

Campaign 61
Skirmish 10
June 26, 2020

The Dispatch

Editor
Tracy Sommers
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Newsletter of The Harrisburg Civil War Round Table

Welcome to our fellowship forum where we discuss our past, emphasizing remembrance, education & preservation.

Meetings held at The Radisson Penn-Harris Hotel—1150 Camp Hill Bypass, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania

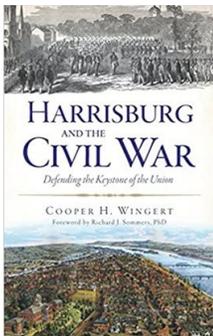
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June 26—Cooper Wingert—A Virtual Meeting

Harrisburg and the Civil War

We had to cancel our regularly-scheduled meeting at the Radisson on June 11 because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but we still need to conduct our annual June business meeting to elect new officers. We will do this via Zoom on Friday, June 26 at 7:00 pm. *Look for an email in the next few days with instructions on how you can join the Zoom meeting.*

Although most of the news over the last few months has been bad, there is genuine cause for celebration. Cooper H. Wingert, a member of our Round Table since 2011, graduated *summa cum laude* from Dickinson College this spring, with a 3.94 GPA. While Dickinson's graduation ceremony was canceled due to the pandemic, our members have a chance to congratulate Cooper as he heads to Georgetown University, where he has been accepted into the Ph.D. program with a full scholarship and stipend.



Cooper has offered to speak to us at our business meeting on *Harrisburg and the Civil War*, the topic of one of his many books. Before Cooper heads off to the nation's capital and plunges into the stacks of the National Archives and the Library of Congress, we want to recognize his academic and scholarly accomplishments. We'll also have short reports from our treasurer and various other officers and committee chairs, and hold elections for the positions mentioned below, as we look forward to campaign 62 in the fall. Please join us on Friday the 26th for a special send-off for an exceptional young historian whom we are immensely proud to call one of our own!

Nominees for vacant elective positions. To be voted upon at the annual meeting.

President: Stephen Smith
Vice President: John West
Membership: Donald Madar
Director: Tracy Sommers
Director: Stephen Williamson



Executive Officers

President, Linda Meenaghan
Meenaghan1961@comcast.net

Vice President, Steve Smith
smith337@erau.edu

Treasurer, Norm Daniels
nld500@aol.com

Secretary, Ed Hicks
secretary@harrisburgcwr.org

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Directors

Bruce Apgar

Joe Boslet

Rick Eiserman

Greg Hillebrand

Standing Committees

Audit, Kim Ledger

Communications/PR, Todd Little

Field Trip, Steve Smith

Membership, Sam Waldrop

Newsletter, Tracy Sommers

Nominating, Jim Moss

Preservation, Curtis Wolf

Program, Al Mackey

Webmaster, John West

The President's Pen

As the end of my tenure as president approaches, I want to say what a privilege it has been to serve you. I am also certain that the Round Table will be in good hands under the leadership of Steve Smith, who has been invaluable to me. I thank him for all his hard work, particularly during this challenging time. I want to thank Sam and Nancy Waldrop, who did a fabulous job maintaining the membership rolls, and Al Mackey, who interceded with our speakers when the pandemic struck and managed to reschedule them all for Campaign 62. I also want to express my thanks to all those who served on our Board of Directors over the last two years and kept the Round Table going during a turbulent period, and to our loyal members who have steadfastly supported us. A special word of thanks to those who volunteered to step up to fill vacancies on our board. I feel I am leaving our Round Table in very capable hands.

Look forward to seeing you at the annual business meeting on June 26!

Linda Meeneghan

Odds and Ends

Books

Graeme Goodsir recommends *The Scourge of War, The Life of William Tecumseh Sherman*, by Brian Holden Reid as a good read.

Savas Beatie has a limited number of *The Bachelder Papers: Gettysburg in Their Own Words*, a 3 volume set, edited by David & Audrey Ladd. Hopefully still available from them. As you know, John Bachelder corresponded and met with hundreds of Union and some Confederate soldiers, toured the field with many of them and helped to map where units were on the field and what they did there. His thousands of pages of reports, journal entries, notes, letters, etc. were in the New Hampshire Historical Society where the Ladds discovered them. They were transcribed and originally published in a small run by Morningside Books in 1995. Eric J Wittenberg wrote the Foreword to this edition. If you are interested give Savas Beatie a call at 916-941-6896. They are in California so remember the time difference.

Events

The Gettysburg Battlefield Preservation Association (GBPA) has rescheduled the 2020 Battle of Gettysburg Reenactment and other events as follows, contingent on Adams County orders and guidelines:

- 2020 Battle of Gettysburg scheduled August 22-23 at the Historic Daniel Lady Farm on Hanover Street (Rt. 116).
- Fall Skirmish, Battle of Antietam/Sharpsburg remains scheduled September 12-13 on the Daniel Lady Farm.
- The Annual Civil War Artifact Show, the nation's premier Civil War relic and collectors show, normally held the end of June, is rescheduled to September 26 - 27 at the Eisenhower All Star Complex. Brendan Synnemon, GBPA Vice President of Administration and the event's coordinator, is working closely with the Eisenhower Complex to ensure the event follows PA Guidelines for COVID-19 control.

Additional events are being planned for Fall 2020. For information www.GBPA.org

Meeting Schedule—Campaign 62

9/18/20

Common Soldiers and the Environment in 1862 Virginia
Kathryn Shively

10/16/20

The Antebellum U.S. Congress
Rachael Sheldon

11/20/20

George B. McClellan and the Seven Days Campaign
Ethan Rafuse

12/10/20 (Thursday)

The Great Partnership: Robert E. Lee & Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson
Christian Keller

1/22/21

Abraham Lincoln
Matthew Pinsker

2/26/21

William B. Cushing
Jim Brommer, HCWRT Member

3/26/21

Hinsonville's Heroes
Cheryl Renee Gooch

4/23/21

George G Meade and the Pursuit After Gettysburg
Eric Wittenberg

5/21/21—Nye-Sommers Lecture

R. E. Lee
Allen C. Guelzo

6/11/21

Cold Harbor
Bert Dunkerly

The Civil War Saga of Samuel Sherer Elder

By
Norman Daniels

Samuel Sherer Elder was born in Harrisburg on December 22, 1826. Paxton Presbyterian Church records list him as being baptized in December of that year.

Elder enlisted in the regular US Army in 1853, and was assigned to Battery C, 2nd U.S. Artillery. During his five-year enlistment, he worked his way up through the ranks to First Sergeant. When his enlistment ended in 1858, he returned to civilian life. With the storm clouds of the Civil War approaching, he received a lieutenant's commission on March 23, 1861 and was assigned to the 1st U.S. Artillery. Soon after, the war started and he was promoted to first lieutenant and assigned to the 4th U.S. Artillery.



Lieutenant Elder was cited for gallantry for his actions at Antietam in September of 1862. His battery commander, Captain Graham, wrote in his after-action report: "Lieutenant Elder served his section with remarkable effect, and was principally instrumental in silencing the battery first engaged. His conduct, under an extraordinarily heavy fire, was cool and gallant in the extreme." For his actions, Elder was awarded a brevet promotion to captain. In 1863, his battery was assigned to the famous

U.S. Horse Artillery Brigade where he served most of the rest of the war.

Brevet Captain Elder took part in the Gettysburg campaign. On July 3, 1863 his battery arrived on the field and took position on a hill southwest of Big Round Top, supporting the ill-fated charge of the cavalry under Brig. General Farnsworth that afternoon. During the Confederate retreat from July 6 -16, he took part in the Battle of Hagerstown where his battery covered General Kilpatrick's troops withdrawal. For his actions in the Gettysburg campaign, Samuel Elder was awarded a permanent promotion to captain on August 1, 1863. Today, there are two monuments at Gettysburg with his name - one, at the location of his battery at the south end of the battlefield; and the other on the Regular Army monument near the Copse of Trees.



He was detached briefly from the Army of the Potomac in February 1864 and was sent to Florida. Captain Elder was again cited for gallantry at the Battle of Olustee. During this battle, his battery supported several USCT (United States Colored Troops) regiments, including the 54th Massachusetts whose story was told in the movie *Glory*. For his actions at Olustee, he was awarded a brevet promotion to major.

After returning to the Horse Artillery, Major Elder wrote to his niece, Lizzie, on May 3, 1864 not about a battle but about items he picked up during the Florida campaign. "... Tell Robbie I captured a sword at Camp Finegan Florida which I would like to send him if I knew how. I have a couple of table covers which I rescued from destruction at Baldwin after the Battle of Olustee which I afraid a box would hardly afraid of loosing the articles a long letter and you must kiss for me..." (sic). On May 5, Bluff (a fort outside of Rich-



Civil War U.S. Ames Model 1840 Light Artillery Sword
with Sheath Inscribed to Samuel Sherer

mond along the James River) where Major Elder was cited for gallantry for a third time, and for his actions he was brevetted lieutenant colonel.

In June of 1864, Elder was taken prisoner at Petersburg, Virginia. According to historian, Edward Longacre, one night, during the siege of Petersburg, Colonel Elder went on a drinking spree and on his way back, rode into Confederate lines. The next day he was both hung over and a prisoner. He was sent to Macon, GA and Columbia, SC from whence he escaped in November of 1864.

As commander of Battery B, 1st Artillery, he was present at the Battle of Appomattox Courthouse, where his battery (specifically, the cannon on the left flank) fired what is credited as the final shot of the battle. That historic canon currently sits next to the front door of Academy Library. As a result of sword was presented to him Col. S.S. Elder Battery B. 1st U.S. surrender at Appomattox court 2013, this sword was sold at



the United States Military this "final shot," an artillery inscribed on its scabbard: "Lt. Art. /Fired last shot before house/April 9, 1865." In auction for \$6,000.

At the end of the war, Elder re-of Captain, and continued serv-Fortress Monroe on April 6, gallant officer was brought rest with his beloved Bessie in the "Elder corner" of the Paxton Presbyterian Churchyard.

verted to his permanent ranking with the Army. He died at 1885. From his last post, this home and can be found at



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The Harrisburg Civil War Round Table
500 Bonnymead Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17111

June 2020

Gen. John W. Geary
Gettysburg NMP

The Harrisburg Civil War Round Table

Where we discuss our past, emphasizing remembrance, education & preservation. **All Are Welcome!**
Meetings normally held the fourth Friday of the month at The Radisson Penn-Harris Hotel, Route 15, Camp Hill, PA
Online: harrisburgcwr.org



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Harrisburg Civil War Round Table Enlistment Form

Current Member Renewal

- Individual \$24
- Family \$36
- Full Time Student \$5

New Members Only

- Individual \$34 (includes badge)
- Family \$56 (includes two badges)
- Full Time Student \$9 (includes badge)

Individual or Family Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Contact: Norm Daniels, Treasurer, 500 Bonnymead Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17111

E-mail: hcvrt.membership@gmail.com