground Railroad in South Jersey counties such as Cape May, Cumberland and Salem. Slavery and the rights of Black Americans were at the forefront of the region's attention including stories such as a melee in a Cape May hotel between Black waiters and white patrons, the covert signaling of boats ferrying fugitive slaves across the Delaware River and the daring rescue of a runaway slave from the hands of slave catchers by local church worshipers. Author Ellen Alford reveals the history of abolition and the Underground Railroad in South Jersey.

Meeting Notice

Join us at 7:00 PM on Thursday, November 13th.

Please note: We will be meeting at the Rohrer Center and simulcast on Zoom.

And will also gather for the pre-meeting dinner at the Kettle & Grill at 5:30 PM

If you are not already receiving Old Baldy communications, email oldbaldycwrt@verizon.net at least 24hrs prior to request the Zoom link for the program.

"Members, and Friends of the Roundtable who receive our email communications, will automatically receive the Zoom link and do not need to request it"

Ellen D. Alford is a native South Jersey resident and local historian who researches and writes about the Underground Railroad, slavery, abolition and Harriet Tubman in South Jersey. She is a former newspaper correspondent, public school educator and university administrator. She has won numerous journalism awards, including the Lloyd P. Burns Award for Public Service from the New Jersey Press Association. Ms. Alford is a graduate of Howard University in Washington, D.C., with a degree in English/communications and has pursued graduate studies in American history at Rutgers University–Camden, New Jersey, where she was given the School of Arts & Science Excellence Award. Ms. Alford is a member of the National History Honor Society.

Notes from the President

WELCOME everyone. As many of you may be aware, Paul resigned as president of OB just prior of the October meeting. As a result, I am standing in until myself and the Board can finalize a long-term plan forward. The Board held a Meeting on November 3. Any significant outcomes of the meeting will be presented at the November meeting and included in the next Newsletter as our schedule for publishing the newsletter does not give me time to include it in this issue. Until a definitive path forward can be identified, we will be focusing on maintaining the basic

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functions necessary to support our monthly meetings. This includes continuing to identify some additional volunteers which I will discuss further below.

Want to thank **Frank Bartletta**, **Lorraine Gancher**, **Mike DiPaolo**, **Mike Bassett** and **Rich Jankowski** who participated in the ***Boscov's*** Coupon sales and collectively have provided to date over $900. Want to thank **Dave Gilson**, **Sandy Kenny**, **Maggie Tumasz**, **Randy Acorcey**, **Rich Jankowski** and **Karl Pusch** for manning the display table at the ***Civil War History Weekend*** at the West Jersey Depot in Glassboro on October 25th and 26th.

To keep the meetings moving forward and to keep our newsletter being published, we still require members to volunteer (1) as Zoom meeting coordinator to assist **Randy Acorcey** with Meetings set-up, (2) a Zoom Equipment coordinator (need two in case someone cannot attend) and (3), someone to assemble the Newsletter (replace Don after December). These are critical positions we need to fill. If anyone considers they may have some interest, please reach out and I will be happy to discuss with you individually.

Just a reminder from last newsletter, Old Baldy won the ***2025 Matthew Borowick Marketing Award***. We will be meeting Thursday (November 13th) a little earlier at 7PM at the Rohrer Center and on Zoom to make the award presentation. Matt will be joining us for dinner on Thursday November 13th at the Kettle and Grill. For those who like socializing and sharing a meal together, a group of us meet at the Kettle and Grill, 230 N Maple Ave, Marlton around 5:30PM... ***Please join us!***

Following the marketing reward, **Ellen Alford** will present ***"Abolition and the Underground RR in South Jersey"***

December sees two events. December 13 is ***Wreaths Across America*** at the Beverly National Cemetery at Noon and December 31st is the celebration of ***Meade's birthday*** at Noon at the Laurel Hill Cemetery (Meade talk, Wreaths dedication and Champagne toast). Please consider attending these events.

Our December meeting (December 11) with be our season social. There will be a sign-up sheet at our meeting for bringing items as well as a coordinator to reach out to for those individuals who may not attend the November meeting but would be interested in attending the social and providing an item.

Wishing everyone a Happy Thanksgiving!!

Calvin Kinsel, President

Member Profile - Bob Sparks

by Kim Weaver
OBCWRT Member

Bob Sparks

When you are a child your career aspirations have no limit. Bob Sparks wanted to be a caveman, then a geologist, then a physicist—and all were absolutely attainable. The first one just required more skills. "I spent my free time as a child constantly outside, hiking, climbing trees. And I loved sleeping in a tent and camping. And I liked the idea of being able to survive in the wilds. Well, cavemen did it, so I wanted to learn how to make hunting tools, etc. Maybe trying to chip rocks into spearheads got me interested in geology. I never learned how to make stone tools, but I camped a lot."

Bob was born in Newtown, Pa., and raised in the village of Dolington in farm country. He attended Council Rock High School, which opened in 1954 and took a giant hit from the wrecking ball in 2018. "Now there is a beautiful new building that I would have enjoyed attending!"

After graduating in 1969, Bob entered Wesleyan University in Connecticut. He studied a broad range of subjects, including math/physics, astronomy, literature, and religion/philosophy, while trying to understand what field suited his taste and character. He even got to spend a semester abroad in Germany. Bob left Wesleyan after three years and later learned computer programming at Maxwell Institute in Norristown. He worked in the industry

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at the Bucks County Courthouse for 18 years, eventually becoming a systems analyst. Then a consulting company offered Bob a position working on contracts for the New Jersey Department of Human Services. He spent eight years as a consultant, and then 13 years as a full employee and manager of a programming team at NJDHS. He retired in 2013 and lives just outside of Newtown with Vicky, his wife of 45 years.

Bob's early innate wonder and curiosity about nature have served him well and have made him adept at many things, including birdwatching and the ability to identify most birds by ear. He has been a birdwatcher since childhood, and the passion has only grown stronger. "About 22 years ago, I decided I would try to learn the songs and calls. Lots of hard work tracking down each bird by following its song. Later, I got some CDs to learn the birds I rarely saw. Now I know by ear which birds are about when I walk and then use my binocs when I hear one I'm interested in or is uncommon or particularly attractive." Bob also has a talent for sketching and painting with watercolors, and says he does it all just for fun—like playing tabletop war games. "I've played the old Avalon Hill Gettysburg board wargame dozens of times by now. Now and then Lee wins."

One of Bob's friends in the fourth grade was a big fan of the Civil War and they would often play rebels in the woods behind his friend's house. He also introduced Bob to a Civil War tabletop game with little plastic figures of infantry, cavalry, and artillery. "So I started learning about the Civil War and taught one of my neighborhood friends that it wasn't the Silver War." What interests Bob are the battles and overall strategy, the biographies of leaders, and firsthand accounts of life as a Civil War soldier. He admires Abraham Lincoln "for his intelligence and values, and for being the right person at the right time. I admire Grant for his integrity and persistence."

Bob has been a member of our roundtable since 2021 and has reviewed books for the newsletter. He is an old-time member of both the Bucks County and Delaware Valley CWRTs.

Today in Civil War History

1861 Wednesday, November 13

The North
President Lincoln pays a call on his new army chief, but after keeping the president waiting, McClellan retires to bed without meeting his superior.

1861 Thursday, November 13

Western Theater
Skirmishing occurs at Nashville. Bragg, looking to join with another Con- federate force under Breckenridge, pushes his command towards Murfreesboro. In Mississippi, Grant's force takes Holly Springs after Van Dorn evacuates.

1863 Friday, November 13

Western Theater
Longstreet advances on Knoxville where Burnside's men are well entrenched, expecting the Confederate assault. Minor actions occur at Palmyra and Blythe's Ferry, Tennessee. California Union troops skirmish with hostile Indians near the Big Bar on the Trinity River.

1864 Sunday, November 13

Eastern Theater
Early detaches most of his men to join Lee at Richmond and Petersburg. This

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marks the end of his valley campaign, which, since June, has occupied greatly superior Union forces. If he failed to achieve the incredible success of Stonewall Jackson in 1862, it was nevertheless an outstanding effort considering the odds against his little army.

Western Theater
Hood establishes his headquarters at Florence.

Far West
Federal troops are in action against Indians near Fort Larned, Kansas.

1865 Month of November

The North
Only one man was branded a "war criminal" after the end of the Civil War—the Swiss-born Captain Henry Wirz, who had commanded the infamous prison camp at Andersonville, Georgia. Convicted of cruelty to prisoners of war by a military commission, he is hanged in the Old Capitol prison yard. The hangman had evidently not calculated the drop to kill him quickly; Wirz took over seven minutes to die.

Wirz's execution makes the name Andersonville synonymous with grim prisoner-of-war camps, but Andersonville was only in operation from February 1864, and the conditions at Union prisons like Camp Douglas, Chicago, or Johnson's Island on Lake Erie, were hardly pleasant. Federal records show that 211,000 US troops were captured, of whom 16,000 were paroled, and 30,000 died in captivity. Some 460,000 Confederates surrendered during the war; 247,000 were paroled and 26,000 died in prison. Thus the mortality rates were not vastly different—12 percent against 15 percent.

The South
Mississippi adopts a series of laws regulating vagrancy and labor service. It is the first of a succession of Southern states to pass discriminatory laws intended to keep the freed black population firmly under white control. By continuing to oppose reform, these die-hard State administrations play into the hands of Northern radicals who are determined to see the Negro placed on an even legal footing.

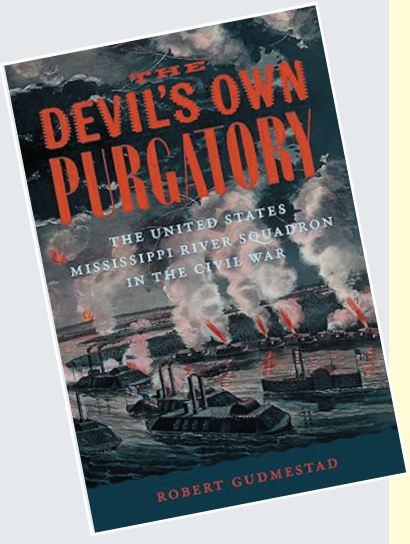
OBCWRT Awards

- American Battlefield Trust for 25 Year Service to the Trust presented to OBCWRT
- The Society For Women and the Civil War for Service to the Society presented to OBCWRT
- Civil War Roundtable Congress The Wallace L. Rueckel Innovation Award presented to OBCWRT (2022)
- Civil War Roundtable Congress Sustainability Challenge presented to OBCWRT (2023)
- Kevin M. Hale Award for best Historical Newsletter in New Jersey (2017, 2022)
- Candid Gold Transparency Award presented to OBCWRT (2024)
- Matthew Borowick Marketing Award presented to OBCWRT (2025)

American Civil War Books

(to be released November 2025)

Compiled by Kim Weaver
OBCWRT Member



The Devil's Own Purgatory: The United States Mississippi River Squadron in the Civil War

by Robert H. Gudmestad/LSU Press

The Devil's Own Purgatory is the first complete history of the Union navy's Mississippi Squadron, a fleet that prowled the Mississippi River and its tributaries during the American Civil War. The squadron battered Confederate forts, participated in combined operations with the army, obliterated the Confederate fleet, protected Union supply lines, fought a river-based counterinsurgency war, raided plantations, and facilitated the freedom of thousands of enslaved people.

War Fought and Felt: The Emotional Motivations of Confederate Soldiers

by Joshua R. Shiver/LSU Press

Joshua R. Shiver's War Fought and Felt advances our grasp of the links between masculinity, emotion, and relationships during the American

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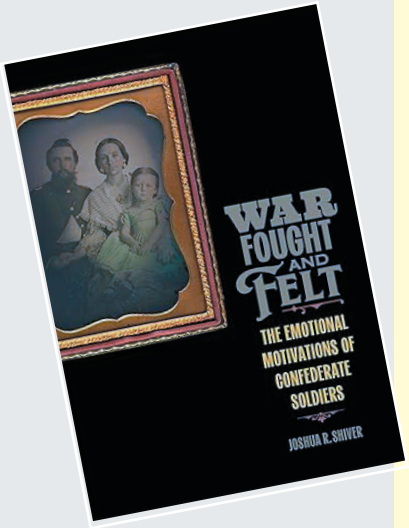


Civil War. It is the first broadly researched, multidisciplinary, and statistically supported approach to understanding the pivotal role of emotions in the everyday lives of Confederate soldiers. Using a source base of more than 1,790 letters and diaries from two hundred Confederate soldiers from North Carolina and Alabama, it builds upon traditional sociocultural and ideological arguments for why Confederate soldiers fought. Drawing on history, psychology, sociology, philosophy, and neuroscience, it underscores the necessity of examining primal emotions when looking to understand soldiers' motivations. It argues that the heightened emotions felt by these soldiers drove them to suffer, fight, desert, and willingly die.

Shiver examines the vital role of emotions within the context of soldiers' relationships with their parents, children, wives, sweethearts, and comrades. These relationships and the emotions they engendered defined Confederate soldiers' firsthand experiences of war and ultimately redefined the Confederate cause itself. A war that began steeped in ideology ended, for the soldiers, as one fought for the protection and future of one's loved ones. Shiver demonstrates that the emotionally overwhelming nature of the war forced a tectonic shift in American masculinity in which the prewar emphasis on stoic individualism gave way to an outpouring of emotional expression and mutual interdependence. As a result, Confederate soldiers pragmatically embraced emotional and relational norms that were previously considered taboo.

By placing emotion alongside traditional ideological and sociocultural explanations for motivation, Shiver sheds light on a new area of research that promises to promote a deeper understanding of why the American Civil War was one of the bloodiest, most emotionally influential, and world-changing events of the last two centuries.

Three Roads to Gettysburg: Meade, Lee, Lincoln, and the Battle That Changed the War, the Speech That Changed the Nation
by Tim McGrath/Dutton Caliber

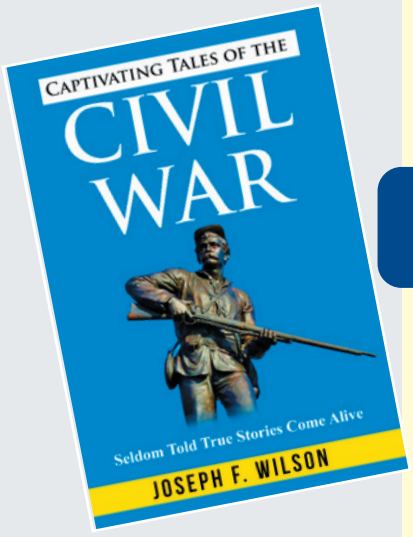
Winning Our Wonder: Rhetorical Re/Constructions of American Civil War Women on the Web
by Patty Wilde/University of South Carolina Press

Richmond Views the West: Politics and Perceptions in the Confederate Capital
Larry Daniel/University Press of Kansas

The Greatest Calamity: Tennessee in the Civil War Era
by John D. Fowler/University of Tennessee Press

Ulysses & Julia Grant's Missouri Love Story
by Vicki Berger Erwin, James W. Erwin/The History Press

The Day They Hanged Old Brown
by John R. Van Atta/University of Missouri



"Captivating Tales of the Civil War" A New Book by Old Baldy Member Joe Wilson ...

Old Baldy Members, I have always enjoyed your support in the past.
I'm excited to send his notification informing you of the release of my new book. The book titled, "Captivating Tales of the Civil War." is finally available. (Amazon) It's a compilation of obscure stories that gets lost under the weight of the greater Civil War narrative. I've always been attracted to the personal struggles of individual soldiers that fly under the radar.

Joseph F. Wilson
Member of Old Baldy CWRT
General Meade Society of Philadelphia

Photos - Old Baldy at Glassboro - West Jersey

Photos by OBCWRT Members

Anna Kenny

Ellen Alford our November Speaker

3rd USCT Regiment

Glassboro Troops

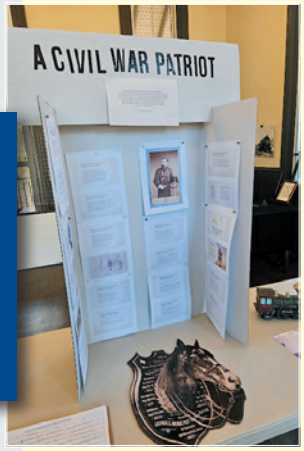
Old Baldy Display

Dave Gilson & Maggie Tumasz

Frederick Douglass 3rd USCT Regimental Flag

Glassboro Trains

Brigadier General Louis Henry Carpenter. He was from Glassboro, served in the Cavalry, received the MoH for actions in the Indian Wars, was a Military Governor in Cuba and is buried in Swedesboro.



Sandy Kenny and holding Flat Old Baldy and her daughter Anna Kenny

Patrick Kenny

"Tent 58 (Philadelphia) of the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War"

Tent 58 (Philadelphia) of the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War won the Loving Cup again this year for the most new members (6).

Commander Bill Fischer awarded the Dr. Mary Walker Award to Ellen Higgins. OB CWRT congratulates Ellen.

Congratulations to OB CWRT members Mary Wible and Ellen Higgins (#1 and #3 in picture)

Commodore Andrew Hull Foote

"He prays like a saint and fights like the devil."

by Allen Keller
Civil War Times
December 1979

Commodore Andrew Hull Foote

Continued from October Issue

As the smoke of battle cleared away, certain facts became clear. Grant had expected a long battle with heavy casualties. He was even ready to lay siege to Fort Donelson and wait out a surrender. Abler Confederate generals could easily have delayed or perhaps prevented a Union victory. What broke the poor spirits of those woefully incompetent Southern leaders was the terrifying, plunging shellfire from the gunboats' cannon and mortars. Proof of this, if any was needed, came when Pillow telegraphed to the governor of Tennessee at the height of the conflict: "The Federal gunboats are destroying us. For God's sake send us all the help you can immediately."

Capture of Forts Henry and Donelson unlocked one of the two main gates to the South. The other consisted of forts on the Mississippi below Cairo. A serpentine double bend in the river above New Madrid, Missouri, was the real cork in the bottle because an island, called Number 10, blocked it with hastily placed Rebel guns.

Foote was eager to help pull the cork but his boats were not ready. He put much faith in a super gunboat named the Benton, which had the heaviest armor on the Mississippi at the time. Her iron plating made her almost impervious to shells but it also left her awkward and slow. But Foote, in his dogged Yankee manner, sensed that this dreadnaught of the inland waters held the key to passing the many Confederate forts along the river and he wanted her ready.

On March 14 he finally wired Major General Henry W. Halleck, in supreme command in the West, that he was moving against the enemy forts. After preliminary battles the Union flotilla reached Island Number 10 and found

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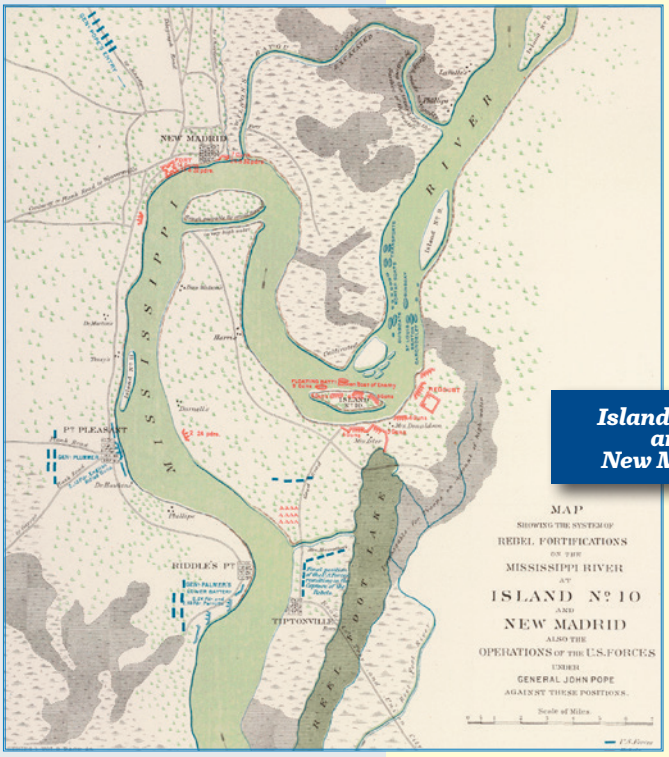
the river in flood, filled with floating debris, currents un- predictable, and the Benton as temperamental as an opera diva. Foote solved one problem by lashing the big gun-boat to two other vessels with more powerful engines. Then he steamed downstream and started a heavy bombardment of the fort.



Island No. 10 and New Madrid

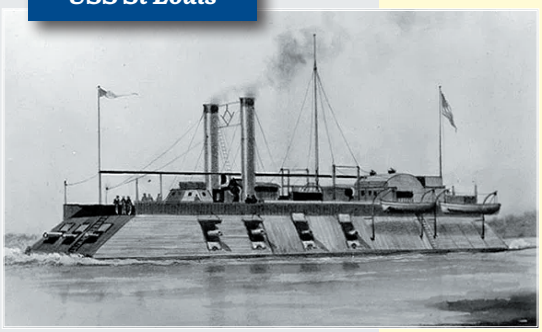
Southern guns replied vigorously. One shell ricocheted off the heavy armor plate of the Benton, found a weak place in the sheathing, crashed into Foote's cabin and, in his own words, "deposited itself in the drawer as quietly as possible."

In the midst of that protracted seige the commodore received a message from his wife in New Haven, disclosing that their second son, William, had died at the age of 13. Without leaving his post on the flagship Foote dictated a short answer: "May God support us. The shock stuns me in midst of fight. Thy will be done to us and ours."

In a later, longer message, he told his wife that God's will was all-wise, that he himself, although in much pain and danger, had no fear of death because he knew God would provide for his wife and children. It was a premonition of tragedy to come.

The battle between gun-boats and shore batteries went on for weeks. Neither side seemed able to claim a victory. Then Union forces tried a novel approach to breaking the impasse, not by booming guns and exploding shells, but by the sheer drudgery of digging a canal around the serpentine bend and bypassing and isolating Island Number 10. In the meantime Foote's injury failed to respond to the rough medical treatment of the place and time. Cold compresses did little to relieve the pain. As Major General John Pope's army dug the canal the flotilla kept up its bombardment, but Foote became fretful at the delay.

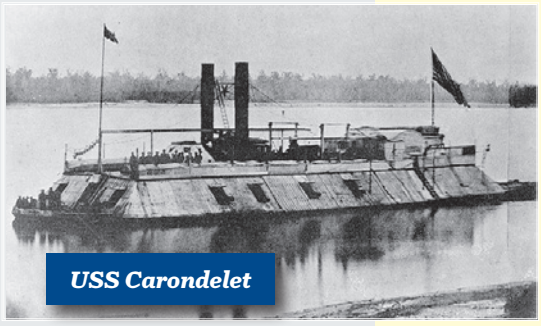
USS St Louis



H. commanded one last, dramatic action against the fort but he took no part in it personally. With Pope, victor at New Madrid, on the west, and wrong, side of the Mississippi, it was decided to run the gantlet past the fort to supply him with transports, so he could move his 15,000 men in behind the Confederate defenses.

A few nights later, in the midst of a violent thunder-storm, the Carondelet, flying Flag Officer Henry Walke's pennant, churned south to run by the island's batteries. She was protected with railroad ties, anchor chains laid over vulnerable spots and an 11-inch hawser tied around and around her pilot house. And as added insurance against being holed by shells, a coal barge loaded with baled hay, timber and coal was lashed to the port side, the one that would face the island's guns.

With the pilot, an old riverboat captain, standing completely exposed on the bow to direct the wheelman, the gunboat made the run downstream.



USS Carondelet

Whenever a bolt of lightning flashed across the sky illuminating the scene, the Confederate gunners lobbed a few shells at the passing vessel but in such a stygian night, they had little luck. The Carondelet survived in part because it hugged the island's shore and the Rebel gunners could not depress their guns far enough to hit her. The next night the Pitts- burg made the same daring run in another thunder storm, reaching New Madrid unharmed.

The Confederate defenders of the fort had no re- course now but to retreat as the two gunboats, and others that might follow, could serve as transports and move Pope's men to the east bank of the Mississippi behind them.

This was, technically, Foote's last active engagement with the

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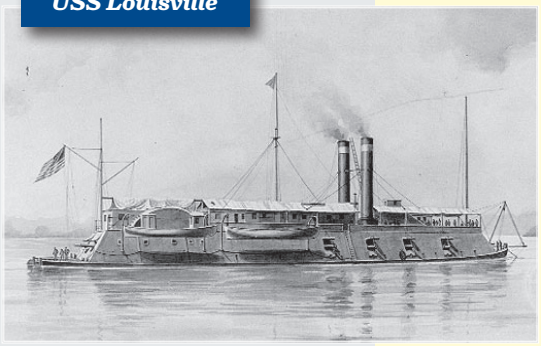
enemy. The wound in his foot failed to respond to the crude medical treatment, prompting him to start wondering in one letter whether it would be better to re- sign to save his life or to die in harness.

A century later, with antibiotics and other medicines, the wound would probably have healed within weeks. As it turned out, Foote had to give in because of pain and the drain on his strength. He requested transfer to inactive duty and it was granted reluctantly by the navy.



USS Louisville

He was crushed by this misfortune. As his pennant was lowered on the
Benton, the flag officer, sitting on the deck of a transport alongside, shielded his face with a palmetto leaf fan so no one could see the tears coursing down his grizzled bewhiskered face. A few did, though, and they wept for him.

Promoted to rear admiral, he was later named Commander of the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron. But before he could buy a new uniform two of his daughters died within a fortnight of each other. Now he had lost three children in less than half a year. And as if the tragedies were not enough to shake his resolve, doctors ex- amined him and told him he had Bright's Disease; kidney failure and coma were imminent.

Nothing could stop him from trying to follow his orders.

Courageously he left New Haven for New York to pick up his new ship. He took a room in the old Astor House Hotel on lower Broadway and while he fretted over the delay in the ship's arrival, his last illness struck. He lapsed into a coma and died on the evening of Friday, June 26, 1863. A physician standing at the bedside with the admiral''s brother said that Foote "had worn himself out"

He had not yet won a war or led a nation. He was just—
Grant from Galena

by the
Reverend James L. Crane
Civil War Times
July 1979

A hard-drinking garrison soldier, a practical tactician, a bumbling, naive politician, and the very worst businessman; that was Ulysses S. Grant at the peak of his fame, or at least, the way he is remembered. But there is another Grant. Perhaps a man struggling for a reprieve from obscurity.

After resigning his army commission in 1854 over his drinking problem, he went into a steady decline in his personal and business life, eventually relying on a clerkship in his brothers' Galena, Illinois, leather goods store and selling firewood in the street to make a living. The outbreak of civil war tentatively offered him a second chance. After his application for Federal service with the Regular Army was passed over, he was appointed colonel of the 21st Illinois Volunteers.

Ulysses S. Grant

The man who was colonel of the 21st seems a great deal different from the image we are presented with today. The chaplain of that unit, the Reverend James L. Crane, recalled his service with Grant in a memoir written near the close of the war and not published until February 16, 1896, in the Los Angeles Times. In it he describes a sober, deliberate, conscientious soldier out of the public eye—maybe a man looking to make good. We offer the account for your consideration.

Grant is about five feet ten inches in height and will weigh 150 pounds. He has a countenance indicative of reserve, and an indomitable will and a persistent pur- pose. In dress he is indifferent and careless, making no pretentions to style or fashionable military display. Had he continued Colonel until now [circa 1865], I think his uniform would have lasted till this day, for he never used it except on dress parade, and then seemed to regard it a good deal as David did Saul's armor. He usually wore a plain blue blouse coat and an

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ordinary black felt citizen's hat and never had about him a single mark to distinguish his rank. While he is reserved in his intercourse with strangers, yet in the quiet circle of friends, especially when the cares and duties of office are over, he is free, frank, communicative and agreeable in the highest degree. He regards smoking as a luxury, and if he takes a pride in anything, apart from the success of his enterprises, it is in his horsemanship. In his estimation a good horse is next to a good soldier.

Grant's Home in Galena

"His body is a vial of intense existence," and yet when a stranger saw him in a crowd he would never think of asking his name. He is no dissembler, no assumer of snob dignity; he has more than ordinary freedom from selfishness, and appears to no one as an ambitious man. He is a sincere, thinking, real man; by real we mean that he does not take to shows, shams or "flourishes," but to realities.

He is always cheerful; no toil, cold, heat, hunger, fatigue or want of money depresses him. He was just as buoyant while a colonel, away from paymasters looking after bushwhackers in Missouri, and with scarce money enough to prepay a letter, or buy a pipe full of kinikinick, as he is the hero of a hundred battles, and the commander-in-chief of the finest army in the world, and with the wealth of the nation at his command.,

In action he is bold and daring, almost to a fault, and the excitement of the contest fires the man. Yet he never loses his self-control, and his influence of discipline and training can be seen in his most rapid movements. He goes to battle as though a charitable country was watching him; as though he felt intensely the responsibility he bore to protect the interests of others. He has no desire to rise by the fall of others; no glorying over another's tears. He went forth to the field of strife only at the call of his country, and he strikes at her bidding, smites at her command, and when the rebellion shall cry "enough," and his country shall bid him retire, he will quietly and dutifully return, and repose on the bosom he has so bravely defended.

He does his work at the time, and he requires all under his command to be equally prompt. I was walking over the encampment with him one morning after breakfast. It was usual for each company to call the roll at a given hour; it was now probably half an hour after the time for that duty. The colonel was quietly smoking his old meerschaum and talking and walking leisurely along, when he noticed a company drawn up in line, and the roll being called. He instantly drew his pipe from his mouth, and exclaimed: "Captain, this is no time for calling the roll; order your men to their quarters immediately." The command was instantly obeyed, and the colonel resumed his smoking and walked on, conversing as quietly as if nothing had happened. For this violation of discipline those men went without rations that day, excepting what they gathered up privately from among their friends of other companies. Such a breach of order was never witnessed in the regiment afterward while he was colonel. This promptness is one of Grant's characteristics, and it is one of the causes of his success.

A want of this coming to time has been the cause of many of the disasters that Have attended our arms. A general is behind time with*his division or corps, and the day is lost. We may conjecture that the battle of Bull Run could have resulted in our favor had Patterson been prompt to intercept the reinforcements of the enemy, as he was directed. And a cloud came well nigh settling upon the head of Grant at Shiloh because of the loitering of Buel [Buell].

Grant would correct, and, if necessary, punish any want of conformity to rule or neglect of orders, or infraction of regulations in as cool and unruffled a manner even as you would give directions to your gardener before breakfast. On one of our marches, while passing through one of those small towns where the grocery is the principal establishment, some of the lovers of intoxication had broken or glided away from our lines and filled their canteens with whisky,

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and soon were reeling and ungovernable under its influence. While apparently stopping the regiment for rest, Grant passed quietly along the ranks and took each canteen, and whenever he detected the odor, emptied the liquor on the ground with as much nonchalance as he would empty his pipe, and had the of- fenders tied behind the baggage wagons till they had sobered into soldierly propriety. On this point his orders were imperative; no whisky or intoxicating beverages were allowed in his camp.

Right here I would notice the report that once obtained some circulation, that Grant was a lover of ardent spirits himself, and that he indulged too freely in their use. Of this report I would say that I was with him for the most part of three months in all sorts of weather, marches and exposure; we ate at the same table, often slept in the same tent, and sat around the same camp fire, and I never knew him to allow ardent spirits in the regiment, nor did I ever know him even to taste them in any form. I have seen him in company with his superiors in office where wine and brandy were freely passing, and when offered to him he invariabley refused, usually remarking that he never indulged in anything stronger than coffee and tobacco.

His promptness and energy in correcting errors and reforming abuses in his regiment sometimes led his men, especially those who were guilty, to feel that he was hard and severe beyond necessity. But while he was thus vigilant and active in inforcing strict discipline, yet he was not unfeeling nor indifferent in regard to the sufferings which the necessary penalties of camp life brought upon unsophisticated and unintentional offenders.

When we halted at Salt River, Mo., two of our young bloods, supposing that it was necessary to show their hatred to the rebellion by some valorous exploit, had hardly pitched their tents when they started off on their own responsibility to seek for the enemies of the Union. They left in the afternoon, stayed all night, and came back next day in flying colors, bringing with them a "seccesher" and two of his horses. Grant was seated by the door of his tent when, the two heroes brought the trophies of their victory before him. He did not rise from his seat nor pull the pipe from his mouth, but quietly asked the boys: "Who gave you permission to be absent from camp?" "Nobody; we just thought we'd go out and look after some secceshers, and we've found this feillar and brought him up," and they pointed triumphantly to the prisoner, who was still sitting on his horse and looked as if he expected to be shot before he could say his prayers.

"T'll attend to your case first," said the colonel, and the flush of victory began to fade from their faces as he continued: "Captain, you will take these boys and have them tied to a tree for six hours for leaving camp without permission." The boys looked crestfallen and disappeared in company with the captain. After the colonel had questioned the trembling farmer, and his professions of attachment to the Union were found to be satisfactory, and he freely took the oath of allegiance, he set him at liberty and leisurely resumed his smoking, and in half a minute looked as though nothing unusual had happened, and turning to me with apparently no aim in his remark, he inquired: "Chaplain, what do you think of camp life by this time?"

"It is entirely a new phase of life to me, colonel, and I have hardly been able to come to a definite conclusion yet."

"What did you think of the conduct of those two young men?" he asked as cooly as if he were inquiring about the weather.

"T think the young men were not intentionally guilty of a violation of discipline; the method was irregular, but they doubtless thought they were doing their duty."

"I don't ask you for a military opinion. I ask for your opinion as a citizen; chaplains are not supposed to be military men. They are supposed to carry into camp the same feeling and views of justice and right they had in civil life." And he raised his eyes as if to see whether I were appreciating his remarks. "As you have asked me for a candid opinion I will give it. I think the punishment of those boys was not pro- portioned to their offense. If it were I six hours tied up to a tree would be a serious business. I think it was rather too severe on the boys, colonel."

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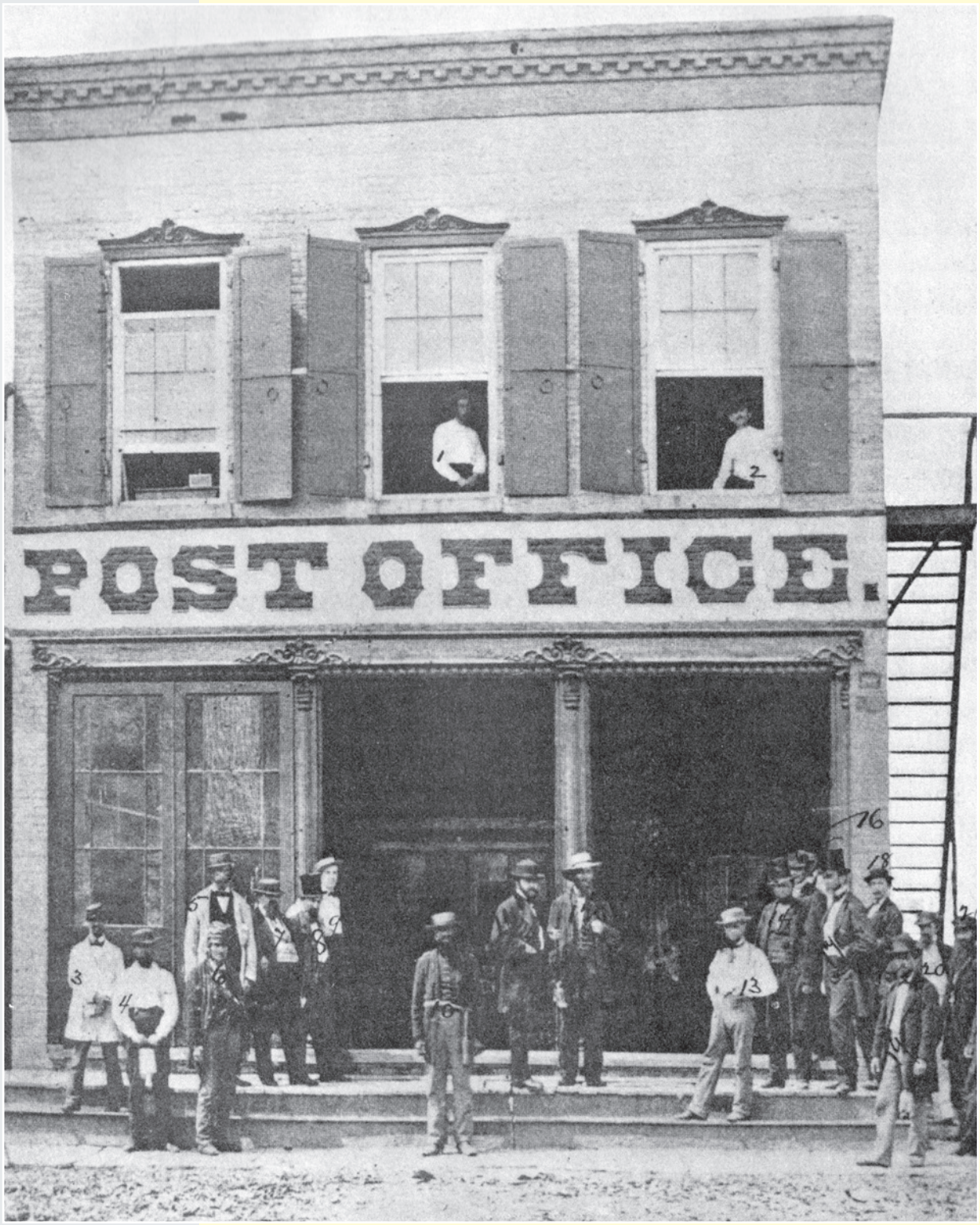
"But, chaplain, suppose we were surrounded by an enemy, and men were allowed to stray from camp, they would be taken prisoners or lose their lives in such a case."



Before fame touched Grant. In this September 1861 photograph he stands (center) hands in pockets, in front of the Cairo, Illinois, post office. Beside him, in front of the pillar, is later Major General John A. McClernand.

Continued in Next Issue - December

Events

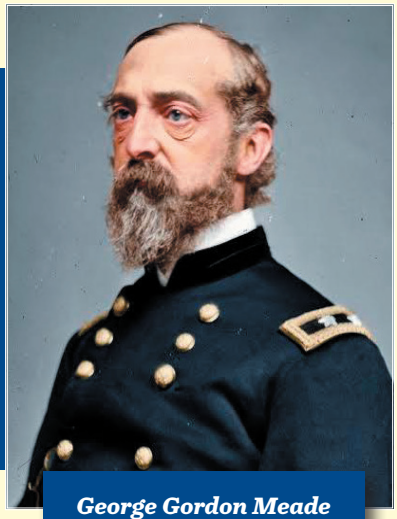
October Raffle Book Winners -
Present at Meeting: Sandy Kenny
Zoom Meeting Participant: Rich Jankowski
Member: James Morris

Folks to thank for selling Boscov's FHF coupons: Frank Barletta, Lorraine Gancher, Mike DiPaolo, Mike Bassett, and Rich Jankowski. We raised over $900.

Old Baldy December Social Gathering

Join us for our December Holiday Social meeting in our regular room at the CCC William G. Rohrer Center and take a break from the holiday frenzy. Round Table members, family and friends are all invited to join together on December 11 for the last time in 2025 and discuss the past year, share stories, plans for our 50th anniversary, drink a little non-alcoholic cheer and nibble on delicious treats. Some lucky folks will even walk away with presents too boot! Please look for the Holiday Party Planning email later this month and of course more information will be communicated at our upcoming November meeting. "The email will have a list of the items we need volunteers to bring to the social gathering and the name of the party coordinator and his/her email address. This list will also be circulated at the November meeting and people can note what items) they will bring to the December social athering. For those not attending the November meeting who are planning to come to the December social gathering, you can email the party coordinator what you plan to bring."

Old Baldy to visit
General George Gordon Meade's
Birthday Wreath Laying
at Noon ,
December 31, Laurel Hill Cemetery



George Gordon Meade

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Camden County History Alliance

The Camden County History Alliance is a partnership of over 50 Camden County history organizations, historic assets, and support agencies. It was established in 2016 to promote appreciation for the wealth of historical resources throughout Camden County.

One joint project is to produce a historical heritage magazine which will be offered FREE and distributed county-wide to local businesses, libraries, historical societies, meeting spaces, and public events. The copies are full color with a finished size of 8.125" x 10.125."

Each edition follows a theme of Camden County's Heritage with vintage photographs, images, maps, and information on life in Camden County. The theme of the Spring 2026 magazine is Anniversaries & Commemorations in Camden County. Past themes include education, women, lost places, food, military history, entertainment, industry, transportation, famous people and first responders.

Each organization in the CCHA is expected to sell advertisements and/or patron donations to fund the production and printing of the magazines. To fulfill our obligation, the form has been made available for download on our website (OldBaldycwrt.org). Click on the page-wide button on the front page of the website to access the form to print and fill out. Please share with potential vendors and patrons to assist CCHA in meeting its goal. Instructions for payment and artwork are at the bottom of the form. The deadline for submission is in February. ***Thank you for your support on this matter.***

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Our Sister Round Table Inland Empire Upcoming events

Sunday, November 16th 2:00 – 3:00pm, In Person Only
A K Smiley Public Library, 125 W Vine St, Redlands, CA
Dr. Bert J. (Hans) Davidson will give a presentation on "History of Medicine during the Civil War.
On Monday, November 17th, Zoom Program Only
Rev. Robert Miller -
Faith of Our Fathers: Catholic Chaplains in the Civil War

Here is the Zoom Link—6:30 p.m. Pacific Time. The Zoom room will open at 6:15.
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87187864471?pwd=vOaWqi520lQdahnjbpSdBrcp488bdq.1
Meeting ID: 871 8786 4471 Passcode: Lincoln

The Cruiser Olympia won fame in the Spanish-American War and served as a flagship in WWI

HOMECOMING 250

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER 2025

To kickoff America's celebration of its 250 years of independence, Homecoming 250 Navy Marine Corps will honor the men and women who gained and continue to defend our independence. Through our efforts, the Secretary of the Navy has announced that the Navy and Marine Corps should celebrate their 250th birthdays in their birthplace, Philadelphia, PA, and Camden, NJ. Homecoming 250 will salute their 250 years of distinguished service by hosting spectacular events, ceremonies, parades, aerial demonstrations, exhibitions, and educational programs featuring historic buildings, ships, museums, and waterfront sites on both sides of the Delaware River.

WREATHS across AMERICA

Wreaths Across America December 13, Beverly National Cemetery

FOB Welcomes New Members, Award and Visits from afar...

Maggie Tumasz
New Member
Palmyra, NJ

Marty Berger
New Member
Harrison, NJ

Wayne Blattner
30 Year Pin

Schedule of Old Baldy CWRT Speakers and Activities for 2025 - 2026

December 11, 2025 - Thursday
General Membership Meeting and Social Night

January 8, 2026 - Thursday
Ron Kirkwood
Tell Mother Not to Worry:
Soldier Stories from Gettysburg's George Spangler Farm

February 12, 2026 - Thursday
James Jewell
Waging War For Freedom with the 54th Massachusetts

March 12, 2026 - Thursday
John Horn
Lee Besieged: Grant's Second Petersburg Offensive, June 18–July 1, 1864

April 9, 2026 - Thursday
Elizabeth Varon
Longstreet - The Confederate General Who Defied the South

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

Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia
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William G. Rohrer Center
1889 Marlton Pike East
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Founded January 1977

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https://www.youtube.com/@oldbaldycivilwarroundtable86/videos