



Banner of the Blue and Gray

Newsletter of the Frederick County Civil War Roundtable Frederick, Maryland
Founded January 30, 1989

268th Meeting

April 2018

Volume 44, Issue 8

April 26, 2018, 7:00 PM National Museum of Civil War Medicine 48 E. Patrick St, Frederick, Maryland

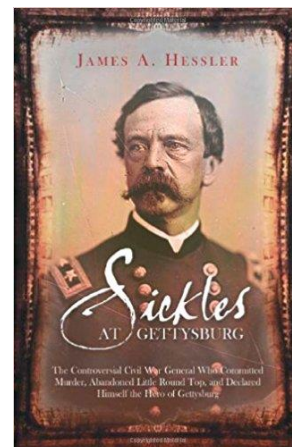


Speaker: James Hessler

Topic: "Dan Sickles"

James Hessler has been a Licensed Battlefield Guide at Gettysburg National Military Park since 2003. His book *Sickles at Gettysburg* (Savas Beatie, 2009) was awarded the R.E. Lee Civil War Round Table's "Bachelder Coddington Award" and the Gettysburg Civil War Round Table's "Distinguished Book Award" as the most outstanding work on the Gettysburg Campaign. His latest book, *Pickett's Charge at Gettysburg*, was co-authored with Wayne Motts and was released in July 2015. It is the first battlefield guide ever

published on the famous July 3 assault. Jim has been a guest on Travel Channel, NPR, PCN-TV, Breitbart News, Civil War Radio, and Gettysburg Daily. He was one of the primary content designers for the Civil War Trust's mobile Gettysburg application and animated maps. Jim has written several articles for Gettysburg Magazine and other national publications. He is a frequent speaker at Civil War Round Tables and has taught courses for the Gettysburg Foundation and Harrisburg (PA) Area Community College. Mr. Hessler will have books available for sale at our meeting.



In Case You Missed It..... (by Lucy Tannozzini)

Gary Dyson, who produces our monthly newsletter and serves as Secretary on the FCCWRT Board, spoke at our March meeting on the “Ambush of The USS Isaac P. Smith, Family Ties and The Battle on the Stono, January 30, 1863.” This Union gunboat, repurposed from a civilian vessel, was deployed in late 1862 to control and to block Confederate commerce along the Stono River near Charleston. Serving aboard the Smith were John Wyer Dicks (Executive Officer) and Frederic Calvin Hills (Paymaster), who first met onboard as fellow officers and after the war became related when Frederic married Dicks’ daughter, Marianne. After months of tolerating the many forays from the Smith’s crews stealing crops, commandeering cattle, and raiding private property, Confederate General Beauregard ordered an attack on the gunboat using guns strategically placed in hidden positions along the Stono River. On January 30, 1863, the battle began with crossfire coming at the boat from all directions. The boiler was hit, its power lost, and the ship was surrendered. An interesting side-note to the story concerns a deserter, Alexander Russell, who may have been instrumental in helping the Confederates achieve victory by providing insider information. There were 25 casualties including nine killed or mortally wounded, and the ship’s officers and three black sailors were not paroled for months in response to the Emancipation Proclamation. The Smith was refitted as the “CSS Stono” and subsequently used against the Union army until it wrecked later in 1863. The “Family Ties” aspect of the talk refers to fact that both Dicks and Hills are ancestors of the author’s wife. This personal connection engaged Dyson’s dual role as genealogist and historian as he wrote his book on the battle. *The Ambush of the Isaac P. Smith, Family Ties and the Battle on the Stono*, is published through Lulu.com and is also available on Amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com.

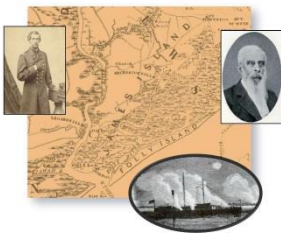


Photo by Todd Morris

THE AMBUSH OF THE ISAAC P. SMITH

Family Ties and the Battle on the Stono

January 30, 1863



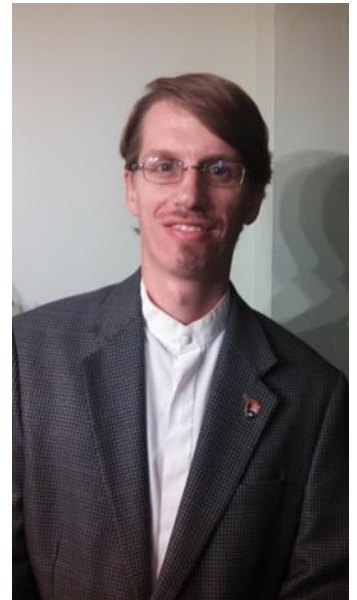
GARY L. DYSON

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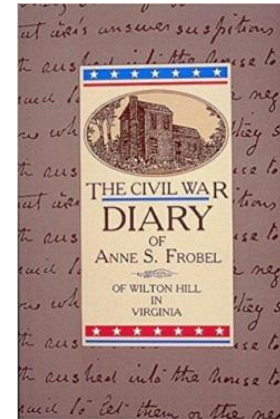
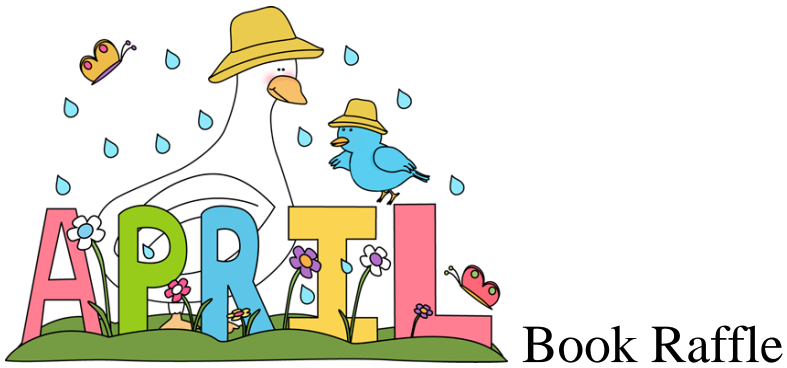
Now that Spring is truly upon us (even if the first day of Spring brought the heaviest snow we had seen all Winter) it is time to start thinking about all the Civil War events popping up. As mentioned at our last meeting there are dozens of hikes and special events going on this April, May and June to herald the start of the tourism season. Be sure to check out our Nearby Events section of the newsletter to get the details on numerous conferences and Civil War hikes throughout the region.

Also as a reminder from last meeting, a quick scheduling note. Our speaker for this month is Licensed Gettysburg Guide, Jim Hessler. One of the big names in that fine organization, and we are looking forward to his discussion on that controversial character, Daniel Sickles. We want everyone to have a chance to hear this talk so please remember that the date of our April meeting has been moved! The museum needed their conference room, so the Frederick County Civil War Round Table meeting will now be on April 26th, the fourth Thursday of the month. We will be in the same location and at the same time, 7pm, as usual.

Finally as we near the end of our 2017-2018 season we would like to remind you that our May program is a Civil War Walking Tour of Historic Downtown Frederick, led by our own Joe Collins. Joe is a longtime volunteer with Heritage Frederick and has written several books about his family ties to Frederick and the city's Civil War heritage. The May walking tour will meet at the Medical Museum at 6:30pm. The tour should last about an hour and we hope you will join us for dinner at Brewer's Alley afterward. If you are interested in this event please RSVP to me at mborders@comcast.net so we can give the restaurant a heads up on how many are attending. We hope to see you on the hike!



~Matt Borders

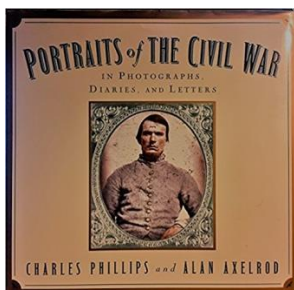


The Civil War Diary of Anne S. Frobel of Wilton Hill in Virginia

Anne Frobel was born in 1816 and lived her entire life at Wilton Hill, in Fairfax County, VA. She began her diary in May, 1861 just days after Virginia seceded from the Union, and Union soldiers occupied nearby Alexandria. Anne writes of the sudden death of Union Col. Elmer Ellsworth, shot and killed by the innkeeper at The Marshall House Hotel when he tore down a Confederate flag flying from an attic window. James Jackson fired his shotgun directly at Ellsworth, killing him instantly. Immediately, one of Ellsworth's men, Cpl. Francis Brownell, then fatally shot Jackson. Anne writes of Jackson's widow finding her husband's dead body and "uttering the most piercing and heartrending shrieks." The Frobel diary contains a first-hand chronicle of war and Reconstruction events in Virginia from 1861-1879.

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Portraits of The Civil War: Charles Phillips and Alan Axelrod



The American Civil War was the first conflict in which photographers flocked to cover the battles, the soldiers, and all the horrors of war. This book includes over 75 portraits of men, women and children during the war along with excerpts from their diaries, journals, and letters. The book has portraits of familiar faces such as Sickles, Beauregard, Jackson and Clara Barton as well as other lesser-known portraits of drummer boys, spies, surgeons, and prisoners of war.

Nearby April Events

(For any event listed please remember to confirm its happening before hitting the road.)

April 7 at 9 AM- Park Day -Help preserve and protect our nation's heritage; pitch in at Monocacy National Battlefield.

April 14 and 15, 11 AM Living History with the Blue and Gray Hospital Association -Living historians depicting the Union Army's medical department at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine.

April 28 at 1 PM, Painting the Past- Paint toy soldiers and learn about Civil War uniforms and camp life at Monocacy National Battlefield.

April 28 at 2:30 PM -Dr. Hunter McGuire: Medical Director, Surgeon, Confidant -Learn about the life of notable Confederate surgeon Dr. Hunter Holmes McGuire.

April 29 - Guided battlefield hikes at the Monocacy National Battlefield in Frederick. Two-hour walks cover various parts of the battle. 9 am-4 pm. Free. Schedule: [nps.gov/mono](https://www.nps.gov/mono)

Antietam Events

April 1st, Sunday – East Woods – This ranger led program will focus on the events that unfolded in the East Woods on the 16th and 17th of September 1862. This program will start at the visitor center, 1PM. Each hike is about two miles and will last approximately two hours. Participants should dress for the weather and we will hike, rain or shine.

April 8th, Sunday – Sunken Road - This hike will explore the II Union Corps' breakthrough of the Confederate defenses in the Sunken Road. This program will start at the visitor center, 1PM. Each hike is about two miles and will last approximately two hours. Participants should dress for the weather and we will hike, rain or shine.

April 15th, Sunday – West Woods – Join a ranger for a hike that will focus on the action in the West Woods. This program will start at the visitor center, 1PM. Each hike is about two miles and will last approximately two hours. Participants should dress for the weather and we will hike, rain or shine.

April 22nd, Sunday - Burnside Bridge and Final Attack – This ranger led program will focus on General Burnside's assault on the Lower Bridge as well as the IX Corps' final attack towards Sharpsburg. This program will start at the Lower Bridge, 1PM. Each hike is about two miles and will last approximately two hours. Participants should dress for the weather and we will hike, rain or shine.

April 29th Sunday – Hood's Counter Attack – Join a park ranger for this program that will focus on one of the numerous attacks in and around the Cornfield. This program will start at the visitor center, 1PM. Each hike is about two miles and will last approximately two hours. Participants should dress for the weather; we will hike, rain or shine.

May 17- Civil War Walking Tour of Frederick by guide and board member Joe Collins. Please see the flyer at the end of this newsletter for details.

Seminars and Conferences

April 6, 2018 - April 12, 2018 Appomattox Court House National Historical Park 153rd Anniversary of the Surrender - A weeklong series of events at Appomattox Court House National Historical Park, contact Patrick A. Schroeder, Historian at patrick_schroeder@nps.gov for more information.

April 14, 2018. Liberty University Civil War Seminar. This year's seminar is titled "Civil War Legacies." The Liberty University Department of History will be hosting its annual Civil War Seminar on Saturday, April 14, 2018 from 9:00 am--4:30 pm in the Liberty University Visitors Center. This event is free and open to the public. Guest speakers R. David Cox, Paul Dakin, Doug Wicklund, Alan Farley, and Dr. Carey Roberts. For more information call Mrs. Rachel Allison at 434-592-4366 or contact her at rbrown165@liberty.edu.

May 12 at 12 PM - Meet the Authors - Hear from authors and experts on the Battle of Monocacy during this panel discussion, including the renowned Ed Bearss.

Book Review by Matt Borders

Daniel J. Vermilya, *James Garfield & the Civil War: For Ohio and the Union*. 208 pp. photos, notes, maps, references. \$21.99 (Paperback) ISBN: 978-1626199088

Dan Vermilya is a favorite speaker of the Frederick County Round Table, so I thought it only appropriate to review his most recent work, *James Garfield & the Civil War*. Both James Garfield and Dan Vermilya are Ohioans and the author lived most of his life not far from the Garfield home and volunteered at the James Garfield National Historic Site. Thus the topic was a natural fit. Mr. Vermilya has done something different with this work than Garfield's other biographers; he has chosen to focus specifically on Garfield's wartime years.

Those who fought in the American Civil War felt that this was the defining time period of their lives. The same can be said for James Garfield, a man who went on to be President of the United States, he still preferred the title General Garfield, as opposed to any other he had earned in his life. The war came at a time when Garfield was just beginning to find his public voice; he had been elected as a state legislator and was building a reputation as a brilliant orator in Ohio when Confederate batteries fired on Fort Sumter. Garfield, unlike most at this time, had welcomed the possibility of war, believing that too much discussion and compromise had already occurred with

southern politicians. Though he felt the war was destined, he did not fall prey to mass enthusiasm for war once it came. James Garfield was a realist and was one of the few voices to warn that the coming conflict would be bloody and long. He himself expressed his desire that the war should continue until slavery was destroyed and secession vanquished. It was this determination and strong support for the Republican Party that propelled him through his service and eventually back into politics.

After some difficulty, and several false starts, Garfield was able to secure the command of the 42nd Ohio Volunteer Infantry. Raised from September to November of 1861, and mustered into Federal service in December, the young regiment did not have to wait long to see action. Attached to the forces of Brigadier General Don Carlos Buell, Colonel Garfield was given command of several regiments, including his own and was ordered to drive Confederate forces from the valley of the Big Sandy River. A terrible campaign followed in the winter mountains of Eastern Kentucky, eventually culminating with the successful engagement at Middle Creek. This was Garfield's first taste of combat and command, both he and his men performed admirably. Garfield himself was made a Brigadier General for his actions at Middle Creek.

Middle Creek is the first of several engagements described in detail by Dan Vermilya. The author uses both Garfield's and his soldiers' writings to describe the actions, as well as information gleaned from the Official Records of both armies. With the aid of several good maps Middle Creek, Shiloh and Chickamauga are all examined in detail. In each of these engagements Garfield had a greater or lesser role to play and Vermilya is able to layout Garfield's development as a leader of men, as well as his growing frustration with the progress of the war.

It is due in part to this frustration that he grudgingly accepted a nomination to be a member of the House of Representatives. Even though he knew that a victory would require that he resign his commission. It was fortunate for the young legislator that he was able to remain in the field almost a year between his election and the next time Congress met. It was during this period that he became Major General William Rosecrans Chief of Staff and was involved in the often overlooked, but incredibly important, Tullahoma Campaign and of course the Chickamauga Campaign. It was Chickamauga where Garfield had his famous ride, an event that was used repeatedly during his run the presidency in 1880.

It is obvious that the author knows his topic and while he wants to stay within the confines of Garfield's Civil War years, he does an admirable job giving the reader brief snippets of Garfield's pre and post war years, including his tragic assassination in 1881. Vermilya's interest and knowledge of the topic does lead him into the biographer's trap of loving ones subject however. He is well aware of Garfield's faults, including a strained martial relationship due to his ambitions and his radical politics that put him occasionally at odds with the White House.

I highly recommend *James Garfield & the Civil War*, to anyone interested in the Civil War in the West, the contributions of Ohio to the war effort or the man himself, James Garfield. A fast, highly interesting read all around.

We are on Facebook! Please check out our page for timely updates, local events, or comments. Please read and share our posts!



<https://m.facebook.com/fccwrt>

Gary Dyson is our "face" for Facebook.

Help us spread the word about OUR FCCWRT!! We have 170 "likes" to date. This number fluctuates at times, sometimes for no apparent reason and sometimes when certain topics are mentioned.

Join Facebook. Share posts with friends! You'll get more timely notice of events when you check us out on Facebook. Post things you'd like to share!

Our MISSION

TO cultivate and preserve Frederick County's Civil War heritage and broaden the understanding of the Civil War Era and its impact on our nation.

TO explore the many facets of the Civil War from the battlefield to first-person narratives, including guest lectures by writers and historians.

TO support historical projects and activities aimed at increasing public interest and appreciation of our Civil War history, both locally and nationally.

Looking Ahead

While our speaker list for this season is set, please let us know of any topics or speakers that you'd like to hear about. We hope to see you at our next meeting, a Civil War walking tour in Frederick, **May 17, 2018!**

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Civil War Walking Tour of Frederick, May 17, 2018



Bond map of Frederick, 1858

We are excited to announce that in lieu of our May meeting we will be led on a walking tour of Frederick sites with Civil War history. Our guide will be Joe Collins, a member of our FCCWRT. We'll meet in front of the National Museum of Civil War

Museum at 48 East Patrick Street at 6:30 PM to begin. Our tour will end at Brewer's Alley on Market Street for dinner (on your own) and conversation. There is no cost for the walking tour. Spouses and friends are encouraged to attend. In the event of heavy rain we'll have a slide show of Frederick historic sites at the Museum. Please RSVP by May 10th. Please contact Matt Borders at mborders@comcast.net if you have any questions.