



The Camp Griffin Gazette

News and Information from the Green Mountain Civil War Round Table

Vol. XVII, No. 5 – May 2009

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**“MISSOURI 1861 AND THE
BATTLE OF WILSON’S CREEK”**
DICK SIMPSON
TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2009
THE BLACK ANGUS STEAKHOUSE
ROUTE 4
QUECHEE, VERMONT

6:00 -6:30 Social Hour

6:30 – 7:00 Buffet Dinner

7:00 Business Meeting

7:15 Program, followed by discussion

9:00 Adjournment

Guaranteed dinner reservations **MUST BE MADE** by 7 p.m., MAY 10, 2009. **Cost per person for the buffet dinner is \$18.00.** There is no assurance that additional meals will be available if you have not made a reservation. Should they be available, there will be an additional \$2.00 charge per meal. For the meeting and program only, there is a donation of \$2.00 for members and \$4.00 for non-members. For reservations please contact Gail Blake at 802-296-2919 or e-mail her at auntis@comcast.net.

Dick Simpson

From May until October, Dick, who is retired from 30 years as the Vice-President of Graphic Design for InterContinental Hotels, and his wife Deborah reside on

Willoughby Lake in Westmore Vermont. Dick is the Historian for the Town of Westmore where he lectures on local history. From November to April they live in Lancaster Pennsylvania where he is an exhibit designer and volunteer for the Lancaster County Historical Society.

He was past president and longtime trustee of the Northport Historical Society on Long Island, New York where he lived for 37 years. In 1974 he founded the Northport Historical Museum where he lectured for many years on Northport and Huntington history.

Dick has been touring Civil War battlefields since Junior High School, mostly following the 3rd and 15th Vermont Regiments in which his relatives fought and died. He now lectures on the "Battle of Franklin Tennessee", "Missouri 1861 and the Battle of Wilson's Creek", "Gettysburg, America's Greatest Art Park", "Battle of Pea Ridge (Fall 2009)", and "The 2nd Vermont Brigade at Gettysburg", his great grandfather's regiment. Dick has raised thousands of dollars for battlefield preservation through Civil War book raffles at these programs.

He also enjoys being a civilian Civil War reenactor portraying Vermont Governor Frederick Holbrook, the states Civil War Governor.

Dick is an active member of the following Civil War organizations:

The Harrisburg Civil War Roundtable, PA (Director).
The Lancaster Civil War Roundtable, PA.
The Hershey Civil War Roundtable, PA.
The Camp Curtin Civil War Roundtable, PA.
The Delaware Valley Civil War Roundtable, PA.
The General Meade Society, Philadelphia, PA.
The Northeast Kingdom Civil War Roundtable, VT.
The Green Mountain Civil War Roundtable, VT.
The North Shore Civil War Roundtable, NY.

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, General
George H. Thomas, Camp #19, Lancaster, PA.
Save the Franklin Battlefield, Inc., TN.
Gettysburg Foundation, PA.
The Civil War Preservation Trust.

Battle of Wilson's Creek

On August 10, 1861, Union Brigadier General Nathaniel Lyon with 5,400 troops would meet Confederate General Sterling Price's 12,000 men along Wilson's Creek near Springfield, Missouri. It would be one of the most significant Civil War battles west of the Mississippi.

Despite being outnumbered over two to one, Lyon decided to use the element of surprise to attack the Confederates in their camps along the creek. He planned a two prong, pincer attack. Colonel Franz Sigel would attack from the south with 1,200 men and Lyon would attack from the north with 3,200 men. Sigel's flanking attack started well while at the same time Lyon's force surprised the Confederates in their camps along the creek. But, as you will see in the slide program, Civil War battles never go as planned. Sigel turns tail and General Lyon will be the first Union general killed in combat during the Civil War. It's a western battle you don't want to miss.

Over the years, Wilson's Creek has been able to maintain its pristine condition and remain largely the same as it was in 1861. However, as recent growth in the Springfield area continues to increase, this critical battlefield is under severe threat from residential development and urban sprawl. The final part of the program will be a tour of the battlefield as it looks today. Proceeds from our book raffle will be sent to the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Foundation.

The *Camp Griffin Gazette* is the monthly newsletter of the Green Mountain Civil War Round Table. Editor: Ginny Gage. We encourage and welcome all contributions and suggestions.

Send news and information to:
Ginny Gage
365 East Road
Cornish, NH 03745 or
E-mail: lewandginny@emailmv.com

The deadline for the June 2009 newsletter is
May 25, 2009.

REMINDER!!!

**IF YOU HAVEN'T PAID YOUR DUES, THEY
WERE DUE IN MARCH!**

Green Mountain Civil War Round Table March 2009— March 2010 Membership Rates

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

E-mail
address _____

- Single \$20.00 (includes newsletter)
- Student \$10.00 (includes newsletter)
- Two Person \$35.00 (includes newsletter)
- Family \$50.00 (includes newsletter)
- Newsletter subscription alone – ten issues

\$10.00

Is this a new membership _____
renewal _____

Dues are payable to: GMCWRT c/o Mary B. Davis, 54
Renihan Meadows, Lebanon, NH 03766.

2009 Program Schedule Program Chair: Peter Sinclair

June 9 Craig L. Symonds, author of "Lincoln
and His Admirals"

Other Round Table Meetings and Happenings

May 8 – CDCWRT – Blake Magner to speak. Meeting
to be held at the Guilderland Public Library. For more
information, check out their web site: www.cdcwrt.org

**May 14 – Major McKinley Camp #9 – Sons of Union
Veterans Meeting – 7 p.m. – Soldiers Memorial
Building, North Park Street, Lebanon, NH.** Camp
Members, Junior Members, SUVCW Auxiliary Members,
and guests are welcome! For more information:
[http://www.geocities.com/suvcwlebanonnh/classic_blue.ht
ml](http://www.geocities.com/suvcwlebanonnh/classic_blue.html)

**May 15 – NHCWRT – Civil War Movie Night – 1927
Buster Keaton classic "The General."** Please check out
their web site for more information: www.cwrt-nh.org/

**May 20 – NEKCWRT – Jim Murphy – Vermont
Railroads** – For more information, contact Joan
Huguenin at PoohBahToo@hotmail.com or 802-754-6402.

May 21 – Joshua L. Chamberlain Civil War Round Table – Jerry Wiles of Chebeague Island speaking on “**Abraham Lincoln.**” Meetings at the Curtis (Brunswick, ME) Memorial Library, 7 p.m. For more information contact Sue Bailey at sebailey273@wmconnect.com

Sons of Union Veterans Ripley Camp would like to invite all men to any of their monthly meetings at the Rutland American Legion on Washington Street on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. They are also looking for speakers for their winter/spring programs and would love anyone with a program they'd like to present to contact Jim Proctor at civilproctor@comcast.net

Check out The Ripley Camp #4 web site at: www.ripleycamp.netfirms.com/

Lincoln Bicentennial

To check out activities honoring the 200th anniversary of the birth of our 16th President, check out the website for the Bicentennial at: www.abrahamlincoln200.org
Or: www.lincolnbicentennial.gov

In Vermont, the state liaison for the Bicentennial is Dr. John M. McCardell, President Emeritus at Middlebury College, Painter House, Middlebury, VT 05753 – 802-443-5343 or e-mail at mccardel@middlebury.edu

President Lincoln's Cottage, Upshur Street at Rock Creek Church Road, NW, Washington, District of Columbia 20011
www.presidentlincoln.org

Revolutionary and Civil War Reenactments

(I received the following e-mail from Robert Hunt.)

“It is our hope at Mount Washington Resort to hold reenactments of Revolutionary and Civil War battles all around the grounds of the Hotel on July 4th of this year. I understand that this may be late notice and am also very much aware of the significance of the 4th of July and Gettysburg which might limit availability for actors and equipment. We are hoping to put together a celebration that spans the history of the United States with a special emphasis on our troops currently fighting around the world. Any help, advice or input would be greatly appreciated.

Robert J. Hunt
Food & Beverage Hospitality Manager
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Mount Washington Resort
Route 302
Bretton Woods, NH 03575
www.MountWashingtonResort.com

AND...

Hello Ginny.

You might recall me as a correspondent from Virginia, near old Camp Griffin.

I have just purchased a small wallet which belonged to Pvt. Freeman Hodge, Co K, 3rd Vermont. It is signed by him, and contains 6 letters written by him, three of which were penned at Griffin. I can see the old camp ground of the 3rd from my office window. It is now a neighborhood.

I would very much like to get more information about Hodge. Fat chance to locate a photo. One can hope.

I think I mentioned before about a hat I have which belonged to Pvt. George T. Childs, of the 5th Mass Vol. Inf. He was from Charlestown, Mass, and was captured at First Manassas on 21 July 1861. He was sent south to prison and paroled in June 1862.

After the war he moved to St. Albans, VT, and became very prominent. He was editor of the St Albans Messenger, at Secretary to the President of the Vermont Central Railroad, a State Delegate for the Republican Party, and was head of a GAR post, if not the State head for the GAR. There is a post named for him today.

There is a photo of him in the Mass 5th history, but it is later in life. Sure would love to locate one of him in uniform. He tried to reenlist after parole, but had health problems from prison, and could not serve again as a result. His hat has a period inscription in it which reads, “This hat was worn by Geo. T. Childs on his release from prison, June 1862.”

I'm still trying to interest people down here to mount an exhibit on Griffin and all the Vermont boys who were here. Shooting for January 2011.

I live 1/4 mile from Lewinsville, and 1/4 mile from headquarters house, Solona, on old Camp Griffin site.

Regards from Ole Virginy.

Guy

Guy Schum - guy@schum.com

(If anyone has any information that will help Guy, please contact him directly.)

May Menu
Lasagna with Meat Sauce
Stuffed Chicken Breasts
Fresh Vegetables
Salad – Rolls
Dessert

**Monument to Civil War Regiment and Medal
of Honor recipients completed:
By Jim Fouts**

Barre, VT—The Eighteenth Vermont Regiment, Inc. a contemporary Civil War historic preservation organization, has commissioned Rock of Ages to produce a civil memorial to honor the courage and heroism displayed by the men of the 3rd VT Volunteer Infantry Regiment at the battle of Dam No.1 on April 16, 1862. It was at the battle of Dam #1, frequently called the battle of Lee's Mills, that the Vermont troops made their first courageous assault upon Confederate earthworks. Included on one side of the nearly seven foot tall monument are the names of two soldiers who received the Medal of Honor for their bravery on this field of battle.

Funding for the nearly \$18,000 monument was raised through individual donations and the contributions of those who attended the 18th VT Regiment's annual Civil War Expo. An official viewing and presentation will commence at 1PM Saturday May 16th at the Rock of Ages Craftsman Center at 560 Graniteville Road, Graniteville, VT. A ceremony will formally present the monument to the people of Vermont prior to being shipped to its final location at the battle site beside the Warwick River in Newport News, Virginia.

Assigned to lead the assault, Captain Samuel Pingree led the men of the 3rd VT Regiment across the swampy Warwick River and succeeded in driving the defenders from their advanced rifle pits. Although initially successful, the outnumbered Vermont Regiment came under a heavy Confederate counterattack. With no reinforcements coming to help and in spite of being severely wounded, Capt. Pingree brought his men back across the river amid a hail of bullets to their initial position.

Throughout the fight Julian Scott, a drummer boy, crossed the river numerous times at the risk of his life to rescue the wounded. One story goes that he rescued his cousin, William Scott who was mortally wounded in the attack. William Scott, called the "sleeping sentinel" was the first man during the Civil War to be sentenced to be shot for falling asleep while on guard duty and was pardoned by President Lincoln.

For their bravery that day, Samuel Pingree and Julian Scott received the Medal of Honor. Years after the war, Samuel Pingree was elected Governor of Vermont and Julian Scott became a well-known artist. His painting of the Battle of Cedar Creek and three other of his paintings hang in the Vermont statehouse.

Samuel Pingree, Julian Scott and the men of the 3rd VT Volunteer Infantry Regiment will be honored during an open house hosted by the 18th VT Regiment at 1PM on Saturday May 16th at the Rock of Ages Craftsman Center in Graniteville. At that time the monument to these men will be presented to the people of Vermont.

**"Flames Beyond Gettysburg: The Gordon
Expedition, June 1863"**

**Review by Alan Brunelle
NHCWRT**

by Scott L. Mingus, Sr.
Copyright (C) 2009
Ironclad Publishing, Inc.
ISBN 0-9673770-8-0
625 pages (including a couple of appendices, driving tours, endnotes, bibliography and index)

When this book arrived, I moved it to the top of my "to read" pile - in all honesty because of my great experiences reading two other Ironclad Publishing books ("Protecting the Flank: The Battles for Brinkerhoff's Ridge and East Cavalry Field" by Eric J. Wittenberg, and "The Battle Between the Farmlanes: Hancock Saves the Union Center; Gettysburg" by David Shultz & David Wieck). As with both of those works, the first thing that struck me was the attractive cover - a nice portrayal of General Gordon superimposed on the burning Columbia-Wrightsville bridge. The impression after reading Ironclad's latest book mimics that which I had for the first two mentioned: this is a really great read and a wonderful book to have.

The book sets out to cover the usually overlooked aspect of the pre-Gettysburg expedition trying to cross the Susquehanna River by Gordon's brigade. When Lee invaded Pennsylvania he apparently had some broad-stroke ideas on how he intended to proceed, and one of the key ideas was to strike at the critical areas of Pennsylvania, both in terms of military objectives but also some political ones as well. The Pennsylvania state capital at Harrisburg - just across the Susquehanna River - was one such target. General Lee ordered General Ewell to take his Second Corps eastwards, and potentially threaten that important Northern city. As things progressed relatively smoothly at first, a plan was made to push Gordon's men across the critical Columbia-Wrightsville bridge - thus trying to potentially come at Harrisburg from the south whilst Ewell's other troops came at the city from the west.

The key tactical target for General Gordon was the Columbia-Wrightsville bridge which was needed to affect the overall strategic plan. The bridge was an amazing engineering structure in and of itself - over 5,600 feet long with 27 piers - it had separate paths for pedestrians, carriages, towpaths and a double-track railway. It was the world's longest covered bridge and was critical to traffic in this area of the state. Due to the crucial nature of the bridge, the Union exerted a lot of effort to at first try to defend it, and then in a last desperate attempt to stop the Confederates from using it, they burnt it down.

Mingus tells the tale of Gordon's brigade (along with the closely associated Lt. Colonel Elijah White's 35th Virginia Cavalry Battalion) in very fine fashion, detailing the various parts of the expedition from when Ewell's whole corps

entered Pennsylvania up to the retrograde movement of Gordon's brigade back to Gettysburg to participate in that great battle. The author maintains a fair balance between detailed accounts of the Confederates actions with a thorough description of the various Union efforts to try and stop the Rebel advance to the Susquehanna. The way he carries the reader along is like watching a complex game of parry and thrust between Gordon and various Union militia forces trying to get in his way. Given the numerical superiority and experienced nature of Gordon's men, the Union attempts end up being a couple of hopeless stands by the militia starting at Gettysburg and ending in Wrightsville.

But Mingus doesn't stop there: he also provides copious amounts of detailed citizen accounts. It's very hard for us to imagine what it was like 146 years ago to live in Adams and York counties as the Confederates came marching through. Mingus helps us along here by showing the various amounts of panic that permeated the region as civilians tried different ways to handle the situation. Some people chose to flee - taking what they could with them eastwards. Others tried to hide what they could and weather the storm. A remarkable few attempted to take up arms and show some resistance - including an all-black company that performed admirably in the attempt to defend the western end of the Columbia-Wrightsville bridge. And, apparently, some "Copperheads" almost seemed to welcome the invading army (much to their later regret).

The book also includes a very detailed set of endnotes, bibliography and index making this a very valuable reference book for this part of the Gettysburg campaign. It also contains a set of driving tours that help you find places along the route.

This book works on many levels: as a reference book the detailed accounts provided, coupled with its organization of the material fills a void that's been out there. As an account of the expedition, the story moves along very well - filled with interesting characters, many of whom will be unfamiliar, but a few well-knowns are there too. For example, Darius Couch and "Baldy" Smith show up - and a controversy over a certain man named Lt. Colonel William Sickles, who just happened to share a last name with another "interesting" character at Gettysburg). The book also helps to open up one's eyes to the trials and tribulations of both the citizens of York and Adams Counties as well as the diverse nature of the Confederate soldiers. The discrepancy between the actions of the relatively well-behaved thousands under Gordon are in stark contrast to the couple of hundred "Comanches" under White for example.

I heartily enjoyed the book, and would recommend it to those of you who are interested in one of the off the beaten path aspects of this major campaign, or are interested in civilian reactions to incoming enemy troops, or perhaps just looking for a good read.

A NEW BIRTH OF FREEDOM

We have 8 copies left of the 1809-2009 "A New Birth of Freedom" magazine that has been put out for the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial. These magazines are 138 pages. There are short articles by President Obama, Harold Holzer, Craig L. Symonds, our June speaker, Thomas F. Schwartz, Illinois state historian, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Springfield, IL, college history professors, Lewis E. Lehrman, advisor to the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission and author of *Lincoln at Peoria: The Turning Point*, etc., etc., plus there is a page for each state explaining what they have done or will be doing in each state to celebrate.

We thought this might be a good opportunity to try and raise some money for our Round Table by asking anyone interested in these magazines to make a donation of \$5.00 each.

They will be available at our May meeting and future meetings until gone. Please feel free to contact Ginny Gage by e-mail at lewandgabby@emailmv.com or at home at 603-542-4664 if you would like me to put a copy aside for you.

(Thanks to Irving Moy of the CT Bicentennial Committee for sharing these with us.)

Notes from our April Meetings

Our first April meeting was on April 9 when approximately 24 members and guests visited the Soldiers Memorial Building in Lebanon, NH. We were fortunate that the artist responsible for restoring the stained glass windows in the building was able to attend and tell us about the work involved and some of the history of the windows. Not only are there eight large stained glass windows that had been made in memory of different soldiers from Lebanon and one donated from the Women's Relief Corps, but there are also many artifacts going back to the French and Indian Wars. Refreshments were served by the Sons of Union Veterans. A very big "THANK YOU" to Gary Ward and the members of his SUV group for allowing us to visit such a special place.

Our second April RT meeting had approximately 25 people. Whitney Maxfield passed out hard tack to everyone, but told us we shouldn't eat it unless we soaked it first!

New member, George Butts, told us that the Stephen Douglas house is starting to be refurbished.

Our speaker, Steve Gasiowski, gave a wonderful powerpoint presentation on the history of brass bands. The oldest brass band goes back to the West Point Band in 1815. The first town band in the United States was in Temple, NH in 1799. It played at the memorial for George Washington.

Steve told us a couple of humorous stories of "Saxie" Pike from the 2nd NH regiment band.

By 1900 there were 20,000 town bands! There were all-women brass bands before the 1900's.

Steve brought along some brass instruments for us to look at.

Our raffle was won by Brian Smith, Dave Curtain, Whitney Maxfield, Alice Evans, and Jeanette Cook.

**"OUR VISIT WITH LINCOLN,
GRANT AND LEE"**

By Nancy Miville

Ed and I are back from NYC, and yes, we had a great time. The New York Historical Society exhibit was not as I expected it to be, but it did fulfill its publicity and was very good. It actually had more, and I learned more, than I expected. Some of what they displayed: Lee's formal gilded surrender sword, his battle sword, his spurs, his dancing slippers, his formal surrender uniform, his engineering drawings of dams, rivers, topography, etc. Most of the Lee items were on loan from the Virginia Historical Society. Other items displayed were: Grant's shabby blue great-coat, John Brown's Bowie knife, numerous pieces of Native American bead-work, some of Philappoteau's study drawings, some broadsides, some newspapers, some photographs (two I had never seen before: Lee on his horse Traveler and Grant with his horse Cincinnati), and some famous paintings. The first thing you see in the exhibit is a HUGE (probably 50' long and 15' high) wall display of all the Civil War generals and their West Point information. At the base of the wall, along the "walking path", were numerous open, but sealed with acrylic tops, war chests with artifacts (surveying instruments,

engineering instruments, military equipment, etc). There was also a smaller case on the wall for each general with an artifact relating to him or of his own; i.e. "Stonewall" Jackson's gloves. But I think what I learned the most from, was the way they told the story: West Point, Mexican War, out west/Indians, down south/ escaped slaves & Cherokee nation, politics, slavery, Native American resettlement, Civil War and Reconstruction. All of these were "braided" with the personal stories of each of the generals, but focusing on Grant & Lee. I was very disappointed to find when we arrived there that there were no brochures and no display maps (NOTHING) to bring home. I am very glad I saved the newspaper articles that led me to find this exhibit.

We checked out another exhibit "Lincoln in His Own Words": draft of "house divided" speech, an encouraging telegram to Grant, signed Emancipation Proclamation, pages from a ledger/diary, condolence letter to a family, a refusal letter to a man requesting a military commission, and others.

We also looked in on Audubon's Aviary: 50 or so color plates from the NY Historical Society's collection.

This was well worth the time and money spent to get there.

**Green Mountain Civil War Round Table
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