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# The Camp Griffin Gazette

News and Information from the Green Mountain Civil War Round Table

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**AND DON'T FORGET: WE'RE ON FACEBOOK!**

**AMANDA GUSTIN**  
**“FIRST DRAGOONS”**  
**TUESDAY, MAY 12, 2015**  
**6 P.M.**  
**HOTEL COOLIDGE**  
**WHITE RIVER JCT., VT**

Guaranteed dinner reservations **MUST BE MADE** by 12 Noon, May 11. **Cost per person for the meal is \$19.25.** For the meeting and program only, there is a **\$4.00 charge for members and \$6.00 charge for non-members. For reservations please contact Gail Blake at [auntis@comcast.net](mailto:auntis@comcast.net) or 802-296-2919.**

**Menu**  
**Hot Dish Surprise**  
**Salad bowl**  
**Dessert**  
**Coffee/tea/decaf and punch**

(Hopefully we will find out what the hot dish will be before the meeting. If that happens, you will receive an e-mail message.)

## “First Dragoons”

In 1833, Congress established the United States Dragoons, the first regular mounted regiment in the army. The recruitment, organization, and early expeditions of the dragoons provide a window into the tensions and fault lines

of the military establishment, the United States government, and the American public. From the earliest days of the regiment, broken promises, poor planning, differing objectives and goals, and mismatched expectations complicated life for everyone involved. Few of the problems the dragoons encountered were unique to their regiment; however, due to the speed with which the regiment was formed, and the total lack of experience of all parties, these problems were magnified in such a way that make them more obvious than those encountered by the average infantry regiment.

Ultimately, despite its early failures, despite the chaotic tensions among the officers and enlisted men, and despite the deep wariness of politicians who believed that a regular mounted regiment could be a step toward tyranny, the regiment was a success. The United States Dragoons represent a turning point in the American military establishment, a transition from milita- and Eastern-centered thinking to a more efficient, Western-focused planning. The dragoons were the first, but by no means the last, mounted regiment in the American army, and over the course of the nineteenth century the importance of cavalry on the plains would only grow.

**Amanda Kay Gustin** is the Public Program Coordinator at the Vermont Historical Society, where she plans public events including the Vermont History Expo and the Vermont 1970s project. She holds a BA in history from Middlebury College and a MA in history and museum studies from Tufts University. Her research interests focus on the intersection between military theory and morality, early American culture, and her current project is a more in-depth look into the early history of the first Morgan horse.

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## PROGRAM SCHEDULE 2015

**June 9 – Angela Smythe – “Richmond Grays Photo”  
via Skype**

### **Other Round Table Meetings and Happenings**

**The Vermont Heritage Galleries** include *Service & Sacrifice*, which is now featuring the Andrus panoramic battle scenes, Houghton’s photographs, and the State of Vermont Civil War flags. Learn more about Vermont citizens’ service and sacrifice during the War Between the States. Admission covers all three galleries and entrance to the Vermont History Museum in Montpelier.

**Vermont History Center, 60 Washington Street, Barre, VT Open Mon-Fri, noon to 4:00 pm (802) 479-8519 [www.vermonthistory.org](http://www.vermonthistory.org)**

**NORTHFIELD, Vt.–Norwich University’ - Sullivan Museum and History Center** - New exhibit: **“1865, Out of the Ashes: Assassination, Reconstruction, and Healing the Nation.”**

The exhibit, which focuses on the aftermath of the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, the rehabilitation and restoration of the South, and efforts to unify the country, is the fifth and final exhibition in the museum’s series commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.

A centerpiece of the new exhibition is a unique and rare firearm recently acquired by the Sullivan Museum and History Center: a Spencer repeating rifle. Possibly tested by President Lincoln himself, the weapon had remained in private hands for several generations and will now be on public view for the first time since the Civil War. The rifle was itself an important part of Civil War history. Adopted by Union troops, it allowed for more accurate and rapid firing. The Spencer rifle now on view was an early issue, originally given to Lincoln by the manufacturer and later gifted by Lincoln to Gideon Welles, NU’1826, in recognition of his Civil War service as Secretary of the Navy.

In addition to the rifle, historical objects from Ford’s Theater, a brass cannon used during the Civil War and period currency loaned by the Hon. John W. Walter will be included in the exhibition.

The museum is located on the Northfield campus of Norwich University. It is open Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. during the academic year. There is no charge for admission to the museum. For more information call 802.485.2183 or visit the museum’s website ([academics.norwich.edu/museum/](http://academics.norwich.edu/museum/)) or Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/SullivanMuseum](http://www.facebook.com/SullivanMuseum))

**May 20 - NEKCWRT - Tony O’Connor on the Lincoln Assassination at the Eastside Restaurant.**

**May 15, 2015 – RT of NH - Dave Decker - "Female Soldiers in the Civil War."**

**To May 17 – Vermont Objects – “Civil War Objects”** at the Fleming Museum of Art, University of Vermont, Burlington. Items from UVM collection including Gettysburg artifacts, quilts, documents, art, 12<sup>th</sup> Vermont cap, GAR badge, 9<sup>th</sup> Vermont medal. Closed Mondays, holidays, school breaks. For information call 802-656-0750 or check out their web site: [www.flemingmuseum.org](http://www.flemingmuseum.org) (From the Civil War News.)

**May 20 – Arming the Union: Vermont Gunmakers and the Technology that Shaped America.** During the Civil War, the Union army fielded more than two million men, most of them armed with newly made, highly accurate rifles. In this illustrated lecture, historian and museum curator Carrie Brown explores the critical role that Windsor, Vermont, played in producing technology that won the war and changed American life and popular culture even after the war ended. Hosted by the Woodbury Community Library, 69 Valley Lake Rd., Woodbury, VT - 7:00 pm. Elizabeth Hansen, (802) 456-1630.

**May 25-Oct. 12 – “Soldiers & Citizens”** – Free museum at New England Via Vermont in Alburgh village. Focus on soldiers & families back home. Displays include Lincoln, St. Albans Raid, medicine, ladies, children, soldier life, Underground Railroad, battles, veterans. Call 802-796-3665 or: [www.newenglandviavermont.net](http://www.newenglandviavermont.net) (From the Civil War News.)

**May 27 – 6:00 P.M. - Abraham and Mary Lincoln: The Long and the Short of It** - Distinctly different paths led Abraham Lincoln and Mary Todd to Springfield, Illinois, where they met, married and began a family. The years that followed their move to the White House were filled with personal and national crises. Steve and Sharon Wood portray President and Mrs. Lincoln in this living history program, telling stories of their early lives and the challenges they faced during this turbulent time in our country’s history. Upper Valley Senior Ctr., 10 Campbell St., Lebanon. For more information contact Jill Vahey – 448-4213.

**June 3 – Vermont and the Civil War.** From Cedar Creek to Gettysburg, Vermonters were central to the Union cause. Vermont author and Civil War historian Howard Coffin addresses the Vermont contribution to the Civil War. Hosted by the Milton Historical Society and Museum. Milton Historical Society and Museum, 13 School St, 7:00 pm. Allison Belisle, (802) 363-2598.!

### **WORLD WAR I GROUP**

This group meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday at 1 p.m. in the Café next to the Coolidge, but this may change. We will cover topics in chronological order. If you want to come or want more information, contact Peter Sinclair [802-584-3280] or David Curtin [802-633-2536].

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**“From Vicksburg to Cedar Creek”** by Tom McKenna - This is the first comprehensive history of the 22nd Iowa Volunteer Infantry to be published in over 100 years. This regiment was formed in Iowa City, Iowa, in August 1862, and served for three years. It was one of the few Civil War regiments which served in both the Western Theater, where it fought under General Grant in the Vicksburg Campaign, and in the Eastern Theater, where it fought under General Sheridan in the Shenandoah Valley. This remarkable regiment traveled about 13,000 miles (equal to half way around the world) by foot, wagon, rail, riverboat, and ocean-going steamship and served in 10 of the 11 Confederate States, from Texas to Virginia. 23% of the men who served in this regiment died in battle or from disease. (Lew has read this book and highly recommends it. You can order this Amazon.)

**May 4, 1865 – Matthew Simpson, Methodist Episcopal church bishop, in his speech at President Lincoln’s funeral, on May 4, 1865:** :Look over all [Lincoln’s] speeches; listen to his utterances. He never spoke unkindly of any man. Even the rebels received no word of anger from him.”

**On May 30, 1865 Special Field Order No. 76 – General William Tecumseh Sherman’s official farewell to his troops:**  
“Your general now bids you farewell, with the full belief that, as in war you have been good soldiers, so in peace you will make good citizens; and if, unfortunately, new war should arise in our country, ‘Sherman’s army’ will be the first to buckle on its old armor and come forth to defend and maintain the Government of our inheritance.”

**Memorial Day quote from President Rutherford B. Hayes, 1878, at the Gettysburg National Cemetery:**  
“In addition to the many young lives of our soldiers lost on the numerous battlefields of this war, let us not forget Abraham Lincoln, who also fell as a martyr for the cause of liberty.”

**From The Watchman, Montpelier, VT, May 23, 1865:**  
**MONUMENTS TO MR. LINCOLN.**—The Christian Register suggests that, instead of building the six or eight monuments in honor of President Lincoln, already projected, a single monument be built over his remains at Springfield, Ill., and that Lincoln Homes for disabled soldiers be established in all the principle cities. This is the right idea. These would be the noblest and most fitting monuments to his memory, and most acceptable to him, if his wishes could be consulted. And let the first of these institutions in honor of Mr. Lincoln and in gratitude to those who have suffered for the country, be the theater in which the tragedy occurred.

**THE CAPTURE OF JEFF. DAVIS.**  
**Farmer’s Cabinet, Amherst, NH – May 18, 1865**  
The one great wish of the loyal people is gratified in the arrest of Jeff. Davis. The event was announced by telegraph Sunday, and no event, not even the surrender of Lee and his army, has given greater satisfaction. It is regarded by all as the closing up of the most wicked rebellion that the world has ever seen—and well may the people rejoice.

The circumstances under which he was taken are humiliating in the extreme. He was pursued by two parties of cavalry—a detachment of the 1<sup>st</sup> Wisconsin Cavalry, under the command of Lieut. Col. Harden, and a detachment of the 4<sup>th</sup> Michigan Cavalry, under the command of Col. Pritchard. Col. Harden, on the 7<sup>th</sup>, struck the trail of the fugitives at Dublin, Lawrence County, Georgia, and pursued them through the pine wilderness of Alligator Creek and Green Swamp to the vicinity of Irwinsville. Col. Pritchard’s detachment arrived at Irwinsville at midnight on the 9<sup>th</sup>, and learning that Davis was encamped within two miles, surrounded his camp before daylight. Col. Harden’s proximity not being known to Colonel Pritchard, a mistake occurred, which resulted in the loss of several men of each party, they having fired upon each other. The firing in this skirmish was the first warning Davis received. The captors report that he hastily put on one of his wife’s dresses and started to the woods, closely followed by our men, who at first thought him a woman, but discovering his boots while running, suspected his sex at once. The race was a short one, and the rebel President was soon brought to bay—He brandished a bowie knife of elegant pattern and showed signs of battle, but yielded promptly to the persuasion of the Captain’s revolver, without compelling the men to fire. He expressed great indignation at the energy with which he was pursued, saying that he thought our Government was more magnanimous than to hunt down women and children. Mrs. Davis remarked to Col. Harden after the excitement was over, that “the men had better not provoke the President, as he might hurt some of them.”

The party captured consists of Jeff Davis and family, consisting of his wife, sisters and brother, his Postmaster-General Reagan, his private secretary, Col. Harrison, Col. Johnston, A.D.C. on Davis’ staff, Col. Lubbick, Lieut. Hathaway, and a train of five wagons and three ambulances.

**THE LATE PRESIDENT AND HIS ASSASIN.**  
**From the New York Herald.**  
The personal relations existing before the murder between Booth and the President, augment the horror of the occurrence. Mr. Lincoln saw Booth play more than once, and particularly admired him. He once applauded him rapturously, and with all that genial heartiness for which he was distinguished. Booth, when told of the President’s delight, said to his informant that he would rather have the applause of a negro. The President had never spoken with Booth, but wished to make his acquaintance, and said so. Booth evaded the interview, yet he knew Mr. Lincoln thoroughly well so far as his whereabouts and appearance were concerned, but never appreciated the President’s good

nature and personal benevolence.

**Green Mountain Civil War Round Table  
March 2015— March 2016 Membership Rates**

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BLAKE, 55 ORRIZONTO ROAD, WHITE RIVER  
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**Green Mountain Civil War Round Table  
P.O. Box 982  
White River Junction, VT 05001**

**WHERE BOOTH LIES.**

The correspondent of the New York *World* thus speaks of the burial of Booth: Yesterday the Secretary of War, without instructions of any kind, committed to Colonel Lafayette C. Baker, of the secret service, the stark corpse of J. Wilkes Booth. The secret service never fulfilled its volition more secretly. "What have you done with the body?" said I to Baker. "That is known" he answered "to only one man living besides myself. It is gone. I will not tell you where. The only man who knows is sworn to silence. Never till the great trumpeter comes shall the grave of Booth be discovered." And this is true. Last night the 27<sup>th</sup> of April, a small row boat received the carcass of the murderer; two men were in it; they carried the body off in the darkness, and out of that darkness it will never return. In the darkness, like his great crime, may it remain forever, impalpable, invisible, condemned to that worse than damnation, annihilation. The river bottom may ooze about it laden with great shot and droning manacles. The earth may have opened to give it that silence and forgiveness which man will never give its memory. The fishes may swim around it, or the daisies may grow white above it; but we shall never know.

**DON'T FORGET: DUES ARE DUE!**

