



NEWS

Issue 42: October 2023

2023-2024 BOARD

President: Tom Hutchinson

Vice President: Rod Myers

Past President: Brett Johnson

Sec./Treas.: Carol VanOrnum

At Large Directors:

Lana Blumhoefer, Steve Cook

Bruce Cooper, James Mewborn

Bob Svacina

NEWS Editor: Bruce Cooper

MEMBER PROFILE OF THE MONTH

DEB BACHRACH

BY LANA BLUMHOEFER



Our member of the month is Deb Bachrach. She was introduced to our TCCWRT by Mitch and Sally Rubinstein whom she met when they were all graduate school students in European history at the University of Minnesota. When she retired about 15 years ago, they suggested that perhaps she may be interested in our Civil War Round Table. She came to a meeting and was hooked and has been a

member for about 10 years. She now has a collection of books on this subject and has tremendously enjoyed having extended her fields of interest.

Her husband, Berner, who sadly passed away in July, 2023, shared her history interest. He had retired after teaching at the U of M for over 50 years as the History Department Senior Medievalist. They very much enjoyed discussing history strategy together.

What she has enjoyed about the TCCWRT is learning new things as she had almost no familiarity with American History and takes pleasure in learning about her own country. She has no ancestors associated with the Civil War, as she says they were all from eastern Europe. So, for her this subject has been purely of intellectual and historical interest.



First Minnesota Monument at Gettysburg

She is extremely impressed with the number of people locally who are amateur historians, and she has tremendously enjoyed their enthusiasm. However, she wishes that more people were interested in their own history and would invest their time and energy in pursuing that subject.

When asked about her favorite Civil War battlefield, she relays the story of taking a trip to Gettysburg when her boys were quite small. She and her husband were taking a long walk around the battlefield and suddenly discovered that they could not find their sons. After a panicked search they discovered them on Little Round Top, listening to a lecture. They extolled to their parents the virtues of Major General Joshua Chamberlain, but particularly about the Minnesota soldiers who fought in the battle of Little Round Top. She says it was then that they discovered that their Minnesota-born sons were indeed Minnesotans unlike their New Yorker parents. What a surprise she says! She also hopes to visit Chancellorsville someday.

Her only family military history is that her dad served in World War II as a dentist working on soldiers of the 82nd before they left for Europe.

She says that she has been fascinated by military history for such a long time and likes being around people who share this interest. She added that the Civil War Round Table has filled this space long missing from her interests.

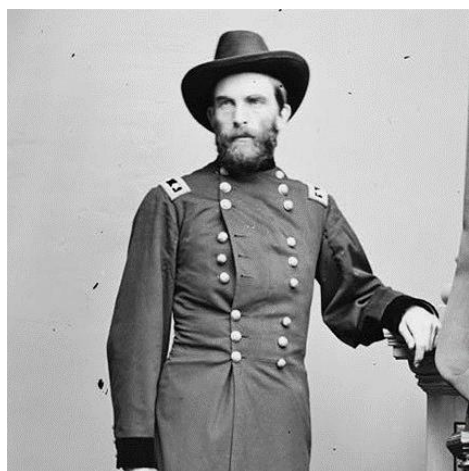
STEVEN SCHIER'S CIVIL WAR TRIVIA QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

Name two top medicines employed during the Civil War

(See last page for the answer)

OUR OCTOBER MEETING: OCTOBER 17, 2023

“General Grenville Dodge, Grant’s Chief Intelligence Officer” – Prof. William Feis



Whether fighting Confederates during the Civil War or constructing the Union Pacific Railroad in the West afterwards, Grenville M. Dodge’s extraordinary life made him a national hero and, in the words of one contemporary, the very symbol of “the American ideal of courage, vision, action and candor.” But Dodge’s contributions went beyond helping save the Union and linking America by rail. This presentation will examine Dodge’s unique Civil War service and his railroading days but will also illuminate other important aspects of his long life, including his steadfast devotion to his fellow veterans and his deep love for his hometown of Council Bluffs, Iowa. These insights provide more texture and depth to Dodge’s remarkable life—a life his friend

Theodore Roosevelt believed was “essentially American.”



*Dr. William B. Feis received a BA and MA in History from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and a PhD in Military History from The Ohio State University. He is the author of *Grant's Secret Service: The Intelligence War from Belmont to Appomattox* (University of Nebraska Press, 2002) and co-author of *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012* (Free Press, 2012). He also wrote "Essentially American": *General Grenville M. Dodge and Family* (Donning Publishers, 2017), a work commissioned by the Historic General Dodge House in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Dr. Feis gave an invited lecture on his book *Grant's Secret Service* at the*

National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, which aired on C-Span 3 American History TV in September 2018. He is currently working on editing a collection of letters from soldiers serving in Iowa and Indiana regiments during the Civil War. Dr. Feis is Professor of History at Buena Vista University where he has been teaching for over 25 years.

OUR 2023-2024 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

2023

November 14th "General George Searls Greene & Culp's Hill"

Dan Welch

December 19th "General Grant as Commander-in-Chief of the Union Armies"

Christopher L. Kolakowski

2024

January 16th "Civil War Ciphers & Codes Wartime Evolution"

Derek Lee

February 20th "The Concept of "Cowardice" in the Civil War"

Dr. Lesley Gordon

March 19th "Food and Hunger During the Civil War"

Prof. Anne Rubin

May 21st "U.S. Colored Troops at War"

Dr. David Wright Falade

THIS MONTH IN CIVIL WAR HISTORY – OCTOBER

- 3-4th 1862 – Second Battle of Corinth, Mississippi
- 9th 1861 – Confederate forces are unsuccessful in their attempt to capture Union held Fort Pickens at the Battle of Santa Rosa Island, Florida.
- 19th 1863 – “The Buckland Races” a cavalry engagement in Fauquier County, Virginia.
- 22nd 1862 – Battle of Old Fort Wayne, Indian Territory (Oklahoma)
- 26th 1909 – Union Major General Oliver Otis Howard, “Old Prayer Book” dies in Burlington, Vermont at the age of 78.

CIVIL WAR BIRTHDAYS – OCTOBER

- 5th 1836 – Brig. General George Washington Gordon C.S.
- 9th 1802 – Commodore Andrew A. Harwood U.S. Navy
- 10th 1819 – Brig. General Zebulon York C.S.
- 16th 1806 – William Pitt Fessenden, Lincoln’s Second Secretary of the Treasury.
- 24th 1797 – Rear Admiral Frederick K. Engle U.S. Navy

TCCWRT MEMBERS WITH OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 10/1 Steve Schier | 10/16 Glenn Corliss |
| 10/6 Carol VanOrnum | 10/17 Dave Tabert |
| 10/8 Kathy Sullivan | 10/26 Erin Whitehead |
| 10/9 Brett Johnson | 10/30 Paul Engstrom |
| 10/12 Jim Coughlin | |

SURVEY RESULTS ARE IN!

By Carol VanOrnum

The recent survey on the Membership Renewal form regarding meal portion size and desserts brought forth many opinions. The Board of Directors intends to make some decisions regarding those matters at the upcoming November Board meeting. Please review the findings below. If

you have any further questions or opinions, feel free to contact any of the Board members and they will bring them to the meeting.

Also, all members are invited to attend any Board meetings, which are held the third Tuesday of the month, 4:00 p.m., in the months of August, November, February, and May. We encourage members to get involved – it's *your* organization.

Of the members who responded to each question, these are the results.

Question 1: Are you okay with a smaller entree portion?

92% Favorable 8% Unfavorable

Question 2: If no, are you okay with a meal price rise?

94% Favorable of a price rise 6% Unfavorable

Question 3: How much would you be willing to pay for a meal?

\$25 = 29% \$27 = 26% \$30 = 45%

Question 4: Are you okay with an occasional dessert?

89% Favorable 11% Unfavorable

Question 5: Do you want dessert every time?

19% said Yes to dessert every time, 81% said No

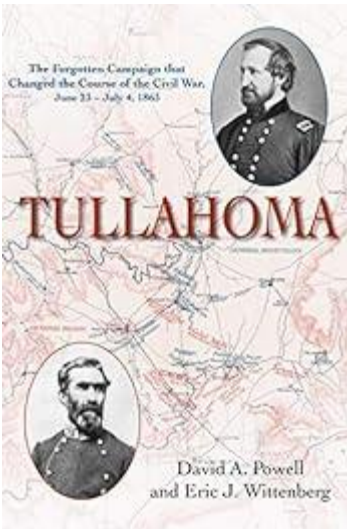
Additional Comments:

- No dinner, just meeting.
- Have desserts September, December, and May
- If lunch-sized portions are served for \$25, I will not attend meetings in person. I will hear and see the speakers by Zoom instead or from recorded meetings from the TCCWRT website.
- Most attendees are not hurting for money.
- Would really like to go back to the Fireside Room.
- You could consider tiered pricing based on cost of entrée. Vegetarian option would likely be cheaper and seafood more expensive.
- Keep up the good work.
- The quality of the meals has been excellent. If they need to get smaller, fine. If the price needs to go up, fine. Would like a dessert but it's not that important.

CIVIL WAR BOOKSHELF: BOOK REVIEWS BY TCCWRT MEMBERS

Tullahoma: The Forgotten Campaign that changed the Civil War, June 23–July 4, 1863, by David A. Powell and Eric J. Wittenberg

Reviewed by Ken Flies



It is an interest of our membership as we exhausted presentations on the major battles and leaders in the Civil War to delve into more esoteric subject matter or lesser-known leaders, battles, or campaigns that have evaded major coverage. Based on these criteria, *Tullahoma: The Forgotten Campaign that changed the Civil War, June 23–July 4, 1863*, by David A. Powell and Eric J. Wittenberg fits the bill for an interesting subject matter. July 4, 1863, was a day of major celebration. Gettysburg ended the War on northern soil and Vicksburg permanently opened the Mississippi River. While these battles are celebrated, little celebrated or noted today is the third significant event of that day – the Tullahoma Campaign which removed Bragg’s 52,000-man Army of Tennessee from the rich agricultural supply and recruiting source of Tennessee. This book is a major attempt to right this oversight.

The authors correctly state, and for which there is little disagreement among historians, “Tullahoma was one of the more remarkable campaigns of the Civil War. It was a brilliantly conceived and executed piece of strategy in a conflict better known for command snafus and artless bloodbaths...It was masterpiece of organization, logistics, deception, and maneuver...” This feat was accomplished with only 570 Union casualties, less than one hundred that were killed, while estimated Confederate losses were more than 5,000. Compare this to 23,049 Union casualties at Gettysburg and over 9,000 at Vicksburg.

The highlight of the book in large measure demonstrates the evolution of the Federal Cavalry with the triumphs, among others, of Wilder’s “Lighting Brigade” and Minty’s “Saber Brigade.” This campaign for the first time exposed the weakness and failures of Wheeler’s, Morgan’s, and Forrest’s much heralded and previously romanced Confederate Cavalry units; cavalry that would never be as effective again in the War. Minty’s Saber Brigade was under Phil Sheridan’s Infantry Division, skills Sheridan would eventually take to the Army of the Potomac. Also, while Sherman was not a huge fan of cavalry, it was cavalry lessons learned during the Tullahoma Campaign that in reality led to the fall of Atlanta with the severing of all of Hood’s supply lines. For an excellent read on this see the book *Sherman’s Horsemen*, Union Cavalry Operations in the Atlanta Campaign by David Evans.

Minnesota’s participation in this campaign included the 2nd Minnesota under Judson Bishop, the 2nd Minnesota Battery, and Brackett’s Battalion as part of the 5th Iowa Cavalry. Minnesota General Horatio Van Cleve commanded an infantry division, and General Richard Johnson commanded a Cavalry Division.

While this is an excellent history of this campaign, I agree with several others that the book at 393 pages is quite lengthy and filled with far too much narrative and personal accounts that distracts from staying in touch with the progress of the main events. It could also use better maps. There is also not enough analysis which is left to the last chapter. If you are a fan of the War in the West and of battle strategy and the effective use of cavalry with infantry support, this is a significant read.

Ken Flies is past president and currently serves on the Advisory Board of the TCCWRT.

Submit your book reviews to Bruce Cooper at earloffbruce@hotmail.com.

WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS



L to R: Jane Uecker, Kayla Williams, Gary Rodger, David Wilson and Walt McFadden.



L to R: Keith and Pam Robideau, Aidan Rush, Jeffrey Smith and Tom Smith

From the Dusty Collection #33

Brittle Fragments of Silk: Civil War Color Souvenirs

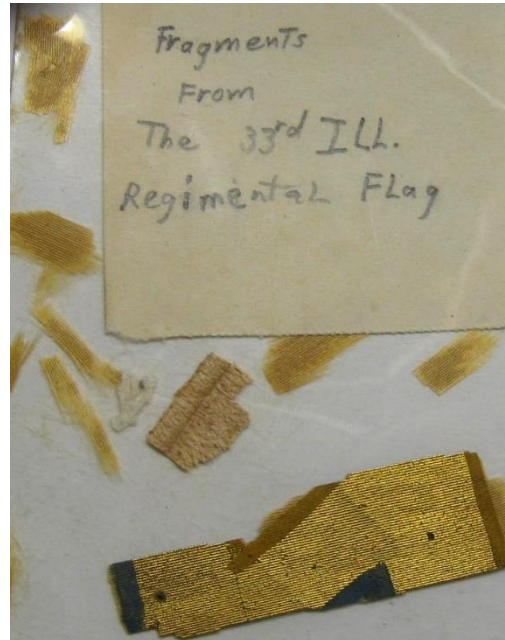
This story begins in April 1961 when a youngster attended the commemoration of the start of the Civil War at the McLean County Soldiers Monument at Miller Park, Bloomington Illinois. It was a cold, blustery day. Well-meaning representatives of the local historical society began to unroll the regimental colors of the 33rd Illinois Volunteer Infantry (the hometown *Normal Schoolboy Regiment*) as part of the ceremony, only to have fragments of painted silk be caught by the wind and scattered across the grass. As the crowd left, the young Civil War buff gathered up a few pieces to remember that haunting sight as a century old color disintegrated in the wind.

A stand of colors – the national stars and stripes and a usually state themed regimental flag – were positioned at the center front of an infantry regiment in line of battle. The color guard, often eight or more stalwart non-commissioned officers, marched forward six paces as the colonel commanded



“Battalion, forward” then stepped forward retaining that distance as the colonel added the command of execution “MARCH.” The color guard could glance right or left to keep pace with a general guide marching parallel to them at the left of the first company and the right of the tenth company. Those few key non-commissioned officers were essential to keep the regiment in line and to promptly respond to changes of direction ordered by the colonel. And the colors, six feet square and mounted on a ten-foot pole, stood high and were the focus of every man in the regiment.

More than that, colors were the spiritual center of a unit. They were often purchased and presented by local citizen groups, with emotional speeches by ladies and equally emotional responses by the receiving officer to protect the colors with their lives. Colors were guarded day and night, and on the battlefield received special care. In the smoke



of battle, they often were the only way to determine the location of friendly or enemy units. Veterans said they *drew fire like a magnet*; a hard-fought battle might see entire color guards made casualties. And loss of a color – even when not the fault of the unit – was horribly shameful. When the Third Minnesota Volunteer Infantry was surrendered by their colonel at Murfreesboro, its brave men were chagrined. Sent back to Minnesota they helped win the Battle of Wood Lake that decisively ended the 1862 Dakota Conflict. But it was still months, and well after they returned south, before they were issued replacement colors.

As units mustered out their final stand of colors was usually turned in to state authorities. In some cases, individuals or nascent veterans' organizations retained possession of the often-fragmented silk colors. Units like the First Minnesota went through several sets of colors during their service and only a few have remained relatively intact. The soldiers themselves sometimes tore up their colors and any man who wanted a piece could take it home. This happened to the final First Battalion, Minnesota Infantry regimental color, today unknown except for a large fragment preserved by California descendants of a Minnesota soldier. It reportedly had been divided up among veterans attending an 1880 reunion. The photos here show front and back views of the large piece of painted silk.



Today Civil War colors are quite rare. They were usually made of so-called weighted silk, treated with metallic salts to give body and rustle to the fabric. The sharp edges of those metallic crystals served to shatter the old silk into fragments. Some states, including Minnesota, have undertaken expensive conservation efforts to conserve or in some cases reverse earlier work of stitching the old silk between layers of mesh. Many of Minnesota's colors were for years stored in an open warehouse at Camp Ripley, then moved to special storage cabinets in the Minnesota Military Museum, then finally to the Minnesota Historical Society. They currently rotate through

the display cases at the Capital, and available for public viewing via an informative web site: <https://mnhs.gitlab.io/archive/the-battle-flags-of-minnesota-collections/collections.mnhs.org/battleflags/index.html>

Some colors are privately owned, and high collector demand can lead to fraud. A purported fragment of a First Minnesota national color, in 19th century frame and complete with period tag



giving provenance as having been carried at Gettysburg, was shown to this author years ago in Baltimore. It passed to a Kansas collector and finally to a major local collection of that regiment's artifacts. This researcher was always troubled that the stars on the fragment did not match the two stars remaining on the sad and fragmentary remains of the national color actually carried at Gettysburg and shown to the right. More recently it turned out that the identifying tag



was real, and that the framed piece of flag was real – but they had been “married” to defraud eager collectors.

And some fragments of brittle silk hold promise of a complicated research project. Two years ago a small box of fragments surfaced in the attic of an 1890s house overlooking Lake Minnetonka and slated for demolition. (Like back in 1961, being in the right place in the right time but sixty years later was serendipitous in saving historical treasures.) The family had New York origins and that is where these pieces of at least three silk colors of the famous Hawkin's Zouaves originated. One star is fully hand embroidered while the other is pieced and hand inset into the blue field. This represents two different national colors carried during different periods of the regiment's service. The largest fragment of regimental color depicts a sailor on one side and an “Indian princess” on the reverse.

The 9th New York Volunteer Infantry, an April 1861 organization, served its first seventeen months on the Atlantic Coast as part of the Burnside Expedition. It was organized by Colonel



Rush Hawkins, and adopted the colorful uniform of French Algerian troops, made popular just before the war by Elmer Elsworth and his Chicago Zouave Cadets drill team. Moved to the Army of the Potomac, the New Yorkers were staggered at Antietam with a loss of 233 men, nearly 65% of those engaged. Eight color bearers were shot down in quick succession as the regiment charged forward shouting its battle cry *Zoo, Zoo, Zoo*. The survivors were back on the Coast in early 1863 and mustered out in May, but then two companies mustered back in as the 9th New York Veteran Infantry. After action during the New York Draft Riots, they were consolidated into another unit and lost their historic identity.

The fragments shown below relate to that early two-year service, but few references have been found to identify the specific colors they represent. Several flag presentations are noted in the regimental history. Today only one surviving color is documented in the New York National Guard historical data base. The veterans had voted to retain the flags when mustered out and not until 1899 turned what was left over to the State of New York. According to the regimental history:

When the survivors of the regiment formed the Hawkins Zouaves Association, it was formally decided by that body that their flags which had waved over them in the hours of victory, and



under the folds of which so many of their comrades had given up their lives would, under the then existing conditions, be safer in their own custody than in that of the State.

A place was provided for their safe-keeping from which they were never removed except when taken out for conditions of extraordinary importance and interest to the organization of survivors as a whole, as for instance, to accompany the body of a deceased comrade of the regiment to its last resting place, where they were unfurled while “taps” were sounded over the grave. They were sacredly guarded and protected, as well as it was possible to do so, against deterioration and decay, but a time came, when owing either to the chemical action of the dye with which the silk was colored or to the destroying effects of time alone, the fiber of which they were composed became so weakened and frail that they were reduced to a condition when they could no longer be handled without injuring them; when they could not be unfurled, no matter how carefully that operation was performed, without great danger of their falling to pieces.¹

Those years shortly before 1899 were no doubt when the small box of silk fragments was collected by one of the aging veterans. At least some of the pieces of silk in that box were carried aloft at Antietam, and were the last sight of scores of Zouaves as they fell on that field. It's yet another back burner project to write up the story and publish the pictures with hopes of a New York researcher finally doing a conjectural reconstruction of those long-lost Hawkin's Zouave colors!

¹ Graham, Matthew John, The Ninth Regiment, New York Volunteers (Hawkins' Zouaves): Being a History of the Regiment and Veteran Association from 1860 to 1900, E.P. Cody & Company, 1900. (Google Books has searchable copy on line.)

STEVEN SCHIER'S TRIVIA QUESTION ANSWER:

Mercury and alcohol (whiskey, brandy and wine).

CONTACT US:

Twin Cities Civil War Roundtable

info@tccwrt.com

<https://tccwrt.com/>

Can you contribute to a future newsletter? Writers are wanted to submit Civil War related articles to this newsletter.

Please submit your drafts to Bruce Cooper: earlofbuce@hotmail.com