



The Signal Flag



BRANDYWINE VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Campaign # 21

Skirmish # 1

September 2007

From the Rear Ranks:

*I often think of what Will Durant wrote in *The Story of Civilization*:
"Civilization is a stream with banks. The stream is sometimes filled with blood from people killing, stealing, shouting, and doing things historians usually record - while, on the banks unnoticed, people build homes, raise children, sing songs, write poetry and whittle statues. The story of civilization is the story of what happens on the banks.*

Fred Rogers - 2003

As we start the Campaign of 2007/2008, let us not forget that the story of our nation's Civil War is the story the creation of a new American Civilization. I hope each of you enjoy the lessons and tales, about both the streams and the banks of The Civil War, that our speakers have waiting for all of us

*Mike Liddy, President
Brandywine Valley Civil War Roundtable*



~ Officers ~

President: Mike Liddy
Vice President: John Walls
Secretary: Ted Pawlik
Treasurer: Dave Walter

~ Committee Members ~

Preservation: John Walls, Bob Sprague
Nominating / Speakers Committee:
Vince Carosella, John Whiteside
Speakers: Roger Arthur, Joe Lehman
Monthly Scribe / Trips: Susan Mahoney
Credentials: Bill Sitman
Greeter: Loretta Thomas
Publicity: Harriett Mueller
Historians: Bill Sitman
Our Social: Flo Williams

~ Members at Large ~

David Hoffritz, James Lawler

~ Official Sutler ~

Bob Sprague: Books / Periodicals
610-644-0353

~ Annual Membership ~

Individual \$25.00; Family \$40.00; Student \$15.00
(Full time student up to age 23)

? Questions ? Contact:

Mike Liddy
87 Rittenhouse Place, Apt A-1
Ardmore, PA 19003
609-602-0483
liddy41@aol.com

BVCWRT Web Site:

<http://bvcwrt.home.comcast.net>

Webmaster: Jim Lawler

dtownjim@comcast.net

Signal Flag Editor: Lynne Fulton

610-647-1039
fultonlm1949@aol.com

Unsolicited articles from our members are welcome.
Please contact Lynne!

* Our meetings are handicap accessible *



What is the BVCWRT all about???

We were founded in 1987. According to our by-laws, "the purpose of the Brandywine Valley Civil War Round Table shall be to provide a congenial medium through which persons having a common interest in the events of the American Civil War - its causes and effects, engagements, personages, units, armaments and other things pertaining thereto - may satisfy their interest and broaden individual knowledge through discussion, lectures, field trips and the exchange of books, paper and other data. The purposed is also to consider the preservation and protection of the battlefields, sites, landmarks, relics and collection of the period."

In plain English, we are an organization of diverse people brought together by our common interest in the American Civil War. This interest can range from the casual to the obsessive. We intend to tailor our activities and presentations to appeal to all our members, novice or expert.

Welcome New Members & Reenlistments

The Round Table welcomes our new members since our last meeting. Please welcome them and share your Civil War enthusiasm.

New Members:

Welcome to all returning and new members!!





Brandywine Valley Civil War Round Table

Come to our next meeting

5 September 2007

Speaker: Dan Cashin

Topic: "Benjamin Franklin Butler – Practical Patriot or the Dixie Chick of The Civil War"

Time: 7:00 PM

Place: West Chester Borough Hall, Gay Street

Our speaker this month is one of our own, Mr. Dan Cashin. Dan will be concentrating on the difference between Butler's reputation as published in the Richmond papers and his actual accomplishments. His talk will come from the book "Benjamin Franklin Butler - The Damnedest Yankee" by Dick Nolan.

Dan worked for 30 years for the Navy as a civilian rigging instructor (that's where his Navy interest comes from). He is now doing commercial training in the same field at Aker Shipyard. He is of course interested in the Civil War especially the Navy. He was a volunteer crew on the USS Constellation and Aide de Camp for Cdr. Mike Kochan. He does Civil War prisoner of war re-enacting as a member of the Board of Directors of the Fort Delaware Society, and he is involved in Civil War genealogy of three of his great-grandfathers who fought in the CW. One in the 56th NYVI, another in the 19th NYSM and one in the Philadelphia Militia. To date he has identified 40 relations who fought for the Union in the Civil War, army, Navy and USMC. Dan has talked with us before on the Navy so I am sure you will be in for an interest evening leaning about Mr. Butler.

We will be Meeting in Room 240

BIG NEWS! Roger has done it again! He's arranged for a top-tier speaker to appear at our December 5th meeting and Christmas Social. Award winning historian and author Elizabeth Brown Pryor will attend to discuss her recently published book, "Reading the Man: A Portrait of Robert E. Lee through His Private Letters".

. Link to the book on Amazon.com.

. Link to an article about the book at U.S. News & World Report

Don't Forget: Edward H. Bonekemper, III will be making a return appearance to the Round Table at our October 3rd meeting. This time, Ed will discuss his book, "McClellan and Failure: A Civil War Study of Fear, Incompetence and Worse".

. Link to a synopsis of the book: [synopsis](#).

. Link to Mr. Bonekemper's [resume](#).

. Discounted, signed and personalized copies of the book are available from Mr. Bonekemper at ebonekemper@comcast.net.

Banquet News: The Executive Board is delighted to announce that Jean Edward Smith, the John Marshall Professor of Political Studies at Marshall University in Huntington, WV will be our guest speaker on May 13th to discuss U. S. Grant.

. Link to a brief biography of Mr. Smith on Wikipedia.

. Link to Mr. Smith's book on Grant on Amazon.com.



Editor's Note

Hello everyone I am Baaaacccckkk!!!! Hope you all had a nice summer. Well, no one stepped forward over the summer to take over the Editor's position so at our Board Meeting in August I said that I will continue to do the newsletter. We are going to try something new this year. Many of you, that are online, have noticed that Bob Sprague has been sending out "**Round Table Telegram**" keeping you up-to-date with activities of the Round Table and other events that are going on or coming up as he hears about them. Since many activities go on between newsletters we wanted a way to inform the membership of these events so we thought we would try our online "Telegram". Please let us know what you think.

Thank you to the Speaker's Committee for another great year of speakers and topics. We will start our year out with one of our own member Mr. Dan Cashin who will be talking with us about General Benjamin Butler, the favorite General of the ladies in New Orleans. I am sure that Dan will have some interesting information to tell us about General Butler. I have included in this newsletter some general information that will give you a brief background on General Butler

Our New Officers:

Welcome to our new President, Mike Liddy. Mike has graciously taken over the leadership from Bob Sprague. In August at our Executive Board met Mike start us off by sharing some of his ideas and plans for our Round Table's new season - Good Luck Mike.

Welcome to our new Secretary, Ted Pawlik, who will be taking over duties from me.

Welcome to Flo Williams, will be organizing our Christmas and Spring Socials.

I would like to take this time to express, on behalf of our Round Table, our thanks to Bob Sprague for the many years of faithfully server he had given our Round Table. We look forward to working with Bob again this year in his new positions as Sutter and publisher of our Online Telegram.

Dues: please bring your check and membership application which is attached at the back of this newsletter to the first meeting. Please give this to Dave Walter, our Treasurer he will be near the door to collect your dues.

I look forward to serving the Round Table again as Editor and I welcome any inputs you might wish included in the newsletter.

*Welcome Member
Lynne Fulton, Editor*

**Likenesses of
New Hampshire War Heroes & Personages
In the Collections of
the New Hampshire State House
& State Library
Benjamin F. Butler (1818 - 1893)**

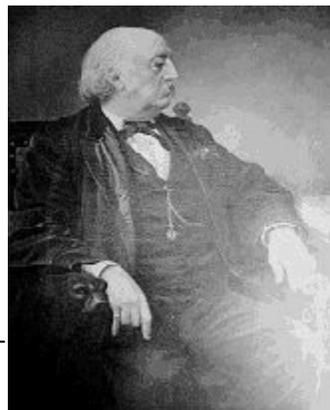
Benjamin F. Butler (1818 - 1893)

Born at Deerfield (NH); died at Washington DC.

Career politician and Civil War general.

Portrait by Darius Cobb, 1889.

Presented to the State by the Boston Butler Club, 1889.



Benjamin Butler's father died when Butler was an infant. His penniless mother moved from Deerfield to her in-laws' farm at Nottingham (NH), and there Butler attended common school. A physically frail boy with crossed eyes and very possibly an attention deficit disorder, Butler began to be a student at Exeter Academy; but he was not a good student. When his mother got an offer of running a boarding house for mill workers at Lowell (MA), his mother accepted the offer and her young son followed. In Lowell Butler studied at Lowell High School; he also established a practice of stealing items from rooms of the boarding house tenants while they were at work according to one of Butler's biographers [Chester G. Hearn, *When The Devil Came Down to Dixie: Bent Butler in New Orleans* (1997), pp. 8-9]. Hearn goes on to suggest that Butler's early proclivities were life-long:

Butler died on January 11, 1893, an immensely wealthy man whose estate topped \$7million. Nobody has ever been able to explain how Butler, who came from simple means and spent the bulk of his career alternating between law and politics, amassed so huge a fortune (Ibid., p. 6).

Butler wanted to secure an appointment to West Point but failed. Instead he attended a Baptist college at Waterville (ME), and he studied for the ministry. After graduation (1838, however, Butler studied law for two years, and he was admitted to the Massachusetts Bar in 1840. He never pursued the ministry as a career, gravitating instead toward law and politics.

In 1844 Butler married Sarah Hildreth, a beautiful and cultivated actress; with his crossed eyes and puny frame the couple made an odd-looking couple, but they settled in Lowell and Butler practiced law and got involved in politics.

In the national election of 1844 Butler was convinced that the Whig Party's Martin Van Buren could not win re-election, so Butler supported the eventual winner, James K. Polk (president 1845 - 1849). After the election Butler went to Washington, D.C. to collect on his political support, and while there he was admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court, an indication of his skills as a lawyer. But Mr. and Mrs. Butler soon returned to Lowell, where Butler campaigned as a Democrat for the 10-hour workday. The Lowell mill owners objected, saying they could not compete with so short a day, and they had the support of the ruling Whig Party. Butler allied himself with the new Free Soil Party, "and on election day, November 10, 1851, the town of Lowell cast 8,000 votes in a district of 800 registered voters.....When the error was discovered the Whigs demanded a revote....." (Hearn op cit., p. 15).

The mill owners expected to demolish Butler in the new election. But two days before the election Butler accepted an invitation to speak on the 10-hour day at Lowell City Hall. The mill owners regarded this as an invitation to civil insurrection and anarchy, and they threatened to call out the militia, and to fire anyone who voted for the 10-hour day. Butler was colonel of the Lowell City Guard, however, so no militia showed up, and

the meeting was such a success that Butler was carried on the shoulders of the multitude who came to hear him. The millowners quietly rescinded their threats of termination and learned to live with the 10-hour work-day.

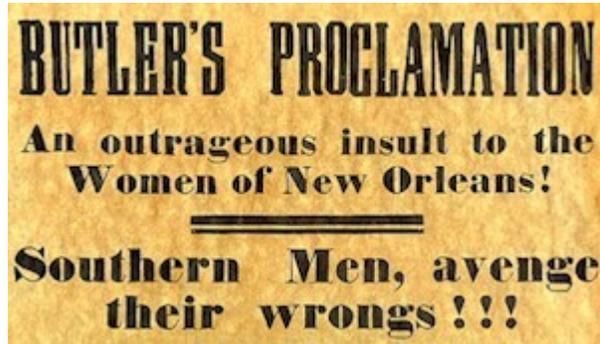
Butler had established a reputation as a man willing to buck the ruling powers. During the 1850s he established a reputation as a man who would do whatever it took to get what he wanted. He changed political parties at will, supporting candidates and causes diametrically opposed to each other throughout the decade, and he did the same throughout his career. In 1856, reunited with the Democratic Party because of his vote-getting skills, Butler was for the Democratic Party leaders' man; but at the 1860 party convention Butler, who had been elected as a delegate for John C. Breckenridge, stuck with his man through seven ballots - and then changed to support of Jefferson Davis of Mississippi for the next fifty ballots. Davis, who was soon to become President of the Confederate States of America, was not the ultimate winner of the convention (Stephen Douglas was), but Democratic Party leaders were angered over Butler's bolt from his Breckenridge position. Not that it mattered much; in the national election Democrat Stephen Douglas won twelve electoral votes. The Republican Party's Abraham Lincoln, a man who had bested Douglas in a series of great debates during the campaign, won the rest.

In the election of 1860 Butler had been the choice of Breckenridge Democrats to be governor of Massachusetts. Butler got four percent of the vote; but with the nation soon to be at war Butler battled with Massachusetts Governor Andrew and got permission to raise a state regiment which would help ensure order at Lincoln's inauguration. How this maneuver turned into Butler's being made a general, despite no military experience and no West Point training in military tactics, cannot be summarized here; nor can his appointment to capture and restore order to New Orleans. It is the subject of Mr. Hearn's book, Butler's own autobiography, and many other writings. Even more than a century after the Civil War the reader is left shaking his head. In the years after his tenure as "Beast" Butler of New Orleans, Butler continued his erratic political career. Between 1866 - 1875 Butler was a Radical Republican from Massachusetts, helping to lead the 1868 effort to impeach President Andrew Johnson. In 1878 he was returned to Congress from Massachusetts, this time as a Greenback Party man. In 1880 he reunited with the Democrats, and in 1882 he was elected governor of Massachusetts as a Democrat. Yet in 1884, Butler was the president candidate of the Greenback and Anti-Monopoly political parties.

Even the 1889 gift of Butler's portrait to the State of New Hampshire was a controversial event, and by far the most colorful presentation of a portrait to the State. A special train brought 250 Butler supporters from Boston to Concord, including the Fife, Drum & Bugle Corps of the Benjamin Butler Post of the Grand Army of the Republic, from Lowell, Massachusetts. At Concord the Third Regiment Band met the train, and spectators lined Main Street. The painting was accepted for the State by Governor David H. Goodell, accompanied by Charles R. Corning, chairman of the State Library Commission and a well-known historian. The President of the Boston Butler Club, Noah A. Plymton, attacked critics of General Butler's war record in a lengthy speech at Doric Hall, and the State Legislature recessed for the event.

The only person missing for these exercises was General Butler, who had missed the train from Boston. He arrived by special train after the exercises were concluded, but received much praise at subsequent festivities. And when Butler's portrait was first hung in the State House, it hung opposite that of General John Dix - two heroes of New Orleans. Perhaps fortunately, General Dix had died ten years before, and was not present for the 1889 installation.

Benjamin Butler's New Orleans "Woman's Order"



One of the major problems that confronted by Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Butler on his occupation of New Orleans in April of 1862, was the abuse his soldiers endured from patriotic Confederate women. Bitterly resentful of the Union occupation, whenever any of Butler's men were present they would contemptuously gather in their skirts, cross streets, flee rooms, cast hateful glances, or make derisive comments. Some sang spirited renditions of "The Bonnie Blue Flag" and other Confederate songs, or spat on soldiers' uniforms, while teaching their children to do the same. One woman emptied a chamber pot on Capt. David C. Farragut from her window shortly after the mayor surrendered the city to him.

The women hoped their actions would force a retaliatory incident serious enough to incite paroled Confederates to revolt against the occupation troops. Butler's men showed remarkable restraint against the insults, but he realized that it was only a matter of time until one of them, pressed too far, would arrest some female belligerent. Undoubtedly the men of New Orleans would attempt a rescue, and Butler feared his small force would be overcome. He dealt with the problem on May 15 by issuing General Orders No. 28, carefully worded to be self-enforcing:

"As the officers and soldiers of the United States have been subjected to repeated insults from the women (calling themselves ladies) of New Orleans, in return for the most scrupulous noninterference and courtesy on our part, it is ordered that hereafter when any female shall, by word, gesture, or movement, insult or show contempt for any officer or soldier of the United States, she shall be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman of the town plying her avocation."

Except for a few isolated incidents, the insults stopped abruptly when the women learned they would be treated as common whores for demeaning a man wearing a U.S. army uniform. A few who persisted were arrested and imprisoned on Ship Island, notably Mrs. Philip Philips, who was confined from 30 June until mid-September for laughing when the funeral procession of a Federal officer was passing her house.

The "Woman's Order" provoked criticism throughout the Confederacy and in Europe from people who considered his proclamation an unpardonable affront to womanhood. In defense of the order he emphasized the restraint his soldiers had shown civilians in New Orleans. Nevertheless, the infamous order excited indignation and personal animosity toward Butler. Many felt his nickname, "Beast" Butler, was well deserved.

Immediately upon learning of General Orders No. 28, John T. Monroe, Mayor of New Orleans, wrote a scathing letter to General Butler decrying the order. Strangely, almost as soon as it was written, Monroe retracted it and issued an apology. However, one who did not issue an apology was Jefferson Davis. President Davis issued a "Proclamation" branding Butler and his officers as nothing more than outlaws that would be hanged if captured.

Source: "Historical Times Encyclopedia of the Civil War" Edited by Patricia L. Faust

www.civilwarhome.com/butlerwomanorder.htm



Executive Board Minutes

August 1, 2007

Attendees: Mike Liddy John Walls Ted Pawlik Roger Arthur Vince Carosella
Lynne Fulton Jim Lawler Bob Sprague Bill Sitman Susan Mahoney
Harriet Mueller John Whiteside

The President's Report/Announcements:

1. John Walls and Dan Cashin made a presentation at the Rose Tree School District. A \$100 donation was received in recognition of this presentation. The donation will be applied to preservation.
2. The Executive Board recommended a donation to the Civil War Preservation Trust for the Franklin Battlefield.
3. The dues for the 2007-2008 Campaign will remain the same at \$25 for individual membership, \$40 for a family membership and \$15 for students. Those members making a presentation at the monthly meetings during the year are not required to pay dues. They may make a contribution to preservation instead if they want to.
4. In honor of the 20th anniversary of the Round Table, the suggestion was made that we purchase a banner for the group. The banner will be displayed at meetings and any outside events. John Walls volunteered to look into this purchase.
5. The dates of our meetings have been confirmed with West Chester for the balance of 2007. A request form will need to be completed for the 2008 meeting dates. The banquet will be held on May 13, 2008 at the Elks Club. The facility has been reserved.
6. John Walls will be in charge of the book raffle for the 2007-2008 Campaign. Vince Carosella will be the back up.
7. Mike Liddy will ask for a volunteer to be Historian for the Round Table.
8. At the September 5, 2007 meeting, 3x5 cards will be distributed to members asking them to update contact information including e-mail addresses and also to indicate what programs they would like to see as well as what programs they do not particularly like.
9. Bill Sitman will collect the nametags of those attending the monthly meetings in a separate container. The purpose of this is to get an approximate count of the number attending and what topics seem to be of interest to members.
10. Mike Liddy, as President, indicated his goals for the 2007-2008 Campaign is to increase membership by 10 people and do community outreach.

Treasurer's Report:

1. As of 8/1/07, the Round Table has a balance of \$2755.82. It was noted that the fiscal year runs from 9/1 to 8/31 so this balance represents the 2006/2007 campaign.
2. The 2007 banquet resulted in a net profit of \$222 of which \$126 came from the book raffle.

Speakers Committee/Trips:

1. Roger Arthur distributed the schedule of speakers. The banquet speaker is to be determined. The list of speakers can be found on the website.
2. The December 2007 meeting will be a roundtable discussion. There is a need to develop a list of topics for the discussion by October 15, 2007.
3. Susan Mahoney will coordinate a field trip this year. Tentative sites are the Wilderness and Manassas (either 1st or 2nd).
- 4.

Fund Raisers for 2007-2008 Campaign:

1. Bob Sprague has been appointed as the official Sutler for the organization. Bob will sell books and magazines before the meetings with all proceeds going to preservation.
2. A discussion was held to promote and market the banquet to members in order to increase attendance.
3. A special speaker will be tentatively scheduled for early spring with all proceeds going to preservation.
4. A suggestion was presented to sell embroidered golf shirts, sweatshirts, and caps with the BVCWRT logo. Roger Arthur to check with Mike Kochan and Vince Carosella will check with a firm in West Chester for pricing information.

Membership Communications/Newsletter:

1. The web site and e-mail will be the primary means of communication to the membership. Those who don't have access to e-mail are encouraged to use the public library.
2. The Board approved the concept of a Roundtable Telegram on a trial basis for one year. If anyone has information that will of interest to the general membership, they are to send that information to Bob Sprague (novacsa@comcast.net) who in turn will distribute it to the membership via e-mail. This will be particularly helpful for information that does not make the newsletter.
3. Lynn Fulton has graciously agreed to do the newsletter again this year and the Board expressed their appreciation for this. The newsletter will be placed on the website for members to access. The deadline for a newsletter will be the 15th of each month. Anyone having information for the newsletter are to contact Lynn directly at fultonlm1949@aol.com.

Respectively Submitted: Ted Pawlik Secretary

=====

Civil War Trail in PA

By Ed Colimore

Date: Mon, 27 Aug 2007 ASSOCIATED PRESS

HARRISBURG, Pa. — The state is putting together a Civil War trail that will guide history buffs and casual tourists to off-the-beaten-track sites in central Pennsylvania.

Historical markers, including photos and a narrative, will be placed at 56 locations from Waynesboro to Harrisburg as part of the project being done by the Pennsylvania Tourism Office and The National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg. Many of the sites are now unmarked, making them difficult to find said Jeb Stuart, secretary of the museum, which is providing images and stories for the markers.

Under the project called "Pennsylvania Civil War Trail: Prelude to Gettysburg," markers will be placed in places such as Fleming Farm, just outside Greencastle, where Confederate and Union soldiers first clashed in Pennsylvania; Mary Ritter's Boarding House in Chambersburg, where John Brown stayed in 1859 before his raid on the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, W.Va.; and Monterey Pass near Waynesboro, where a battle was fought by 10,000 soldiers during the Confederate retreat from Gettysburg.

The museum has received \$350,000 for the project, with \$285,000 coming from the Ben Franklin Technology Partners and the remainder from the state's Pennsylvania Dutch Country Roads tourism promotion initiative.

The project also includes a component on Google Inc.'s Google Earth software. The software will provide panoramic images and detailed close-up views of the sites.

Book Review - A Phila. gentleman warms to Lincoln

Reviewed by Edward Pettit For The Inquirer Wed, 22 Aug 2007

A Philadelphia Perspective: The Civil War Diary of Sidney George Fisher
Edited by Jonathan White Fordham. 282 pp. \$28 paper

"Met Mr. Ryan on the road. He told me news had just come to town that the Republican Party had nominated a Mr. Lincoln for President. I never heard of him before," writes Sidney George Fisher in his diary on May 18, 1860. "It will calm many fears, allay much animosity and inspire hope of better times throughout the country, whoever Mr. Lincoln may be." Sidney George Fisher was a member of Philadelphia's high society in the mid-19th century. He came from a wealthy family, hobnobbed with the merchant and banking aristocracy and, though not rich himself, spent his days as a gentleman farmer.

Fisher gave speeches to historical and agricultural organizations. He wrote books and pamphlets on the major political questions of his day, such as slavery and constitutional authority. Fisher was, as Samuel Johnson once said of Boswell (according to Boswell), "a very clubbable man." Respectable, sociable and determined to make his mark (as long as he didn't have to break a sweat doing it).

Fisher, also like Boswell, kept a diary for most of his adult life. From 1834 until 1871 Fisher commented on the daily minutiae of his own life and of the society in which he lived. Only death halted his voluminous output: He died a mere three days after his last entry.

Unlike Boswell's, Fisher's diary is not filled with details of sexual encounters. While Boswell's journals would not seem out of place as a contemporary blog, with its author's private life splayed for all to see, Fisher writes with a precision and formality that suggest he hoped for readers in years to come. He was not merely taking notes for future writing projects. He was crafting an autobiography, in daily detail.

Fisher's diary has been a boon to historians of 19th-century America for some time. Nicholas B. Wainwright first edited and published a single-volume edition in 1967. This new one, edited by Jonathan White, is a reprinting of only the Civil War years from Wainwright's edition. White has not added any previously unpublished material, even though, as he notes in a preface, Wainwright only published "5 to 10 percent of the original diary." White adds that the Civil War years, in Fisher's own original format, "span some twenty-two volumes." Considering that White was only republishing a few years from the diary, couldn't he have added some extra material? Are there perhaps some salacious Boswellian moments that we don't know about?

From the first entry in this edition, on Jan. 1, 1860, Fisher crafts himself as a man apart. On not attending church service, he writes, "It is very well for the multitude to have a day consecrated to religious observances. . . . But for the thinking man, every day is Sunday, he sees the moral, the divine in truth, and truth governs every day and all things, the most common and familiar." He's not one of the rabble. This passage also suggests an iconoclastic distrust of organized religion.

The personal nature of a diary almost forces a reader to make emotional judgments about the subject, and I found myself disliking Fisher for much of the first year's entries. Longing for the aristocratic ways of yesteryear, lamenting the growing numbers of the uneducated, Fisher often comes off as a prig. But, in documenting the swirling events of the Civil War, Fisher evolves before your eyes. His views on slavery shift. He waxes philosophical. One day (March 13, 1861) he is viewing Barnum's exhibit of African and Central American natives, but can only see (like most of his time) "man in an arrested state of development." The very next day Fisher turns to metaphysical ruminations: "We thus die daily and yesterday is as much lost to me as the hour of my birth."

Most interesting is the development of Abraham Lincoln's reputation in Fisher's eyes. From the first mention, quoted above, Fisher is longing for a statesman to save his society from the mess slavery had gotten it into. And although, as a result of Lincoln's nomination, no fears were becalmed and those "better times" would come only after four years of bloody civil war, Fisher sees the light at the end of the dark tunnel, choosing to quote "the mystic chords of memory / better angels of our nature" part of Lincoln's first inaugural address. Lincoln's speeches gradually win him over and galvanize his commitment to the Union.

A melancholic tone, as Fisher nurses various ailments and mourns Lincoln's assassination, concludes these diary entries as if recording the final days of some lost America. The diary is, at times, an aristocratic idyll in which the classes are forever separate (and not at all equal), and at other times a place where Fisher can explore the ideas of his day and provide the reader with honest opinions. All in all, well worth reading.

Edward Pettit is a member of the National Book Critics Circle and writes the "Bibliothecary" blog at <http://bibliothecary.squarespace>.

(By the Way: Fisher is buried at Woodlands Cemetery, Philadelphia)

http://www.philly.com/inquirer/magazine/20070822_A_Philadelphia_gentleman_warms_to_Lincoln.html

OBSERVANCE OF CIVIL WAR'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY IS OPENING OLD WOUNDS

By BOB DEANS

Cox News Service

New York Times

Fri, 31 Aug 2007

WASHINGTON, after so many years, the wounds have yet to heal. The bitter debate over states rights. The conflict over race that split the country into North and South. The Civil War? No, the scuffle half a century ago over how to commemorate that war's centennial.

Now, with the 150th anniversary less than four years off, it's all happening again. The country is grappling anew with how to mark the sesquicentennial of the costliest war in the nation's history. There are some folks who are still fighting the war. It can still generate considerable heat, said Rick Beard, director of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield, Ill.

How do we get into this without just setting off a firestorm? he asked. It's time to really begin thinking about this. The year 2011 will mark a century and a half since Confederates bombarded Fort Sumter at Charleston, S.C., opening four years of war that took the lives of more than 600,000 Americans, freed 4 million slaves and ultimately held the United States together.

Congress has yet to create a federal commission to coordinate a national commemoration. By contrast, a federal commission to commemorate last May's 400th anniversary of the settlement at Jamestown, Va., was up and running four and a half years before the anniversary. There have been some low-key attempts to set up a Civil War Sesquicentennial commission. Rep. Richard Baker, R-La., introduced a bill last February that would create one. In the seven months since, it has picked up support from just 10 representatives in the 435-member House.

The whole Civil War can be a sensitive political issue, said Gordon Jones, chief military historian with the Atlanta History Center. I'd be willing to bet that you're not going to find too many national representatives, or even state representatives, who are willing to fund a Civil War initiative. The reluctance isn't hard to understand. Anniversaries tend to be celebrations, and this is not a celebration, said Charles Bryan, president of the Virginia Historical Society in Richmond, the former capital of the Confederacy. It is a commemoration of a great tragedy and a breakdown of a system of government and a failure of leadership on the part of a lot of people, said Bryan. We haven't gotten over it, particularly in the South. The Civil War grew out of deep regional divisions over race and States' rights. A century later, those divisions were mirrored in the way its centennial was marked.

The Cold War with the Soviet Union was at its height, and the federal commemoration commission hoped to engineer a period of collective remembrance. The panel, chaired by Maj. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant III the grandson of the commander of U.S. forces in the Civil War planned speeches, battle reenactments, pageantry and parades to bind the nation in a patriotic fervor to defeat communism at home and abroad. But the civil rights movement had also dawned, and in U.S. Supreme Court integration orders some Southerners heard echoes of federal aggression. Among people for whom Reconstruction remained part of living memory, the centennial became a rallying cry for segregation and the right of states to nullify federal laws.

White Southerners in the late 1950s and early 1960s drew parallels between their condition and that of Confederates in the 1860s, said Robert J. Cook, professor of American history at the University of Sheffield in England. Some felt, here another example of federal tyranny and the attempts by Yankees to impose their values on white Southerners, said Cook, author of *Troubled Commemoration: The American Civil War Centennial, 1961-1965*. As a result, the centennial was very disappointing, said Robert Sutton, incoming chief historian of the U.S. National Park Service. I think it did more to hurt than to heal, added Jones of the Atlanta History Center. History has marched forward in the past 50 years, pulling historians along.

Recent decades have seen a renaissance in Civil War scholarship, adding social, economic and political history to battlefield lore. At Civil War sites nationwide, guides stress the contributions of slaves, free blacks and women, said Sutton, who leaves his job as superintendent of the Manassas National Battlefield Park in Virginia to take up the Park Service post Oct. 1. The new approach to history presents an opportunity, scholars say, for the sesquicentennial to help pull the country together around the nation's most enduring themes government by the people, the common good, the

ongoing struggles for equality and justice. It can become national if it's structured the right way, said Beard, former director of the Atlanta History Center. If it devolves into my side won, your side lost, or my side lost because we ran out of bullets, if it gets down to that, it won't work.

Some question the need for a new federal commemoration commission. Differences in the way separate regions experienced the war, and memories of the 100th anniversary, have created a resistance to the idea of a national umbrella group to oversee commemorative events, said Jones. This is going to be a very decentralized thing, he said. Everyone feels like I don't want a national commission to do any of this. Everyone wants to have a local commemoration to do something in their backyard. You also have a certain splintering of national history. The lack of a national commission is evidence of that, Jones said. Some states are already going their own way.

Virginia set up its own commemorative commission nearly two years ago. South Carolina is weighing a similar approach. In Georgia, the Atlanta History Center is partnering with Kennesaw State University to create the new Center for the Study of the Civil War Era, said Jones, and is working with other groups in the state to create a sesquicentennial Web site to further scholarship and foster heritage tourism. Beard, however, insists a federal commission is needed to help pull together common themes for marking a war that still marks the country today. If it's done right, it will be the opportunity for a lot of interesting national conversations, said Beard. This is a chance to do it right.

The annual AMART Civil War History Symposium

Saturday, September 22nd

At Temple University from 9:00am - 4:00pm

Followed by an honor ceremony and dinner at Laurel Hill Cemetery. The event is co-sponsored by AMART, the Civil War & Emancipation Studies program at Temple and the G.A.R. Museum. All proceeds will go to the preservation of the museum and its collections.

The Topic is:

The History of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps, a unique division composed entirely of Pennsylvanians who had a most enviable reputation for hard fighting in some of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War. Many other units also had connections to the Pennsylvania Reserves. If you wish to participate in an outstanding program of historical information sharing, discussion, meet & greet authors and historians and raise funds and consciousness for Pennsylvania history, please join us!

Saturday, September 22. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
13th Annual Association of Mid-Atlantic Civil War Round
Tables (AMART) Symposium

"History of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps - Shock Troops of the Union"

Ritter Hall - Walk Auditorium, Main Campus, Temple University. 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Followed by an Honor Ceremony at Laurel Hill Cemetery for PVRC commanders buried there at 5 p.m. and dinner at 6 p.m. Distinguished speakers, book displays, artifacts, living history.

Cost: \$60. Includes: registration, breakfast, lunch, dinner at Cemetery

Students free with ID.

Make check payable to "G.A.R. Civil War Museum"

Mail to G.A.R. Civil War Museum & Library

4278 Griscom St.

Philadelphia, PA 19124

Directions: <http://www.temple.edu/maps/directions/main.htm>

Ample parking at open lot 11th & Cecil B. Moore Ave.
For information;
215 - 289 - 6484 or garmuslib@verizon.net or see



Scheduled Speakers for 2007 - 2008:

- Sep 5, 2007:** Dan Cashin - "Ben Butler"
- Oct 3, 2007:** Ed Bonekemper - "McClellan: The Failed General"
- Nov 7, 2007:** Dave Kohler - "Whatever Happened to our Favorite Civil War Heroes"
- Dec 5, 2007:** Elizabeth Brown Pryor - "Reading the Man: A Portrait of Robert E. Lee Through His Private Letters", plus our Christmas Social
- Jan 2, 2008:** Dennis Kelly - Topic is to be announced
- Feb 6, 2008:** Chip Crowe - "General George Thomas"
- Mar 5, 2008:** BVCWRT Members - "Show and Tell", plus our Spring Social
- Apr 2, 2008:** Jean Baker - "Mary Todd Lincoln"
- May 7, 2008:** Roger Arthur - "The Importance of John Brown"
- May 13, 2008:** (Annual Banquet): Jean Edward Smith - "U. S. Grant"

**Brandywine Valley Civil War Round Table
Membership Application**

Application Type: New Renewal

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Note: Monthly newsletters are distributed by E-mail only.

Membership Type: Individual (\$25) Family (\$40): Student (\$15):

If family membership, please list other names:

Bring the completed form and a check payable to BVCWRT to a meeting or mail it to:
Dave Walter, Treasurer, 937 Thorne Drive, West Chester, PA 19382

**BRANDYWINE VALLEY
CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE**

c/o Lynne Fulton, Editor
144 West King Street
Malvern, PA 19355

FIRST CLASS MAIL

