

# The Bugle



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

Winter 2011  
Volume 21, Number 4



*Zouaves!*

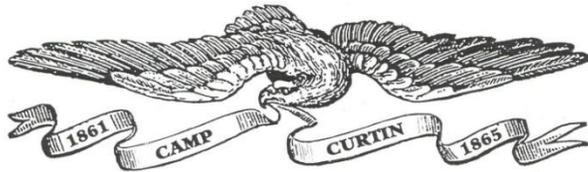
*"The field upon which we now stand will be known as classic ground, for here has been the great central point of the organization of our military forces. When my administration of public affairs will have been forgotten and the good and evil will be only known to the investigation of the antiquarian,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

- Governor Andrew Curtin, 1865

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**Camp Curtin Historical Society  
Annual Meeting  
2:00PM - February 26, 2012**

**at the Camp Curtin Memorial-Mitchell United Methodist Church  
2221 North Sixth Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania**

**Annual Reports, Election of Officers & Directors**

**Speaker to be announced**

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**We need your email!**

As you all know, mailing costs are increasing and it would help us greatly if we had everyone's email. We will be able to send you updates on Society activities and any changes in scheduling resulting from inclement weather (remember the floods in September and unexpected early snow storm in October?).

Rest assured, we will not share our email list with any other organization or business.

If you have an email, please send us a message at [CampCurtin@verizon.net](mailto:CampCurtin@verizon.net) so that we can add it to our list.

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**Cover:** Our cover depicts the charge of the 5th New York Volunteer Infantry – Duryée's Zouaves – at the Battle of Big Bethel, June 10, 1861 as depicted in Harper's Weekly of June 29, 1861. The engagement was the first battle in Virginia and garnered much attention by the press, especially the actions of the flamboyantly dress Zouaves. Our main article in this issue looks at Zouave phenomenon during the Civil War.

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# Zouaves – Tough Fighters in Colorful Uniforms

The original Zouaves were Muslim soldiers from the Zouaoua tribe of Berbers who served in the army of the Dey of Algeria. When the French occupied that area of North Africa in the 1830s, they incorporated these tough fighters into the French Army. The men retained their native uniforms, with short jackets, baggy pants and fez hat wrapped with a turban. Eventually, Frenchmen and other Europeans were recruited as Zouaves and by the early 1850s all of the soldiers were European but they continued to wear the North African inspired uniform.

The French Zouaves fought with distinction in North Africa, the Crimean War (1853-56) and the Franco-Austrian War (1859) and garnered much favorable press. Additionally, U.S. officers sent to Europe as war observers were impressed by not only the Zouaves but most French military practices. When these officers, including McClellan and Hardee, returned home, they advocated adopting French techniques and so many of the U.S. Army manuals are rewritten using French manuals as the guide. All of this led to a “Zouave craze” that swept America as the Civil War approached.

The primary proponent of Zouave soldiering was Elmer Ellsworth (right). He studied law in Abraham Lincoln’s office and, as an up and coming young man with aspirations, he became active in the prewar militia movement. Eventually, he became colonel of the Chicago National Guard Cadets. Ellsworth was impressed by the French Zouaves and adopted their uniform and drill and changed the unit’s name to the United States Zouave Cadets. After defeating another militia unit in a drill



competition in 1859, Ellsworth took his Zouaves on the road in 1860, challenging any militia to best them in drill. Ellsworth’s Zouaves gave demonstrations in numerous cities, including Cleveland, Buffalo, Albany, Boston, New York, Washington, Pittsburgh, St. Louis and returned to Chicago in triumph.

More Zouave units sprang up across the country as a result of the publicity from the tour. In a country that did not have a large standing army, and was somewhat averse to having one, Ellsworth’s Zouaves reminded everyone of the necessity of having a well-trained militia. The tour, along with John Brown’s raid on Harper’s Ferry, may have even inspired the South to improve and expand its militia system.

With the coming of the Civil War, Ellsworth returned to his home state of New York and 11th New York Volunteer Infantry Regiment, known as the “Fire Zouaves” because many of the men belonged to volunteer fire departments. The regiment was one of the first to reach Washington. On May 24, 1861, the day after Virginia voters ratified the state convention’s decision to secede from the Union, Ellsworth and his troops were ordered to occupy Alexandria, Va., just across the Potomac River from Washington.



As the troops moved into the city, Ellsworth noticed a large Confederate flag flying above the Marshall House Hotel. He climbed up to the roof and ripped the flag down but as he came down the steps, he was shot and killed by James Jackson, the owner of the hotel. Francis Brownell, who had accompanied Ellsworth, then shot and bayoneted Jackson. Brownell (pictured above)

wears his Zouave uniform for a formal portrait. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the 11th U.S. Infantry Regiment of the Regular Army and served until 1863. In 1877, Brownell was awarded the Medal of Honor.

Ellsworth, who had just turned 24, was the first Union officer to die in the Civil War. Lincoln ordered that his body lay in state at the White House and an almost cult following grew up around the dead officer. Photographs, prints, jewelry, sheet music, patriotic envelopes, china and mourning ribbons memorialized the dashing young officer. Although Ellsworth was dead, the Zouave movement would survive.

As the North and South called for volunteers, many of the new units called themselves “Zouaves” even if they did not adopt the distinctive uniform or only wore it for a short period.

Some of Pennsylvania’s Zouave units that wore the Zouave uniform during all or most of the Civil War included:

**The 72nd Pennsylvania Volunteers** were formed by Col. DeWitt Clinton Baxter primarily from among young men who were members of various fire companies in Philadelphia. Hence, they became known as **Baxter’s Fire Zouaves**. Their uniform was one of the simpler Zouave outfits. They wore the typical short jacket, trimmed in red, but without the large *tombeaux* that characterized other Zouave jackets. The trousers were light blue and they wore a dark blue forage cap rather than a fez. They were grouped with the 69th, 71st, and 106th Pennsylvania Volunteers and became the Philadelphia Brigade in the 2nd Army Corps. They fought in the Peninsula Campaign, Antietam, and Fredericksburg. At Gettysburg, the Philadelphia Brigade defended the copse of trees and the stone wall at the angle that was the aiming point for Pickett’s Charge. In 1864, the Baxter Zouaves fought in the Overland Campaign and the Siege of Petersburg before mustering out after three years of service in August 1864.



**Zouave Enlisted Uniform**

Although there was no standard for Zouave uniforms, this drawing illustrates the classic elements of the American version of this distinctive attire. Officers usually wore regulation type frock coats, often with red trousers and kepis.

❶ **Headgear** – A red fez, wrapped at the bottom in a white turban, with a yellow tassel. Some Zouaves wore blue or red kepis or forage caps.

❷ **Coat** – A short blue jacket that was designed to be worn open, trimmed with a *tombeaux* (a three leaf clover design) in various contrasting colors (red and yellow being most common). A vest or false vest was worn under the jacket.

❸ **Sash** – A sash (usually red or blue) was worn around the waist by all ranks. Normally, only officers, non-commissioned officers and musicians wore sashes in the Union Army.

❹ **Trousers** – Pants (usually red) did not have full-length legs and did not separate until about the knee, giving them the traditional “baggy” appearance. Some Zouaves wore regular pants.

❺ **Gaiters** – The baggy pants were tucked into white canvas leggings.

**The 76th Pennsylvania Volunteers**, known as the **Keystone Zouaves**, were organized at Camp Cameron in Harrisburg during the fall of 1861. The men came from fourteen counties scattered across the state. They initially wore a Zouave uniform that is not well documented and it was replaced with regulation Union Army clothing. In November 1862, a new Zouave uniform was supplied by the Schuylkill Arsenal. It consisted of a blue fez, dark blue jacket with red trim and a gray false vest, and light blue baggy pants. The regiment was assigned to the South Carolina coastal area and fought in numerous battles around Charleston. In 1864, the Keystone Zouaves were transferred to the Army of the James in Virginia and engaged in the Siege of Petersburg.

**The 95th Pennsylvania Volunteers** were another regiment raised in Philadelphia in the fall of 1861. Like the 72nd P.V., they received dark blue jackets, trimmed in red but without the large *tombeaux*. They also wore forage caps and light blue pants. Known as the Gosline Zouaves, after their commander Col. John Gosline, the unit was assigned to the 6th Army Corps. They fought through the war in most of the Army of the Potomac's major battles and then joined the Army of the Shenandoah in 1864 and helped to clear the Valley of Confederates before returning east for the Siege of Petersburg.

**The 114th Pennsylvania Volunteers** began life as an independent company called the *Zouaves d'Afrique*. They were organized in August 1861 by Captain Charles Collis, a Philadelphia lawyer, as a body guard for General Nathaniel Banks. They served with distinction during the 1862 Shenandoah Valley Campaign and Collis was authorized to recruit an entire regiment, designated the 114th Pennsylvania Volunteers but known more commonly as **Collis' Zouaves**. They adopted the Zouave uniform with a red fez, white turban and yellow tassel, dark blue short jacket with red trim, and red trousers that were less baggy than the original French design.

The regiment fought at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, with about one-fourth becoming casualties in those two battles. At Gettysburg on July 2, the 114th was part of Gen. Daniel Sickles' 3rd Army Corps that advanced out to the Emmitsburg Road. Their casualties amounted to 155 during the desperate fighting that disrupted the Confederate attack but ultimately resulted in the Union withdrawal back to Cemetery Ridge. The 114th served as headquarters and provost guard for the Army of the Potomac during 1864 and 1865. At the end of the war, it participated in the final assault on Petersburg and the Battle of Saylor's Creek. Their monument at Gettysburg portrays a Zouave calmly loading his musket as he watches the enemy advance.



**114th Pennsylvania Volunteers Collis' Zouaves, Company F, with fixed bayonets. This photo was taken near Petersburg, Virginia, in August 1864. This unit wore dark blue jackets, with red trim, light blue sashes, and red trousers. The white turban was usually only added to the red fez for dress occasions.**

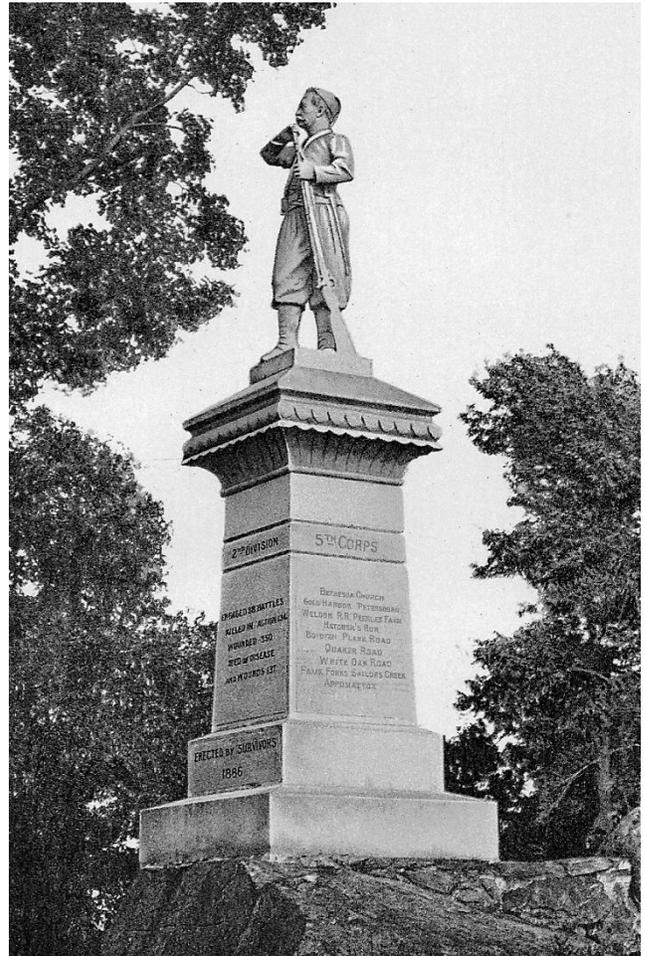
*Library of Congress Photo*

**The 155th Pennsylvania Volunteers** were recruited in the western counties and mustered into service at Camp Curtin in September 1862. It was not initially a Zouave unit and never adopted a nickname like so many other Zouave units. The regiment's first fight was at Fredericksburg, charging the stone wall at Marye's Heights. It suffered 68 casualties and had its flag staff broken in two places during the unsuccessful attack. Serving with the 5th Army Corps, the unit saw little action at Chancellorsville. At Gettysburg on July 2, the 155th fought in the area west of the base of Little Round Top and then entrenched on that hill. After the Gettysburg, the 155th was honored with the award of new Zouave uniforms for its excellence in drill. As Zouaves, the 155th fought through the Overland Campaign, besieged Petersburg and fought with the 5th Army Corps at Five Forks. When the unit erected its monument on Little Round Top at Gettysburg, they decided to depict the Zouave uniform even though they did not wear the uniform at that battle.



Even women were not immune to the fascination with Zouave attire. During the Civil War, Zouave jackets became fashionable among young women and were often pictured in magazines such as *Godey's Lady's Book*.

After the Civil War, the Zouave craze died out rather quickly. A few small militia units retained the uniform and served mainly as drill teams and honor guards. In France, the Zouave units held on much longer, wearing their distinctive uniforms into the First World War. The realities of modern warfare and the need for camouflage forced them into khaki and the era of colorful dress on the battlefield ended.



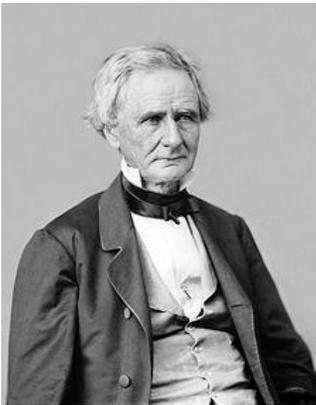
**The 155th Pennsylvania Monument on Little Round Top at Gettysburg.** The men were so proud of their Zouave uniforms that they depicted it on the monument even though they did not receive the uniform until after the battle. *Pennsylvania at Gettysburg Photo*

*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 501c(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.*

150 Years Ago

## Cameron Ousted as Secretary of War

Simon Cameron was born March 8, 1799, in Maytown, Lancaster County. As a young man he was apprenticed to a printer and eventually became a newspaper editor and later served as state printer. He was active in a variety of business enterprises and politics. In 1845, the state legislature elected him to the U.S. Senate and after joining the new Republican Party he was elected to another term in the Senate in 1857. Cameron was well known for his unsavory political dealings and self-promotion.



In the summer of 1860, Cameron was Pennsylvania's "favorite son" candidate for president at the Chicago Republican convention. Behind-the-scenes bargaining led to Pennsylvania throwing its votes to Lincoln, thus securing the nomination for the man from Illinois. Although Lincoln hated political deals, he

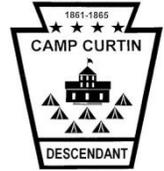
honored the agreement made by his managers and appointed Cameron as Secretary of War when the Republicans won the White House.

With the country at war, Cameron was in the ideal place to profit personally and to send business to his supporters. He was widely criticized for favoritism in awarding departmental positions and contracts, and was eventually censured by the House of Representatives for contract manipulations. By January 1862, Lincoln had enough and was determined to fire Cameron but after consulting with Secretary of State William Seward, he allowed Cameron to resign gracefully and offered him the ambassadorship to Russia.

Cameron was back in Harrisburg during the Confederate invasion of Pennsylvania in 1863. Despite his political rivalry with Governor Curtin, he worked hard to prepare for the defense of the area. After the war, Cameron served another ten years in the U.S. Senate and then turned the seat over to his son Donald, who held it for another twenty years. Cameron died in 1889 and is buried in the Harrisburg Cemetery.

## Camp Curtin Descendant Brigade

Membership in the Camp Curtin Descendant Brigade is open to men, women and children (12 years of age or older) who are direct or collateral descendants of a soldier who passed through Camp Curtin from April 18, 1861 to November 11, 1865. Descendants of civilians who worked or volunteered at Camp Curtin are also eligible.



The application fee is \$25.00. Accepted members will receive a membership medal, membership certificate, and a one year membership in the Society. Subsequent dues will be \$15.00 per year.

Numerous Pennsylvania units passed through Camp Curtin as well as troops from Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Wisconsin, and the U.S. Regular Army. The Ladies Union Relief Association of Harrisburg is one of the civilian organizations that worked at Camp Curtin.

For more information and an application form, visit our website at [www.CampCurtin.org](http://www.CampCurtin.org) or telephone 717-732-5330.

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## Local History Book Available

*Civil War Harrisburg: A Guide to Capital Area Sites, Incidents and Personalities*, newly revised and enlarged this year is available for only \$13.00, tax and postage included.

Sixty new pages have been added to the previous edition, including articles on the coming of the Civil War, pre-war Harrisburg, Prince Albert's visit, Union flags, weapons, and army organization, and profiles of Generals Knipe, Geary, Reno and Gorgas.

Copies are available at our meetings or to order by mail, make your check for \$13.00 payable to "Camp Curtin Historical Society" and send to Camp Curtin Historical Society, Post Office Box 5601, Harrisburg, PA 17110.

# Gettysburg National Military Park

## 2012 Winter Lecture Series

To mark the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, the Gettysburg National Military Park's free winter lecture series in 2012 will explore events and personalities that figured prominently in 1862, and also return to the popular "Perspectives on the Gettysburg Campaign and Battle." Programs will explore the great battles and campaigns of 1862, such as Shiloh, Antietam, the Monitor and Merrimac and others, as well as people and events that shaped the war.

National Park Rangers will present the programs. They are free of charge and will be held at the Gettysburg National Military Park Museum and Visitor Center. Programs begin at 1:30 p.m. and last approximately one hour. A special guest speaker, Dr. Allen Guelzo, the Henry R. Luce Professor of the Civil War Era at Gettysburg College, will present a program on the Emancipation Proclamation on February 18.

Saturday, January 7

**1862: Opening Moves in the Western Theater - Forts Henry and Donelson** by Matt Atkinson

Sunday, January 8

**1862: The Skirmishing is Over** by Bill Hewitt

Saturday, January 14

**1862: The Young Napoleon - George McClellan** by D. Scott Hartwig

Saturday, January 21

**1862: Artillery on the 1862 Battlefields** by Tom Holbrook

Sunday, January 22

**1862: USS Monitor - The Ship That Launched a Modern Navy** by Karlton Smith

Saturday, January 28

**1862: Shiloh** by Matt Atkinson

Sunday, January 29

**1862: Iuka & Corinth** by Angie Atkinson

Saturday, February 4

**Gettysburg: Counterfactual History - "What ifs" of Gettysburg** by Troy Harman

Sunday, February 5

**1862: The Army of Northern Virginia in 1862** by John Heiser

Saturday, February 11

**1862: "I Dread the Thought of the Place"- Antietam** by D. Scott Hartwig

Sunday, February 12

**Gettysburg: The Pipe Creek Line** by Chuck Teague

Saturday, February 18

**1862: The Emancipation Proclamation** by Dr. Allen Guelzo

Sunday, February 19

**1862: The Night The War Was Won - The Battle of New Orleans; April 24, 1862** by Karlton Smith

Saturday, February 25

**1862: God Has Granted Us A Happy New Year - Results of the 1862 Campaign in the West** by Bert Barnett

Sunday, February 26

**1862: The Rise and Fall of Hope - Robert E. Lee, George McClellan and the Seven Days Battles** by Dan Welch

Saturday, March 3 – No program

Sunday, March 4

**1862: Fredericksburg** by Angie Atkinson

Saturday, March 10

**Gettysburg: Official Language - Cover-ups Hidden in Gettysburg After-Action Reports** by Troy Harman

Sunday, March 11

**1862: "No Provisions Had Been Made for Such Wholesale Slaughter" - The Medical Corps and the Campaigns of 1862** by Barbara Sanders

Programs will be held in one of the museum theaters January 7 through February 26, and in the Ford Education Center March 4 through March 11. Schedule is subject to change. For further information, call (717) 334-1124, extension 8023.