

The Bugle

Quarterly Journal of the
Camp Curtin Historical Society
and Civil War Round Table, Inc.



Winter 2017
Volume 27, Number 4



The Gettysburg Cyclorama

"The field upon which we now stand will be known as classic ground, for here has been the great central point of the organization of our military forces. When my administration of public affairs will have been forgotten and the good and evil will be only known to the investigation of the antiquarian, Camp Curtin, with its memories and associations, will be immortal."

- Governor Andrew Curtin, 1865

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Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend.

February 25, Sunday, 2:00PM

Annual Meeting & Draft Riots Presentation

The Camp Curtin Historical Society will conduct its annual meeting with officer reports and elections. Joe Mieczkowski will present a program on the 1863 New York City Draft Riots. See back cover for details.

June 22, 23, & 24, Friday, Saturday & Sunday

3rd Annual Harrisburg Civil War Days

This three day event will feature tours, lectures, living history programs and special displays about the Harrisburg area's role in the Civil War.

Cover: Our lead article in this issue looks at the Gettysburg Cyclorama painting. Chris Brenneman, co-author of *The Gettysburg Cyclorama: The Turning Point of the Civil War on Canvas*, presented an excellent lecture on the painting at our November meeting. The cover illustration shows the death of Lt. Alonzo Cushing of Battery A, 4th U.S. Artillery (leaning on the trail of the cannon). The artist, Paul Philippoteaux, took some artistic license with this scene. The cannon shown is a 10 Pounder Parrot Rifle instead of a 3 Inch Ordnance Rifle with which the battery was actually armed. Next to Cushing is a yellow artillery regimental color, probably used by the artist to direct the viewer's attention to the scene. It is unlikely that such a flag would have been on the battlefield since artillery batteries were not kept together in regiments. Also, to the left of Cushing is Brig. Gen. Alexander Webb, commander of the Philadelphia Brigade (2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, 2nd Army Corps), riding a white horse when in fact he was on foot.

The Camp Curtin Historical Society and Civil War Round Table, Inc., is a non-profit corporation chartered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Contributions are tax deductible under IRC Section 501(c)(3). The Society is properly registered with the Pennsylvania Department of State as a charitable organization. A copy of the registration and financial information may be obtained by telephoning toll free within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Camp Curtin **Historical Society and** **Civil War Round Table**

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The Gettysburg Cyclorama



In the first two versions of the painting, Philippoteaux depicted Confederate Brig. Gen. Lewis Armistead being shot while on horseback. In the two later versions, he correctly showed Armistead on foot.



Maj. Gen. Winfield Hancock, on a black horse just crossing the road, is shown directing reinforcements forward to repulse Pickett's Charge. Hancock was one of the generals Philippoteaux interviewed in preparing the painting.

Cycloramas are large panoramic paintings displayed in the round. The observer of the painting is surrounded by a 360 degree view as if standing in the middle of the event being depicted. This art form originated in Europe and became very popular in the late 1800s in the United States. The paintings were displayed in specially constructed round buildings and occasionally moved from city to city.

In 1881, Chicago businessman Charles Willoughby commissioned French artist Paul Philippoteaux to paint a cyclorama of Pickett's Charge on the third day at the Battle of Gettysburg.

Philippoteaux travelled to America and visited the battlefield. He had photographs taken to ensure the accuracy of topography and location of historic sites, and he interviewed veterans to learn about the battle. He returned to France and with a team of assistants completed the painting. Philippoteaux would eventually paint four versions, each known by the city where it was first displayed - Chicago, Boston (now in Gettysburg), Philadelphia, and New York.

This first version of the painting was exhibited in Chicago to rave reviews. With the success of the Chicago version, Willoughby commissioned another version that opened in Boston in 1884.

Based on comments from veterans about the Chicago version, Philippoteaux made some changes to the second version. Most notably, Meade's headquarters was moved closer to the "high water mark." It had been accurately displayed in the Chicago version but was very small in the background. Many people thought that it should be more prominent so Philippoteaux took some artistic license and moved it closer to the action.

The Boston version would eventually be exhibited in Philadelphia, Chicago, Newark, New York, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C. In some of these locations, only parts of it were hung flat rather than in the cyclorama format.

In 1912, it was moved to Gettysburg in time for the 50th anniversary of the battle. Since it was moved to Gettysburg, the Cyclorama has been exhibited in three different buildings. The first was on Cemetery Hill from 1812 to 1962, then it was moved to a new building along Hancock Avenue just north of the "high water mark." In 2008, the painting was moved to the new Museum and Visitor Center off the Baltimore Pike.

Over the years, the painting was damaged and altered during these various exhibitions. During its move to the new Gettysburg Visitor Center, it was completely restored and now is as close as possible to its original 1884 appearance. This restored version opened in September 2008.



Meade's Headquarters (white house) was depicted in its proper location along the Taneytown Road in the first version of the painting, but that accuracy made it very small and in the background. In the later versions of the painting it was moved closer to the action. Also in this portion of the painting are haystacks that were thought to be European in design and used by Philippoteaux because of his background. Subsequent research found photographs that confirmed this type of stack was used in the Gettysburg area.



The Cyclorama was originally designed and exhibited with a foreground diorama of various three dimensional objects, including landscape, crops, fences, and battle debris. The 2008 restoration included the addition of the diorama that had not been seen for years. In this view, a full scale cannon adds to the illusion of depth.



Each time the Cyclorama was exhibited, visitors received a program that had a key identifying elements of the painting. To increase local interest and attendance some of the identifications were altered. This unit rushing forward to repel Pickett's Charge has been variously identified as the 72nd Pennsylvania, 19th Massachusetts, and 7th Michigan.



Included in the Cyclorama is what appears to be Abraham Lincoln being carried off as a Union casualty. Although there is no documentation that Philippoteaux included Lincoln in the painting, the resemblance is striking.



Philippoteaux did in fact include several people in the painting who were not at the Battle of Gettysburg, including himself, depicted as a Union officer with a drawn sword leaning against a tree but not actually participating in the fight (left). It was a unique way of "signing" his artwork. Several of his assistants have also been identified in the painting.



The fate of the original Chicago version is unknown. For years it was thought to be in storage at Wake Forest University in North Carolina but recent research indicates that it is one of several non-Philippoteaux copies that were made during the cyclorama craze of the late 1800s. The Philadelphia version of the painting was destroyed by fire in 1894 while on display in Niagara Falls. The New York version was eventually cut into pieces, framed and distributed to Grand Army of the Republic posts.

Cycloramas are very unique and rare art forms. The only other one in the United States is the Battle of Atlanta. Several still exist in various foreign countries.

The Gettysburg Cyclorama is now housed in the Gettysburg National Military Park's Museum and Visitor Center at 1195 Baltimore Pike, Gettysburg, Pa. (below right). Admission to the Cyclorama, Orientation Film and Museum is \$15 per adult with discounts for seniors, youth, veterans and groups. Tickets are timed for admission and the Cyclorama presentation includes a narrated sound and light show.

Throughout the year, the Gettysburg Foundation also presents special lectures and behind the scene viewings of the painting led by Chris Brenneman and Sue Boardman, co-authors of *The Gettysburg Cyclorama: the Turning Point of the Civil War on Canvas*. For information on these special events, visit their website at www.gettysburgfoundation.org or telephone 717-338-1243.

GNMP Winter Lecture Series

The Gettysburg National Military Park Winter Lecture Series will be held at 1:30PM on weekends in the Museum and Visitor Center, 1195 Baltimore Street, Gettysburg, Pa., from January 6 through March 10, 2018. These programs are free and are about one hour long. For more information, visit the Park website at www.nps.gov/gett/.



Saturday, January 6

After Gettysburg: The Army of Northern Virginia Tries to Regroup

by Matt Atkinson, GNMP Ranger

Sunday, January 7

The Battle of Shiloh: Conquer or Perish

by Daniel Vermilya, GNMP Ranger

Saturday, January 13

Capt. Johnston's Sunrise Reconnaissance: How Lee and Longstreet Lost the War on July 2, 1863

by Troy Harman, GNMP Ranger

Sunday, January 14

Monitor: The Ship That Launched a Modern Navy

by Karlton Smith, GNMP Ranger

Saturday, January 20

The Unfinished Work: The World Wars at Gettysburg

by Jason Frederick, Penn State University at Altoona

Sunday, January 21

If These Things Could Talk: Artifacts in the Collection of Gettysburg National Military Park

by Tom Holbrook, GNMP Ranger

Saturday, January 27

Breaking the Final Bond: The Presbyterian Church and the Coming of the Civil War

by Zach Siggins, GNMP Ranger

Sunday, January 28

"A Great Weight at My Heart:" The Army of the Potomac after Gettysburg

by Christopher Gwinn, GNMP Ranger

Saturday, February 3

"God Has Granted Us a Happy New Year!" An Unappreciated Turning Point of 1862: The Battle of Stones River

by Bert Barnett, GNMP Ranger

Sunday, February 4

Cogs in a Different Wheel: Non-combatant Life During the American Civil War

by Angie Atkinson, GNMP Ranger

Saturday, February 10

Early at the Gates: The Battle of Fort Stevens

by Steve Phan, Civil War Defenses of Washington

Sunday, February 11

"Before the Fearful and Dangerous Leap is Taken:" The Fateful Compromise of 1850

by John Hoptak, GNMP Ranger

Saturday, February 17

The Lincoln – Douglas Debates

by Daniel Vermilya, GNMP Ranger

Sunday, February 18

Gettysburg & Vicksburg: "The Confederacy totters to its destruction"

by Karlton Smith and Matt Atkinson, GNMP Rangers

Saturday, February 24

"The movement was south." General Grant and the Overland Campaign

by John Heiser, GNMP Ranger

Sunday, February 25

"God Knows My Conscience is Clear:"

Constructing George Gordon Meade's Legacy

by Dr. Jennifer Murray, The University of Virginia's College at Wise

Saturday, March 3

After Gettysburg: Religion, Lee's Army, and Southern Culture

by Troy Harman, GNMP Ranger

Sunday, March 4

Mark Mahosky: 30 Years of Drawing the Gettysburg Battlefield

by Mark Mahosky, GNMP Artist in Residence

Saturday, March 10

Personal Turning Points – Jefferson Davis and George Thomas

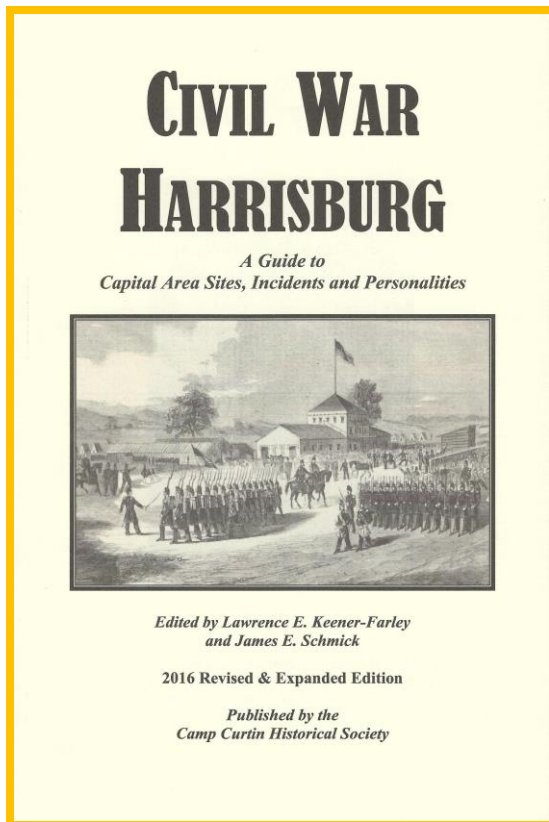
by Bert Barnett, GNMP Ranger

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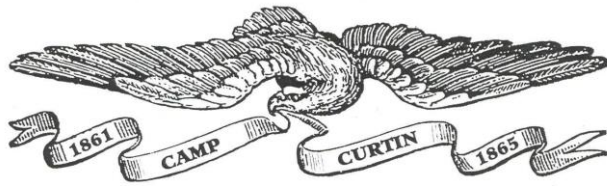


Local History

including:

- ★ *Lincoln's 1861 Visit*
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Joe Mieczkowski

speaking on

The 1863 New York City Draft Riots

2:00PM, Sunday, February 25th

***Camp Curtin Memorial- Mitchell United Methodist Church
2221 North 6th Street, Harrisburg, Pa. 17110***



The New York City Draft Riots of July 13-16, 1863, were by some measures the most bloody and devastating riots in American history. At a time when the Civil War was raging on battlefields, rivers and oceans, violence and terror ruled the streets of our largest city, and battle-weary troops had to be rushed from Gettysburg to help restore order. What began as a protest against the Federal draft quickly degenerated into a racial and social struggle as ugly as any in the Deep South.

Joe Mieczkowski is a retired Federal Executive and a Licensed Battlefield Guide for the Gettysburg National Military Park. Joe is a Past President of both The Association of Licensed Battlefield Guides and The Gettysburg Civil War Roundtable. He has three books, *After Gettysburg: Lee Retreats and Meade Pursues*, *Lincoln and his Cabinet*, and *Jefferson Davis and his Cabinet*.

**This presentation is free and open to the public. Bring a friend.
Prior to the presentation, CCHS will conduct its annual meeting,
with officer reports and elections.**

For information call 717-732-5115 or email genjenkins@aol.com.