

Old Baldy Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia



December 9, 2004, The One Hundred and Forty-Third Year of the Civil War

December 9th Thursday Meeting

The December 9th Meeting of the Old Baldy Civil War Round Table will start at 7:30 pm on Thursday at the Civil War and Underground Railroad Museum at 1805 Pine Street in Philadelphia. **David A. Welker** author of "*Tempest at Ox Hill: The Battle of Chantilly*" and "*Diary of a Keystone Rebel: The Civil War Journal Joseph Garey, Mississippi Volunteers.*" He also authored numerous magazine and newspaper articles. Currently David works as a military analyst for the U. S. Government. His topic will be on his book on the Battle of Chantilly.

"Civil War Battlefield Preservation"

The November Program was **David Duncan**. David gave an imposing presentation on the workings of the Civil War Preservation Trust Organization and how it is moving ahead on various projects to ensure that we preserve our Battlefields now. Information can be obtained at:

Civil War Preservation Trust

1331 H Street, NW, Suite 1001 - Washington, DC 20005

Phone: 800/CW-TRUST - Fax: 202/367-1865

Email: civilwartrust@civilwar.org

WWW Site: <http://www.CivilWar.org>

We should all get involved...

The President's Letter

Hello Everyone!

Where did the time go? It's December already with the hustle and bustle of the holiday season here again. As we reflect on the past year, our roundtable has had a busy one indeed. As he has always done in the past, Mike Cavanaugh has provided us with a truly terrific list of speakers and programs and we thank him for his time and effort in doing so. Our joint programs with the Allentown and Delaware Valley CWRT's, especially our WWII seminar which we will be presenting again in the spring of 2005 were successful endeavors. Thanks to all our members who played any part in making them happen.

Remembrance weekend at Gettysburg was a fun time once again. Unfortunately, the candle luminary at the cemetery had to be cancelled because of the weather but the parade went on without a hitch. I did recognize a couple of Old Baldy members among the marchers, member Harry Jenkins and board member Herb Kaufman. Good job guys!

Our last meeting of the year will be Thursday, December 9th. Our presenter will be author David Welker who will

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David Duncan

Bring a friend, neighbor and another Civil War buff to enjoy a fascinating subject and to support our speakers at Old Baldy.

speak on his book *"Tempest at Ox Hill, The Battle of Chantilly"*. Hope everyone can come out for the meeting.

So as 2004 comes to a close I want to thank all our members for being part of such a terrific roundtable and wish each and everyone a peaceful holiday and a happy and healthy New Year!

Hope to see you all there!!

Nancy Caldwell
President

Today in Civil War History

December 9, 1861 - Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War created

To monitor both military progress and the Lincoln administration, Congress creates the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War.

The War Committee, as it was called, was created in the aftermath of the disastrous Battle of Ball's Bluff in October 1864 and was designed to provide a check over the executive branch's management of the war. The committee was stacked with Radical Republicans and staunch abolitionists, however, and was often biased in its approach to investigations of the Union war effort.

Among other things, the War Committee investigated fraud in government war contracts, the treatment of Union prisoners held in the South, alleged atrocities committed by Confederate troops against Union soldiers, and the Sand Creek Massacre of Indians in Colorado. Most of the committee's energies were directed towards investigating Union defeats, particularly those of the Army of the Potomac. Many members were bitterly critical of generals like George McClellan and George Meade, Democrats that they believed were "soft" on slavery.

The War Committee was often at odds with the Lincoln administration's handling of the war effort, and had particular problems with the administration's military decisions. At the beginning of the war, it was critical because the administration did not have the eradication of slavery as one of its goals. Even after the Emancipation Proclamation, the committee still found fault with many of the administration's decisions—for instance, they did not want any Democratic generals in the army. Members of the committee often leaked testimony to the press and contributed to the jealousy and distrust among Union generals. Although the committee did help to uncover fraud in war contracts, the lack of military expertise by its members often simply complicated the Northern war effort.

HistoryChannel

Today in Civil War History

December 25

1862 Christmas for Union soldier Elisha Hunt Rhodes

Lieutenant Elisha Hunt Rhodes of the Second Rhode Island spends Christmas Day in camp, singing with other officers and writing in his diary: "I should like to be home this Christmas night."

Rhodes is one of the most famous diarist of the Civil War. He was born in 1842 in Cranston, Rhode Island, the son of a sea captain. He joined the Union army when hostilities erupted in 1861, and he fought at the First Battle of Bull Run on July 21, 1861. Rhodes had a remarkable military career. He served with the Second Rhode Island Infantry for the duration of the war, and he fought in nearly every major battle in which the Army of the Potomac was engaged. Rhodes became an officer at age 20 and eventually rose from private to colonel. His vivid account of the war was edited and published by his great-grandson, Robert Hunt Rhodes, in 1985 as *All For the Union: The Civil War Diary and Letters of Elisha Hunt Rhodes*. Filmmaker Ken Burns featured Rhodes' war experiences in his landmark 1990 documentary *The Civil War*.

This was the second of Rhodes' four Christmases spent in the Army of the Potomac, and his location for each charts the progress of the army. The first two were spent in camps around Washington, D.C., the third near Brandy Station in northern Virginia, and the fourth in the trenches around Petersburg, Virginia. When in camp, Christmas was a welcome but short respite from the monotony of an army winter. Rhodes does not record an entry for 1861, and he comments in 1862 that it was a quiet day in which the soldiers were excused from drill and he was visited by his brother-in-law from Washington. In 1863, he rode his newly acquired army horse, Kate, on Christmas Day, and he gave a dinner party for other officers in the regiment, during which they tried to celebrate the holiday "in a becoming manner." He spent his last army Christmas in a small hut outside Petersburg. The Union army was laying siege to the city, but there was little activity during the cold weather. On Christmas Eve, Rhodes entertained officers from the 49th Pennsylvania, and after their departure officers from the 37th Massachusetts serenaded him. On Christmas morning, he took a ride and watched Union soldiers hauling logs to build warmer quarters. Rhodes commented, "This is the birth of the Saviour, but we have paid very little attention to it in a religious way." He closed his entry by writing, "This is my fourth Christmas in the Army. I wonder if it will be my last."

It was. Rhodes was discharged shortly after the end of the war in April, and he returned to Rhode Island. He worked as a cotton and wool trader for the rest of his life and, like many soldiers both North and South, remained very active in veteran affairs. In 1912, he brought his grandson, Frederick Miller Rhodes, Jr., to Virginia to show him the fields on which the elder Rhodes had struggled a half-century before. Elisha Hunt Rhodes died on January 14, 1917.

HistoryChannel

E-MAIL Newsletter

A list was made of those who requested their Old Baldy CWRT newsletter by e-mail. You may request their newsletter by e-mail by contacting

Mike Cavanaugh at chief96pbi@juno.com

This will save the round table money on postage and insure your newsletter's quality.



Ox Hill (Chantilly) Battle Analysis

The Battle of Ox Hill was General Lee's last attempt to destroy Pope's Army of Virginia. His strategy was simply a continuation of what had worked well for him throughout his campaign. He would use Longstreet's Corps (Wing) to distract Pope, while Stuart's cavalry gathered intelligence and screened the movement of Jackson's Wing. Lee's objective was to outflank Pope and control the intersection at Germantown where he could get between the Union army and Washington. If Lee was able to isolate individual units and overwhelm them with his two Wings, he could effectively destroy Pope's entire army in a piecemeal manner. Fortunately for Pope, J.E.B. Stuart tipped Lee's hand by firing on a wagon train. [Later in the war Stuart's recklessness would once again cost Lee at the Battle of Gettysburg.]

Just as Stonewall Jackson started his attack on Germantown he was informed of General Stevens sudden appearance on his flank. Jackson's surprise was best demonstrated by how quickly he "circled the wagons" in a defensive posture. Jackson's hasty deployment also gave Stevens the opportunity to attack while Jackson's forces were somewhat disorganized. Stevens immediately capitalized on this by attacking on a narrow front with every asset available to him.

The Confederate field commanders also had to contend with limited visibility in the heavy rain and thick woods. The bad conditions not only made it difficult to maneuver and communicate, but also made it difficult to determine what Union forces they were facing. With General Kearny's arrival, the raging storm, Longstreet's delay, and the late time of day, Jackson apparently decided to stay in his defensive posture and quite literally "ride out the storm". Where the bad weather was a hindrance for the Confederate commanders, it was what helped save the day for the Union troops. At least half to two-thirds of the

Confederate weapons were unserviceable because of the storm. Had it not rained, the Union ranks would have been devastated by the continuous volleys of Jackson's massed brigades. Furthermore, the Confederates had no artillery support, whereas the Union troops had two battery's in action throughout most of the battle.

In sharp contrast to the confusion and poor performance of General Pope at the Battle of Second Manassas, General Issac Stevens knew exactly what course of action to take when he inadvertently came upon Jackson's flank. His bold actions along with General Kearny's timely arrival, not only saved the weak Germantown defenses from continued attack but also kept Pope's escape route from Centreville to Fairfax Court House open.

Because of General Steven's and Kearny's courage, nineteen Union regiments tenaciously attacked and pinned down sixty-seven Confederate regiments for over two hours (does not include Stuart's Division and Campbell's Brigade). If you add in, the defeat at Second Manassas, a raging storm, and both Steven's and Kearny's death, it is evident that these Americans... these citizen soldiers... did their duty in a remarkable fashion.

The Battle of Ox Hill ended General Lee's campaign against Pope's Army of Virginia and convinced Lee to move north. General Pope was quickly replaced by General McClellan who reorganized the dispirited troops once again into a fighting force. Two weeks later, Lee and McClellan would meet in one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War... the Battle of Antietam.

A Standard of Honor and Courage

Prior to the Civil War there was only one decoration, called the Andre Medal, awarded by the United States. It was given to the three New York Privates who captured Major John Andre, a British intelligence officer, who was also a co-conspirator with Major General Benedict Arnold. On November 29th, 1862 the officers of the 1st Division, III Corps adopted a resolution establishing a medal of honor to be known as the "Kearny Medal". The medal was presented to all officers who had "Honorably served in battle under General Kearny in his Division".

On March 13, 1863 Brigadier General Birney issued an order establishing a "cross of valor", to be known as the "Kearny Cross". The medal was awarded to Non-Commissioned Officers and Privates who had distinguished themselves in battle. In Birney's General Order No.48 he stated in part, "This cross is in honor of our old leader and the wearers of it will always remember his high standard of a true and brave soldier and will never disgrace it."

On July 12, 1863 A Senate Resolution, signed into law by Abraham Lincoln provided for the presentation of Medals of Honor "In the name of Congress, to such non-commissioned officers and privates as shall most distinguish themselves by their gallantry in action and other soldier-like qualities, during the Civil War."

This medal which now symbolizes the highest standard of courage and bravery in our armed forces (regardless of rank), is known as the Congressional Medal of Honor.

ESP Designs



Christmas 62'

December 1861 - 1864 in Philadelphia

*Philadelphia in the Civil War 1861 - 1865
Published 1913*

1861

December 7th. Magnificent silk flag, made by the crew of the U. S. S. Hartford on voyage home from China, was presented to the city and raised upon the staff above Independence Hall with an imposing demonstration. Gunboat Itasca left the port. Steamer Delaware, built at Wilmington, was bought by the Government.

Sloop of war Tuscarora sailed for New York to receive her guns.

December 8th. The "Soldiers' and Sailors' Relief Association of the Episcopal Church" was formed.

December 10th. Departure of a part of the 6th Cavalry (Rush's Lancers).

December 30th. Philadelphia banks suspended specie payment.

December 31st. The Volunteer Refreshment Committees reported having supplied meals, since opening, to soldiers en route to or from the South aggregating 143,394.

The fateful old year was ended and the new year ushered in by the people of Philadelphia with general patriotic observances in all parts of the city.

1862

December 3rd. Companies A and B of the "Continental Cavalry" mustered in.

December 8th. U. S. S. Shenandoah launched at the Navy Yard.

December 9th. 157th Regiment broke camp and

embarked for garrison duty at Fort Delaware. Battalion of drafted men left Camp Philadelphia.

December 23rd. First of the "Monitors" built at Wilmington arrived at the Navy Yard.

December 25th. Christmas Day. Special dinners and entertainments at the army hospitals.

1863

December 5th. Councils appropriated \$1,000,000 for bounties.

December 23rd. The 29th Regiment, P. V., Col. Wm. Rickards, Jr., returned on furlough. This was the first of the three years' regiments to arrive home.

December 25th. Special celebrations and dinners at all of the military hospitals.

December 29th. School for the instruction of proposed officers of colored regiments opened at 1210 Chestnut street.

1864

December 6th. A large number of paroled soldiers from southern prison pens arrived, many in a dying condition.

December 7th. Headquarters Military Department of Pennsylvania removed to Philadelphia.

The colored population celebrated the end of slavery in Maryland.

December 13th. Philadelphia merchants gave a banquet to Captain J. A. Winslow, U. S. N., commander of the Kearsarge.

December 15th. City bounties stopped. Total of bounties paid by City Treasurer to date \$6,796,600.

December 25th. Christmas dinners provided at the military hospitals to about 12,000 men through donation of the "Mrs. M. G. Egbert Fund."



Philadelphians who served in the Civil War to whom the Medal of Honor has been presented by Congress

*Philadelphia in the Civil War 1861 - 1865
Published 1913*

Captains/Majors/Colonels/Generals/Navy

BINGHAM, HENRY H.

Rank and organization: Captain, Company G, 140th Pennsylvania Infantry. Place and date: At Wilderness, Va., 6 May 1864. Entered service at: Cannonsburg, Pa. Born: 4 December 1841, Philadelphia, Pa. Date of issue: 31 August 1893. Citation: Rallied and led into action a portion of the troops who had given way under the fierce assaults of the enemy.

BLACKWOOD, WILLIAM R. D.

Rank and organization: Surgeon, 48th Pennsylvania Infantry. Place and date: At Petersburg, Va., 2 April 1865. Entered service at: Philadelphia, Pa. Born: 12 May 1838,

Schedule of Old Baldy CWRT Speakers for Winter/Spring 2004/2005

December 9 - Thursday
David A. Welker

Author
Topic: His book, "*Tempest at Ox Hill, The Battle of Chantilly (September 1, 1862)*"

January 13, 2005 - Thursday
Edward Colimore

Reporter Philadelphia Inquirer, Author.
Topic: His new book "*Eyewitness Reports: The Inquirer's Live Coverage of the American Civil War*"

February 10, 2005 - Thursday
Pat Caldwell

Board Member of the Del-Val and Old Baldy CWRT,
Del-Val Newsletter Editor.
Topic: *Brigadier General John Curtis Caldwell*

March 10, 2005 - Thursday
Troy D. Harman

Author, NPS Ranger at Gettysburg.
Topic: His book, "*Lee's Real Plan at Gettysburg*"

March 19, 2005 - Saturday
World War II Seminar

1945 – Sixty Years After. Details to follow.

April 14, 2005 - Thursday
Lee Quinn

Long time member of the Old Baldy CWRT, Past member of the Board of Governors Civil War Library and Museum.
Topic: *Confederate Engineers*

May 12, 2005 - Thursday
Steven Wright

Irish Brigade author, Past President of the Old Baldy CWRT.
Topic: *Brevet General St. Clair Mulholland, 116th Pennsylvania Infantry*

June 9, 2005 - Thursday
J. Kevin Hensel

Member of the Old Baldy CWRT, Extensive research on General George Gordon Meade.
Topic: *George Gordon Meade and the Bristoe Campaign*

All meetings, unless otherwise noted, begin at 7:30 PM at the Civil War Library and Underground Railroad Museum, 1805 Pine Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Questions to Mike Cavanaugh at 215.725.3602 or chief96pbj@juno.com

Members go out to a local restaurant for dinner between 5:30 & 6 P.M.

You're Welcome to Join Us!

Ireland. Date of issue: 21 July 1897. Citation: Removed severely wounded officers and soldiers from the field while under a heavy fire from the enemy, exposing himself beyond the call of duty, thus furnishing an example of most distinguished gallantry.

COLLIS, CHARLES H. T.

Rank and organization: Colonel, 114th Pennsylvania Infantry. Place and date: At Fredericksburg, Va., 13 December 1862. Entered service at: Philadelphia, Pa. Born: 4 February 1838, Ireland. Date of issue: 10 March 1893. Citation: Gallantly led his regiment in battle at a critical moment.

EDGERTON, NATHAN H.

Rank and organization: Lieutenant and Adjutant, 6th U.S. Colored Troops. Place and date: At Chapins Farm, Va., 29 September 1864. Entered service at: Philadelphia, Pa. Birth: -----. Date of issue: 30 March 1898. Citation: Took up the flag after 3 color bearers had been shot down and bore it forward, though himself wounded.

HUDEKOPER, HENRY S.

Rank and organization: Lieutenant Colonel, 150th Pennsylvania Infantry. Place and date: At Gettysburg, Pa., 1 July 1863. Entered service at: Philadelphia, Pa. Born: 17 July 1839, Meadville, Pa. Date of issue: 27 May 1905. Citation: While engaged in repelling an attack of the enemy, received a severe wound of the right arm, but instead of retiring remained at the front in command of the regiment.

MINDIL, GEORGE W.

Rank and organization: Captain, Company I, 61st Pennsylvania Infantry. Place and date: At Williamsburg, Va., 5 May 1862. Entered service at: Philadelphia, Pa. Birth: Germany. Date of issue: 25 October 1893. Citation: As aide_de_camp led the charge with a part of a regiment, pierced the enemy's center, silenced some of his artillery, and, getting in his rear, caused him to abandon his position.

MULHOLLAND, ST. CLAIR A.

Rank and organization: Major, 116th Pennsylvania Infantry. Place and date: At Chancellorsville, Va., 4_5 May 1863. Entered service at: Philadelphia, Pa. Born: 1 April 1839, Ireland. Date of issue: 26 March 1895. Citation: In command of the picket line held the enemy in check all night to cover the retreat of the Army.

ORR, ROBERT L.

Rank and organization: Major, 61st Pennsylvania Infantry. Place and date: At Petersburg, Va., 2 April 1865. Entered service at: Philadelphia, Pa. Born: 28 March 1836, Philadelphia, Pa. Date of issue: 28 November 1892. Citation: Carried the colors at the head of the column in the assault after two color bearers had been shot down.

PALMER, WILLIAM J.

Rank and organization. Colonel, 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry. Place and date: At Red Hill, Ala., 14 January 1865. Entered service at: Philadelphia, Pa. Born. 16 September 1836, Leipsic, Kent County, Del. Date of issue. 24 February 1894. Citation: With less than 200 men, attacked and defeated a superior force of the enemy, capturing their fieldpiece and about 100 prisoners without losing a man.

THOMAS, HAMPTON S.

Rank and organization: Major, 1st Pennsylvania Veteran Cavalry. Place and date: At Amelia Springs, Va., 5 April 1865. Entered service at: Pennsylvania. Born: 3 November 1837, Quakertown, Bucks County, Pa. Date of issue: 15 January 1894. Citation: Conspicuous gallantry in the capture of a field battery and a number of battle flags and in the destruction of the enemy's wagon train. Maj. Thomas lost a leg in this action.

VEALE, MOSES

Rank and organization: Captain, Company F, 109th Pennsylvania Infantry. Place and date: At Wauhatchie, Tenn., 28 October 1863. Entered service at: Philadelphia, Pa. Born. 9 November 1832, Bridgeton, N.J. Date of issue: 17 January 1894. Citation: Gallantry in action manifesting throughout the engagement coolness, zeal, judgment, and courage. His horse was shot from under him and he was hit by 4 enemy bullets.

Navy

LAWSON, JOHN

Rank and organization: Landsman, U.S. Navy. Born: 1837, Pennsylvania. Accredited to: Pennsylvania. G.O. No.: 45, 31 December 1864. Citation: On board the flagship U.S.S. Hartford during successful attacks against Fort Morgan, rebel gunboats and the ram Tennessee in Mobile Bay on 5 August 1864. Wounded in the leg and thrown violently against the side of the ship when an enemy shell killed or wounded the 6-man crew as the shell whipped on the berth deck, Lawson, upon regaining his composure, promptly returned to his station and, although urged to go below for treatment, steadfastly continued his duties throughout the remainder of the action.

MILLER, JAMES

Rank and organization. Quartermaster, U.S. Navy Born 1835 Denmark. Accredited to: Massachusetts. G.O. No.: 32, 16 April 1864 Citation: Served as quartermaster on board the U.S. Steam Gunboat Marblehead off Legareville, Stono River, 25 December 1863, during an engagement with the enemy on John's Island. Acting courageously under the enemy's hostile fire, Miller behaved gallantly throughout the engagement which resulted in the enemy's withdrawal and abandonment of its arms.

Note: Several Names were listed in the book but not on the Official Medal of Honor List and therefore those names were not included on this list.

**Old Baldy
Civil War Round Table of Philadelphia
1805 Pine Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103
215.735.8196
Founded January 1977
President: Nancy Caldwell
Vice President: Pat Caldwell
Treasurer: William George
Secretary: Steve Lieberum
Annual Memberships
Students: \$12.50
Individuals: \$25.00
Families: \$35.00**

What's News?

The only way you'll know what's happening is the Civil War today is by reading

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