

# The Bugle



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

Summer 2008  
Volume 18, Number 2

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## *Pennsylvania's Generals in Gray*



*Brig. Gen. Josiah Gorgas*

*"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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## **CCHS Invited to Paxtang Picnic**

By special invitation, the Camp Curtin Historical Society will be participating in this summer's Annual Picnic of the Paxtang Historical Society on Monday evening August 4. Starting at 6:30PM the "Harrisburg During the Civil War" picnic event will be held rain or shine at the pavilion in Saussman Park in the Borough of Paxtang (southeast Harrisburg) at the intersection of Paxtang Avenue (Progress Ave.) and Simpson Road.

Camp Curtin will display Civil War artifacts, including weapons and military items, local photographs, newspapers and documents. All CCHS members are invited to attend and may bring a food or dessert dish if they so desire. There will be plenty of free food and drinks for all.

This is the first joint Society event with the Paxtang Historical Society, a nonprofit society incorporated in 2002 that meets quarterly and has approximately 150 members. All planned PHS events for 2008 and 2009 are Civil War related. In April CCHS President Larry Keener-Farley gave a well-received talk on the Harrisburg Area in the Civil War to PHS. For additional information about the picnic or the PHS presentations, please contact Robin Lighty at [robin@lighty.net](mailto:robin@lighty.net) or at 717-737-2541.

## **Book Discounts Added to Member Benefits**

The Civil War and More Book Store will offer Camp Curtin Historical Society members a 10% discount on their entire purchase and make a 5% donation of the pre-tax sales total to the Society's historic preservation fund. Located at 10 South Main Street in Mechanicsburg, the store offers thousands of items on the Civil War, WWI and WWII. For more information, store hours and directions, call 717-766-1899 or visit [www.civilwarandmore.com](http://www.civilwarandmore.com).

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**Cover:** *Confederate Brigadier General Josiah Gorgas was one of several Pennsylvanians who "went South" during the Civil War and became a general. He grew up on a farm outside Linglestown, just north of Harrisburg.*

## **Camp Curtin Historical Society and Civil War Round Table**

**Post Office Box 5601  
Harrisburg, PA 17110  
Telephone: 717-732-5330**

**Home Page:  
<http://www.campcurtin.org>**

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**Send articles and photographs to:**

**Editor  
Camp Curtin Historical Society  
P. O. Box 5601  
Harrisburg, PA 17110**

**Telephone: 717-732-5330**

**Email:  
[campcurtin1861@aol.com](mailto:campcurtin1861@aol.com)**

# GAR Presentation



Keith MacGregor discussed the origins and history of the Grand Army of the Republic, the Union veterans' organization, at the Society's meeting on April 7. Keith also displayed numerous GAR artifacts from his personal collection (above). About 70 members and guests attended the presentation.

The Power Point illustrated talk also included the GAR encampments (conventions), the trappings of the organization, and the history of the Department of Pennsylvania. Keith also discussed the Final Encampment and Albert Woolsen, the last Union survivor of the Civil War. The Camp Curtin church is a fitting site for this presentation since it was originally built as a memorial to the Union veterans and many reunions were at the church.

Macgregor, a Mechanicsburg resident, served as Commander of the Gettysburg Camp of the Sons of Union Veterans, the successor to the GAR. He was the keynote speaker at the 50th anniversary rededication of the Albert Woolsen GAR Memorial at the Gettysburg National Military Park.

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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.

# Reaching the Future

Camp Curtin's educational outreach program expanded considerably this year. Lawrence Keener-Farley presented programs to schools from April to June, the time most classes study the Civil War. School programs give the Society the opportunity to inspire the next generation of Civil War preservationists.

Larry's audiences ranged from 20 at Infinity Charter School to over 250 at Central Dauphin Middle School. "The Harrisburg Area in the Civil War" and "The Technology of Warfare" were the most requested presentations although his topics also covered Railroads, Medal of Honor, Women's Roles, Flags, and Naval Operations. With the help of members of the Victorian Dance Ensemble, two schools also received instruction in Civil War dancing.

Unfortunately, over half of the schools were not going on Civil War field trips. Camp Curtin's outreach programs are often the only time that history is brought to life for the students through original artifacts and reproductions. For those schools that went on field trips, most went to Gettysburg, two went to the Carlisle Army Heritage Center and one went to the Harrisburg National Civil War Museum.

For more information on programs for schools or organizations, email [campcurtin1861@aol.com](mailto:campcurtin1861@aol.com).



**Larry Keener-Farley explains an original Model 1861 Springfield Rifle-Musket to an 8th grade class at Bermudian Springs Middle School.**

# Pennsylvania's Generals in Gray

by Lawrence E. Keener-Farley

The Civil War was not strictly a North vs. South conflict. For a variety of reasons, a few men from both regions fought for the other side.

For Southerners fighting for the North, it was usually a matter of nationalism. They believed that the nation would be better off united rather than dividing into sections. They saw themselves as Americans first and residents of a particular state second.

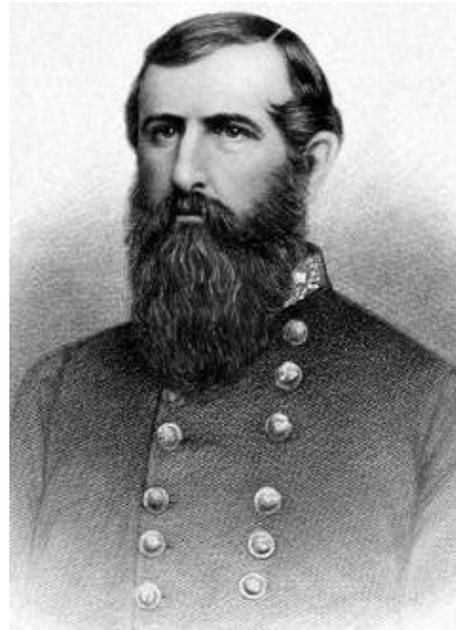
For Northerners who “went South” it was often a matter of marriage into a Southern family, residence in a Southern state, business interests in the South or a preference for the states’ rights view of the South.

Five men who had considerable ties to Pennsylvania – born, grew-up, educated and/or began their adult careers in the Keystone state – cast their lot with the South and eventually became generals in the Confederate Army.

**John C. Pemberton** became the highest ranking Pennsylvanian in the Confederacy, rising to the rank of Lieutenant General. He was born in Philadelphia on August 10, 1814. Pemberton graduated from the United States Military Academy in 1837. While at West Point, he made many friendships with Southern cadets and approved of their states’ rights philosophy. Pemberton was posted to the artillery and served in the Seminole and Mexican wars and took part in the “Mormon War” in Utah.

During his various army assignments in the prewar era, he lived in Virginia and married a Martha Thomson of Norfolk, cementing his ties with the South. In April 1861, Pemberton resigned his commission in the U.S. Army and offered his services to Virginia. Two of his brothers stayed in the Union army. He was appointed a brigadier general by Confederate President Jefferson Davis in June 1861, and

placed in command of the Department of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. He was promoted to major general in January 1862, and then to lieutenant general in October 1862.



Pemberton was assigned to Mississippi and directed to protect Port Hudson and Vicksburg. Union General Ulysses S. Grant’s 1863 campaign down the Mississippi River ultimately forced the Confederates into Vicksburg and the Union forces mounted a siege of the important river town. With no hope of aid, Pemberton was determined to hold out until the Fourth of July in the hope that the Yankees would be more generous on their national holiday. He met Grant and surrendered his army and the city on that day. It was a turning point of the war since it gave the North control of the Mississippi River.

Distrusted after the Vicksburg surrender, Pemberton resigned as lieutenant general and was appointed a lieutenant colonel of artillery, fighting in the defense of Richmond. After the war, he was a farmer in Virginia but later returned to Pennsylvania. Pemberton died in 1881 and was buried in Philadelphia’s Laurel Hill Cemetery.

**Josiah Gorgas** was born on July 1, 1818, and grew up on a farm just east of Linglestown, Pennsylvania. Later the family lived in Fishing Creek Valley and Myerstown. He obtained an appointment to West Point and graduated sixth in



the class in 1841. His high class standing earned him a posting to the Ordnance Department. For the next twenty years, he moved from arsenal to arsenal and became a master of supplying arms and ammunition to troops. In 1853, while posted to Alabama, he met and married Amelia Gayle, the

daughter of a former Alabama governor. Gorgas later wrote, "The South has . . . wooed and won me. Its blandishments have stolen my senses and I am its willing victim."

In 1861, Gorgas commanded Frankford Arsenal in Philadelphia. As the Civil War approached, he resigned his U.S. Army commission and accepted the position as Chief of the Confederate Ordnance Department, ultimately rising to the rank of Brigadier General in 1864. Throughout the war, Gorgas did his job superbly with few industrial and transportation resources, he organized an efficient system for providing weapons and ammunition to the Southern armies. Most of the Northern casualties might well be ascribed to this man from Pennsylvania.

After the Civil War, Gorgas unsuccessfully tried to establish an iron business. He then turned to education and served as the vice chancellor of the University of the South in Tennessee and later as president of the University of Alabama.

Gorgas died in 1883 and was buried in Tuscaloosa. William, his son, became a physician and joined the U.S. Army in 1880. He gained fame controlling yellow fever during the building of the Panama Canal. Later William Gorgas served as Chief of the Medical Corps during World War I, with the rank of brigadier general, the same rank as his father.

**Johnson Kelly Duncan** was born in York, Pennsylvania on March 19, 1827. He graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1849. Duncan fought against the Seminoles in Florida and served in the northwest exploring routes for future railroads. His engineering experience led him to resign his commission in 1855 to accept the post of superintendent of government construction in New Orleans.

When the Civil War came, Duncan cast his lot with his adopted state and was quickly commissioned a colonel of artillery and placed in charge of coastal defenses. In January 1862, he was promoted to brigadier general. In April 1862, Farragut's fleet pushed past Forts Jackson



and St. Phillip on the Mississippi River and forced the surrender of New Orleans. Duncan was captured and after his exchange he was appointed chief of staff to Braxton Bragg, commanding the Army of Tennessee. Unfortunately, Duncan contracted typhoid fever and died in December 1862 and was buried in Franklin, Tennessee.

**William McComb** was born, in Mercer County, Pennsylvania, on November 21, 1828 (some sources say 1824). After spending his childhood and young adulthood in the North, he moved to Clarksville, Tennessee in 1854 and managed a flour mill on the Cumberland River.



With the firing on Fort Sumter, McComb joined the 14th Tennessee Infantry as a private but was quickly elected second lieutenant. By September 1862, he was colonel of the regiment due to heavy losses. McComb fought in most of the great battles of the Army of Northern Virginia,

including the Peninsula Campaign, Second Manassas, Antietam and Chancellorsville, where he was severely wounded. The wound kept him out of the Battle of Gettysburg but he was back for the 1864 Overland Campaign and the Siege of Petersburg. In January 1865, McComb was promoted to brigadier general and commanded a new brigade made up of remnants of dwindling regiments. He surrendered the brigade at Appomattox.

After the war, he lived in for a short time in Alabama and Mississippi but then settled in Virginia in 1869. After working as a farmer for almost 50 years, McComb died on his plantation in Louisa County, Virginia, in July 1918.



**Richard Griffith** was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on January 11, 1814. He graduated from Ohio University in Athens, Ohio in 1837. Griffith then moved to Vicksburg, Mississippi, where he was a teacher until the outbreak of the Mexican War when he

joined the 1st Mississippi Rifle Regiment. He was elected 1st Lieutenant and Regimental Adjutant and during his service developed a close friendship with the unit's commander, Jefferson Davis, future President of the Confederacy. Returning from Mexico, Griffith worked as a banker and served two terms as state treasurer.

In 1861, Griffith became colonel of the 12th Mississippi Infantry and the unit was sent to Virginia. He was appointed a brigadier general by his old friend and given command of a brigade of four Mississippi Regiments. He served in the Peninsula Campaign and was mortally wounded at Savage Station on June 29, 1862. His body was returned home and buried in Jackson, Mississippi.

A number of other Northerners became general officers in the Confederate Army, including: **Samuel Cooper** of New Jersey, who was U.S. Army Adjutant General but became Adjutant and

Inspector General in the Confederate Army and its senior general officer. It was primarily through his efforts that the Confederate documents were saved to become part of the *Official Records*. **Archibald Gracie** of New York had moved South to manage his father's business interests in Mobile, Alabama, and became a brigadier general, dying in the trenches of Petersburg. His family built the mansion that is now the home for the mayor of New York City. **Roswell Ripley** of Ohio became a brigadier and opposed his uncle, Brig. Gen. James Ripley, Chief of Ordnance for the U.S. Army. **Zebulon York** from Maine also became a brigadier general. Before the war, he owed six plantations and 1,700 slaves in Louisiana. The war cost him his arm and his fortune.

## CSA General Rank Insignia

When the Confederate Congress created the Regular Confederate Army, it established only one grade of general officer – “General.” The insignia for the rank was three stars inside an open top wreath (right). The next lower ranks of Colonel, Lieutenant Colonel and Major were indicated by three, two and one stars, respectively.



It quickly became apparent that the large armies in the Civil War would require several additional grades of generals for various levels of command so the ranks of Lieutenant General, Major General and Brigadier General were created for the Provisional Army of the Confederate States. This was the temporary army that would be disbanded in peacetime. It was the equivalent of the United States Volunteers (USV) in the Union.

Oddly, no distinctive insignia was specified for these additional grades of general officer. Thus, all Confederate generals wore the same insignia. Many officers, however, did not have their pictures taken when they were promoted so available pictures often show them with lower rank.

# Volunteers Needed for New Gettysburg Museum

To support the new Gettysburg National Military Park Museum and Visitor Center, and the expected increase in visitation that it will bring, the National Park Service is recruiting and training additional visitor services volunteers over the course of the summer and fall of 2008. Work stations for volunteers at the new facility include: Outdoor Plaza Ambassador, Resource Room Attendant, and Gallery Guide. Specific details on the available volunteer positions are:



## ***Outdoor Plaza Ambassador***

This is a seasonal position – serving summers and some of the fall and spring seasons. Volunteer serves as a visitor contact outside of the building, providing maps, other literature and general guidance on what to see and do.

## ***Resource Room Attendant***

A year-round position, Resource Room Attendants assist visitors in the museum’s resource room. Volunteer must be extremely reliable to make his/her shift each week, and must be familiar with basic computer keyboard functions as well as a bit about research. Attendant will assist visitors with more in-depth searches of gallery stations, materials, and research programs. This person must be a “people person” and be fairly computer literate.

## ***Gallery Guide***

This position can be seasonal or year-round, and is for the volunteer who has always had a special interest in the Civil War, and who enjoys more informal interactions with visitors. Gallery Guides roam the museum galleries, answering questions and pointing visitors to sources for more information on specific topics. They also serve as an additional set of “eyes and ears” in the busy galleries, looking for visitors not following rules or respecting the facility. Hands-on reproduction objects can be used for extra inquisitive and younger visitors.

Anyone who may be interested in these new volunteer opportunities can read more about the job of a Visitor Services volunteer and how to apply by going to the website at [www.nps.gov/gett](http://www.nps.gov/gett) and clicking on the “Support Your Park” link and then click on the “Volunteer” link at the top of the page.

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## **Mark Your Calendars and Plan to Attend Camp Curtin’s Upcoming Events**

### **August 16 - Members’ Picnic**

The Camp Curtin Historical Society will hold its annual members picnic at Fort Hunter on Saturday, August 16. This event is free to members and their guests. The Society supplies hot dogs and buns and we ask everyone to bring side dishes, desserts, and supplies. Mark your calendars now and plan to spend a pleasant afternoon along the sparkling Susquehanna.

### **September 7 - Cemetery Tours**

Our annual tours of the Harrisburg Cemetery will be held on Sunday, September 7. Plans are still being finalized but we should have several tours, with various themes. As always, one tour will highlight the Civil War burials in the cemetery and we will have special displays featuring local history artifacts and presentations by military and civilian living historians.

**For information on either event, contact Jim Schmick, 717-732-5115 or email [genjenkins@aol.com](mailto:genjenkins@aol.com)**

**SEE BACK COVER FOR OUR ANNUAL CIVILWAR DAYS, JUNE 21-22**

**145th Anniversary of the Gettysburg Campaign  
Camp Curtin Historical Society's**

# **Civil War Days**

## **June 21-22**

**Negley Park, Lemoyne**

**Camp open 11AM-5PM on Saturday, 11AM-3PM on Sunday.**

The park and surrounding neighborhood were the site of Fort Washington, the largest fort defending Harrisburg in 1863. A 1/4 mile to the west of the park is Fort Couch, the only surviving Civil War military site in the Harrisburg area.

**Artillery firing demonstrations  
at 1:00PM, 3:00PM & 8:30PM Saturday and 1:30PM Sunday**

**Display of original Civil War weapons and  
presentations on local history throughout both days**



**Civil War era dance at 7:30PM on Saturday**

*This dance is for the public - families welcome*

*Dances will be taught by the Victorian Dance Ensemble*

*Period attire is not required – Wear comfortable modern clothing*

**At sunset the artillery will present a spectacular night-time firing demonstration**

**Free maps to other West Shore Civil War locations will be available  
and Camp Curtin's tour book, *Civil War Harrisburg*, will be on sale.**

**Negley Park is located at 5th Street and Cumberland Road in Lemoyne.**

*From Market Street in Lemoyne, go north on 5th Street, turn right and the park will be on your left.*

**For information, telephone 717-732-5330 or email [campcurtin1861@aol.com](mailto:campcurtin1861@aol.com)**