



Frederick H. Hackeman CAMP 85

November 2021

Camp Communicator

Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War

Commander's Ramblings

Brothers,

I hope everyone has had a wonderful October and seeing the leaves turning colors. My trip to Virginia went well with my friends doing the hiking up and down mountains on the Appalachian Trail most of the 7 days. Since my knees won't take such abuse I stayed back in the KOA cabin and did bird & TV watching. Tough times.

The next meeting as you notice is on the 18th because the normal date is Veterans Day and you will likely be active on that day. So Send any meeting agenda items to Rex as he will be running the meeting. There is the issue of the bank account changing and needing a new second signatory.

In another month or so Ray will be needing to send out the request for 2022 dues. So be prepared to send in your dues.

Until next month, have a Happy Thanksgiving holiday.

Yours in Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty
Steve Williams,
Frederick H. Hackemann, Camp 85 Commander



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Next Camp Meeting
November 18, 2021 -6:30 p.m.

In person Meeting

CAMP TRAINING AIDS

As located on the Department of Michigan web site. It is recommended that Camp members visit these URLs and familiarize themselves with the information contained within these documents.

Handbook of Instruction for the Department Patriotic Instructor
<https://www.suvcwmi.org/hq/Department%20PI%20Handbook.pdf>

Handbook of Instruction for the Camp Patriotic Instructor
Missing link

Handbook of Instruction for the Civil War Memorials Officer
<https://www.suvcwmi.org/hq/Michigan%20CWM%20Handbook.pdf>

Department Membership Initiative
<https://www.suvcwmi.org/hq/DeptMemInitiative.pdf>

Department of Michigan Member Recruitment & Retention Report
<https://www.suvcwmi.org/hq/Dept%20of%20Michigan%20Member%20Recruitment%20&%20Retention.pdf>

National Chaplain's Handbook
<https://www.suvcwmi.org/hq/Dept%20of%20Michigan%20Member%20Recruitment%20&%20Retention.pdf>

Recommended Education & Additional Department Officer Duties
<https://www.suvcwmi.org/hq/Department%20Orders/Series%202017-18/Recommended%20Ed%20&%20Add%20Dept%20Officer%20Duties.pdf>



African-Americans collect the bones of soldiers killed in battle at Cold Harbor, Virginia, June 1864.
John Reekie/Library of Congress



Meeting Schedule

Our meeting schedule is Alternate months between September through May meeting on the 2nd Thursday of every month except as noted. At 6:00 PM.

Location -

Currently -
Lincoln Twp
Public Library



7th corps Kepi patch

Pastimes of the 1860's

To fill the long hours between marches and battles, soldiers on both sides of the conflict found ways to amuse themselves. Reading was a popular way to pass the time. Soldiers read letters, newspapers, novels, the Bible, and any other printed material they could find. In fact, when stationed not far from enemy lines, they would occasionally trade newspapers with their opponents. Milton Barrett, a soldier in the 18th Georgia Volunteers, wrote in 1863:

Our regiment has just come off picket. We stood close together and could talk to each other, then when the officers were not present we exchanged papers and barter tobacco for coffee. The way we managed this is with a small boat with sail set it will go over by itself then they send back in return the same way.

Soldiers who had not brought their own Bible could obtain a free copy from the U.S. Christian Commission. When they had no reading matter they wrote it themselves, some-



"Essayons Dramatic Club," a group of the U.S. Engineer Battalion, at Petersburg, Virginia (Library of Congress)

times even publishing their own camp or hospital newspapers. These newspapers often contained accounts of battles, poetry and essays, or propagandistic messages for the enemy. Some enterprising soldiers established literary or debating societies. Music was a popular diversion, as well—from informal singing around the fire to staged balls.

Gambling prevailed in every conceivable form—from horse races to louse races. Games like cards, chess, checkers, and dominoes could be played for money or simply for fun, were quiet, and easily carried in a knapsack. Card games such as poker, twenty-one, keno, and euchre were played on both sides of the line, but by the last years of battle decks of cards were hard to come by in the Southern ranks. Confederate soldiers obtained more from Union prisoners, fallen soldiers, or by trade with their Federal counterparts.

More athletic activities included wrestling, boxing, leapfrog, racing on foot or horseback, cricket, and—in at least one instance—bowling using cannon balls to knock down rough wooden pins. Baseball, played differently than it is today, was another popular sport. (The ball was soft and the field could contain either two or four bases. Runners were only considered “out” when the pitcher hit them with the ball.)

Semi-permanent winter quarters meant that soldiers had time to develop more ambitious ways to pass the time. Occasionally, they would establish their own theater companies,

such as the “Essayons” of the Union’s 50th New York Engineers or the drama club of the Confederacy’s 9th Kentucky Infantry. Winter, with its attendant cold weather, also brought a new range of activities such as ice skating, sledding, and building “snow effigies.”

One of the more violent winter games was the snowball battle. Whole brigades would form up in lines, develop plans of attack, and set out to pummel the other side with hard missiles of snow and ice. Even officers joined in the battles, which often resulted in black eyes, bruises, and an occasional broken limb.

— Sources include *The Life of Billy Yank and The Life of Johnny Reb* by Bell Irvin Wiley (Louisiana State University Press, 1943 and 1952), *The Fighting Men of the Civil War* by William C. Davis (SMITHMARK Publishers, Inc., 1991) and *The Confederacy is on Her Way Up the Spout: Letters to South Carolina, 1861-1864* by J. Roderick Heller, III and Carolyn Ayres Heller (The University of Georgia Press, 1992).

What were sports like during the Civil War?

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Baseball’s story is wound tightly with the growth of the United States as illustrated in this painting of Union soldiers playing in Salisbury, N.C. in 1862 during the Civil War. (National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum) Town Ball

During the War Between the States, countless baseball games, originally known as “Town Ball,” were organized in army camps and prisons on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line.

While soldiers frequently took part in foot races, wrestling and boxing matches, and occasionally even cricket or football, noted Civil War historian Bell Irvin Wiley has stated that baseball “appears to have been the most popular of all competitive sports” in the camps of both armies.

Upcoming Events

National

- *August 11-14, 2022* 141st National Encampment

Department News

- *November 11th* (10 AM - 5 PM) - Veterans Day
- *November 16th* (7 PM) - No one scheduled yet
- *December 4th* (Noon - 8 p.m.) Hometown Christmas
- *May 14, 2022* Department Encampment will be held at the same venue
- *August 11-14, 2022* The Department of Michigan is proud to host the 141st National Encampment of our Order in Grand Rapids.



Comrades sharing stories at the 1927 National Encampment in Grand Rapids

Camp

- *November 11 2021* Camp **In-person** meeting Location Lincoln Twp Library
- *January 13, 2022* Camp **In-person** meeting Location Lincoln Twp Library
- *March 10, 2022* Camp **In-person** meeting Location Lincoln Twp Library



Officers 2020 - 2021

Camp Commander:

Steven Williams

SVC: Rex Dillman

JVC: Charles L Pfauth Sr

Secretary :Ray Truhn

Treasurer : Ray Truhn

Council 1: Charles L Pfauth Jr

Council 2: Keith Chapman

Council 3: Charles L Pfauth Sr

Patriotic Instructor: Open

Chaplain : Steven Williams

Graves & Memorials:

Rex Dillman

Historian: Rex Dillman

Signals Officer:

Steven Williams

Guide: Jeff Chubb

Guard: Jeff Chubb

Color Bearer: Rex Dillman

JROTC contact: Unassigned

Editor

Steve Williams

sarwilliamssa@gmail.com

Civil War Time line:

November



November 1, 1861 - President Lincoln appoints McClellan as general-in-chief of all Union forces after the resignation of the aged Winfield Scott. Lincoln tells McClellan, "... the supreme command of the Army will entail a vast labor upon you." McClellan responds, "I can do it all." November 8, 1861 - The beginning of an international diplomatic crisis for President Lincoln as two Confederate officials sailing toward England are seized by the U.S. Navy. England, the leading world power, demands their release, threatening war. Lincoln eventually gives in and orders their release in December. "One war at a time," Lincoln remarks.



November 7, 1862 - The president replaces McClellan with Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside as the new Commander of the Army of the Potomac. Lincoln had grown impatient with McClellan's slowness to follow up on the success at Antietam, even telling him, "If you don't want to use the army, I should like to borrow it for a while." November 19, 1863 - President Lincoln delivers a two minute Gettysburg Address at a ceremony dedicating the Battlefield as a National Cemetery.



November 23-25, 1863 - The Rebel siege of Chattanooga ends as Union forces under Grant defeat the siege army of Gen. Braxton Bragg. During the battle, one of the most dramatic moments of the war occurs. Yelling "Chickamauga! Chickamauga!" Union troops avenge their previous defeat at Chickamauga by storming up the face of Missionary Ridge without orders and sweep the Rebels from what had been thought to be an impregnable position. "My God, come and see 'em run!" a Union soldier cries.



November 8, 1864 - Abraham Lincoln is re-elected president, defeating Democrat George B. McClellan. Lincoln carries all but three states with 55 percent of the popular vote and 212 of 233 electoral votes. "I earnestly believe that the consequences of this day's work will be to the lasting advantage, if not the very salvation, of the country," Lincoln tells supporters. November 15, 1864 - After destroying Atlanta's warehouses and railroad facilities, Sherman, with 62,000 men begins a March to the Sea. President Lincoln on advice from Grant approved the idea. "I can make Georgia howl!" Sherman boasts.

The Civil War Day by Day, An Almanac 1861-1865, E B Long, 1971, Doubleday.

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform the members of **Frederick H. Hackeman Camp 85** of activities and events related to the mission of the SUCVW and its interests.

If you wish to place a civil war article or SUCVW item please submit to the Editor at sarwilliamssa@gmail.com

The Editor reserves the right to censor and/or edit all material submitted for publication to the Camp Communicator newsletter without notice to the submitter.

Camp Website

Be sure and visit our Camp Website at <http://www.sucvwm.org/camps/camp85.php>.

Sutler Links

Link to list of vendors for any items to fill out your uniform and re-enactor accessories.

<http://www.fighting69th.org/sutler.html>

<http://www.ccsutlery.com/>

<http://www.crescentcitysutler.com/index.html>

<http://www.regtdm.com/>

<http://www.cjdaley.com/research.htm>

<http://www.fcsutler.com/>

<https://www.militaryuniformsupply.com/civil-war-reenactment-clothing-gear>

Department of Michigan Officers

Commander -	Nathan Smith, CC
Senior VC -	Gary L. Swain
Junior VC -	David Kimble, CC
Members of the Council -	
	Robert R. Payne, PDC
	Steven S Martin, CC
	David S. Smith
Secretary -	Dick Denney,CC
Treasurer -	Bruce S.A. Gosling
Chief of Staff	David S. Smith
Counselor -	Paul T. Davis
Chaplain -	Rev. Charles Buckhahn
Patriotic Instructor -	Nathan Tingley
Color Bearer -	Edgar J. Dowd, PCC
Signals Officer -	Robert R. Payne, PCC
Editor, "Michigan's Messenger" -	
	Richard E. Danes, PCC
Historian -	Keith G Harrison, PCinC
Guide -	Alex Tingley
Guard -	Lloyd Lamphere, Sr.
Graves Registration Officer-	Richard E. Danes, PCC
GAR Records Officer-	Gary L. Gibson, PDC
Civil War Memorials Officer-	John H. McGill
Eagle Scout Coordinator -	Nathan Tingley
Camp-At-Large Coordinator -	L. Dean Lamphere, Jr., PDC
Camp Organizer	James B. Pahl, PCinC
Military Affairs Officer -	Edgar J. Dowd, PCC
Aide-de-camp	L. Dean Lamphere, Jr., PDC



Military Order of
the Loyal Legion
of the
United States

Hereditary membership in the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States (MOLLUS) is open to men who are descendants (e.g., great great grandson, great grand nephew, etc.) of commissioned officers of the Union forces during the Civil War. Web site - <http://suvcw.org/mollus/mbrfrm.htm>

Please Note: Non-hereditary membership (Associate Companion) may be available in some (but not all) of the Commanderies. Associate affiliation is based on a percentage of the number of hereditary members in each Commandery. Consequently, movement to elect Associates may be delayed until such time as there are enough hereditary Companions present in the particular Commandery.



Death by Diseases in Civil War

Basic Disease Information

Measles

Measles, caused by the Rubeola virus, was first identified as a virus in 1911 and it was discovered that vaccination would prevent the spread, causing lifelong immunity. In 1762, a French Physician by the name of Tissot noticed that measles rarely resulted in death and when it did, it was due to medical complication. Yet, at the end of the century, it was concluded that measles was more common, dangerous, and widespread than people believed. Measles, also known as “Covered Wagon Disease” and “the disease of large cities”, was coined these names due to its ability to travel in human communities and spread via large groups of people. (7)

Once infected, the Rubeola virus takes 2-4 days to replicate inside respiratory cells and to spread to lymph nodes. The second round of viral production occurs when the virus enters blood stream. Next, the infection circulating in the blood flows to various body parts. During the final 8-12 day incubation period, fever, weakness, and loss of appetite is followed by hours of coughing and runny nose and eyes. Lastly, cells in the capillaries become infected and interact with the body’s natural immune system and a rash develops and spread on face, arms, legs, and the rest of the body. (7)

Small-Pox

Small-pox, caused by the Variola major or minor virus, was seen to change the course of history by killing generals, kings, and decimating the enemy. When this disease was first discovered, it often involved famine and starvation since infected people became too unable to work on their respective farms or to cultivate or prepare food. (7)

Once contaminated, the virus first infects cells in the mouth and nose, and then spread to mucous membranes and travels to lymph nodes. Variola major or minor then gets in the blood stream and moves throughout the spleen, liver, and lungs. In these locations, the virus replicates, producing a large infectious viral population. The incubation period is between 12-17 days from initial exposure. From here, the virus invades the blood again, which ends the incubation period and the person becomes very ill showing symptoms of high fever, muscles pain, abdominal pain, and vomiting occur. After this, the virus continues to spread to the skin causing eruptions for 3-4 days. An obnoxious rash appears, raised skin fills with fluid, and the lesions contain infection virus. Infected persons can infect others anytime after the rash appears and when the scabs are falling apart. Variola major or minor contaminates clothing and linen for several months after the initial incident. (7)

Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis is caused by the microbacteria labeled Mycobacterium tuberculosis and was found in body remains in Egyptian mummies and in pre-columbian human remains in South America. This disease is primarily airborne and due to poor hygiene and is spread easily among humans in tight social conditions. (7)

Tuberculosis is easiest identified by the extreme symptoms that the microbacteria causes. These include coughing, fever, weight loss, and night sweats. These symptoms are common in

other diseases as well, so many soldiers lived with Tuberculosis and were being treated for another illness. When a soldier was initially infected, the symptoms would normally go away with basic treatment of other diseases. When this microbacteria's effects would return, the symptoms were elevated due to the improper treatment initially, and this eluded to a higher death rate for soldiers. Physical defects were also apt to occur due to this mistreatment. At times, people had to undergo a lot to stop either or both lungs from collapsing, which usually included air being pumped into the diaphragm manually. (7)

Syphilis

The bacterium *Treponema pallidum*, more commonly known as syphilis, is one of the more overlooked common diseases of the Civil War due to its sexually transmitted nature. This bacterium was brought back from Europe in the late 1400s by Christopher Columbus and was first documented in French troops during a war in Naples. (7)

This disease is easy to overlook because the symptoms are not painful. These symptoms include ulcers on the genitals, hands, or mouth, and could appear as a rash on the back, chest, or palms. Today, it is detected in the blood or during a visual examination. After 2 years of minimal to no treatment, the infection may cause serious health problems later in life which could lead to heart, brain, or nervous system malfunction. Syphilis is divided into three stages: primary, secondary, and tertiary. During the primary stage, lesions may appear on the genitalia but usually heal. During the secondary stage of syphilis, one may see skin rash, mucous membrane lesions, enlarged lymph nodes and a fever. This can be followed by a period of latency where one may not observe the visible symptoms, which causes a relapse because people often neglect treatment if they can't see lesions. During the tertiary stage, erosion of the tissue or bone may occur, as well as blood being unable to flow through the aorta. Individuals may also experience dementia. (7)

Typhoid Fever

Typhoid fever, also known as *Salmonella typhi*, is a devastating plague that has been known to wipe out large masses of populations for centuries. Around 430-424 BC, the fever killed one-third of the populations of Athens, including their leader Pericles. This disease is especially dangerous because it is very easy for complications to accompany further disease when treating typhoid fever. (7)

During the first week of *Salmonella typhi* contamination, fever is experienced and rises daily. Headache, weakness and fatigue, cough, loss of appetite, pain in the abdomen, irregular bowel patterns, and rash occur. During the second week (if treatment has not been provided), a continuation of high fever, considerable weight loss, and an extremely distended abdomen is experienced. Rose-colored spots will appear on the upper torso and are able to cause severe lesions. If treatment has not been sought by the third week of typhoid fever, delirium, and extreme exhaustion characterized by a motionless state with eyes half-closed known as the "typhoid state" occurs. By this time, life threatening complications develop. In the fourth week, improvement may occur. A gradual decrease in temperature usually happens over a 10 day period. Signs and symptoms can occur up to two weeks after the fever has subsided. (7)

Diarrhea and Dysentery

Throughout history, infectious diarrhea has been associated with over crowded areas, poor sanitation and war. Although infectious diarrhea has existed in the earliest of times, measures for prevention and research were not widely considered until the modern era of public health. (5)

Diarrhea is characterized by abdominal bloating or cramps, thin or loose stool with water, sense of urgency to have a bowel movement, and nausea and vomiting. Diarrhea isn't dangerous when treated, but ignorance of this can cause death and serious illness via dehydration. Dysentery is the swelling of the intestines, which causes blood to be present in diarrhea. It is brought on via bacteria, viruses, parasites, or protozoa, and is a type of gastroenteritis. Mild stomach pains and frequent passing of loose stool characterize dysentery. While this only lasts a few days, presence of mucus, pus, and blood in the stool pass in large quantities. In the more extreme cases, a liter of fluid may be passed in an hour. Commonly, nausea and abdominal pain can occur. Occasionally, the amoebic parasite may invade the blood stream and spread to the major organs such as the brain, liver, and lungs. (5)

Pneumonia

Pneumonia, also known as *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, is an inflammatory condition of the lungs that preys on the weak. Being wounded via battle field injuries or being infected with another disease made soldiers the perfect candidate for this infection. *Streptococcus pneumoniae* is spread by inhalation of air borne droplets transmitted by an infected persons' sneeze or cough. (7)

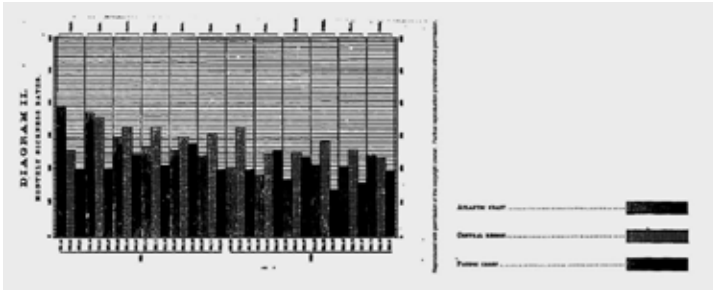
Pneumonia is characterized by severe cough, and occasional coughing up of greenish or yellowish mucus, a mild to high fever, shaking or chills, and shortness of breath when performing small tasks. Chest pain, headache, excessive sweating or clamminess, loss of appetite, and confusion are some less common side effects. Pneumonia is detected with a stethoscope, which can be tricky to diagnose. A more thorough exam is done by X-ray, but this technology wasn't available when this disease was more common, so misdiagnosis was common. (7)

Statistics

While it may be assumed that most causes of mortality during the Civil War were due to battlefield injuries, it is statistically proven that disease was the number one killer during this time. According to "The Impact of Disease on the Civil War" by Intisar K Hamidullah, 3/5 Union troops died of diseases. 63% of Union fatalities were due to disease, 12% due to wounds, 19% of Union deaths were due to death on the battle field. Likewise, 2/3 Confederate troops died of infection. It was also found that more men died throughout this 4-year period than in any other war experienced in the U.S. Over 600,000 soldiers died during the Civil war whereas 400,000 died during WWI. (7) The image below reveals the month sickness rates of 1861 and 1862 in the distinct regions.

(11)

The soldiers had a 1 in 4 chance of surviving because of poor medical care. At the beginning of the war, the North had 98 doctors and in 1865, they had 13,000. For the confederacy,



at the beginning of the war, the South had 24 doctors and in 1865, they had 4,000 doctors. (6)

It was found that between May 1st 1861-June 30th 1866, federal armies reported about 6,455,000 casualties, but more than 6 million of those incidents were for bouts with diseases. More than 157,000 Northern troops died from disease, compared to 38,115 death from battle or non-battle injury. (6)

While illness rates dropped in 1864, as soldiers who came from rural areas were now susceptible to urban childhood disease, the fatality rates didn't improve. (10) The vast majority of casualties lived to go home and probably felt their hospitalization had been a positive influence on that outcome. (6)

According to an article written by Michael R. Gilchrist titled "Disease and Infection in the American Civil War", causes of death among Union prisoners at Andersonville Prison From March 1-August 31, 1864 are as follows: typhoid/typhus- 199 deaths, malaria- 119 deaths, smallpox/measles/scarlet fever- 80 deaths, diarrhea/dysentery- 4,529 deaths, scurvy- 999 deaths, bronchitis- 90 deaths, inflammation of the lungs- 266 deaths, other disease- 844 deaths, wounds- 586 deaths. Likewise, the article by Gilchrist lists the causes of death of Confederate prisoners in Northern prisons as follows: typhoid/typhus- 1,100 deaths, malaria- 1,000 deaths, smallpox/measles/scarlet fever- 3,500 deaths, diarrhea/dysentery- 6,000 deaths, scurvy- 351 deaths, bronchitis- 133; deaths, inflammation of lungs- 5,000 deaths, other- 1,700 deaths. It is clear that disease trumps battlefield casualties at this time period. (6)

Out of the seven mentioned diseases, diarrhea was the greatest killer, which eluded approximately 20% of all deaths caused by disease, followed by 14% of the deaths for pneumonia and 13% for typhoid. It was also found in the article by Hamidullah that 60,000 soldiers died from diarrhea or dysentery in both the Union and Confederate armies. (7)

Bibliography

The citation numbers correspond to the numerical footnotes in the content of the website.

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6. Gilchrist, MR. Disease & Infection in the American Civil War. The American Biology Teacher: National Association of Biology Teachers, 1998.

7. Hamidullah, Intisar K. "The Impact of Disease on the Civil War." Yale National Initiative. January 29, 2015. http://teachers.yale.edu/curriculum/viewer/initiative_10.06.02_u



Everyday Life in a Civil War Hospital

By Paige Gibbons Backus • October 28, 2020 • Updated March 25, 2021

Over the course of the Civil War, at least 600,000 soldiers

died from wounds or sickness. The vast majority of these men were treated in hospitals scattered throughout both sections of the country. While the traditional focus has often been about the battles, often overlooked is the daily life in hospitals where soldiers spent weeks, and sometimes even months, recovering.

Soldiers' experiences in a Civil War hospital varied depending on its location and what kind of hospital they were treated in. At the beginning of the Civil War, both the Union and the Confederate Medical Departments were unprepared for the number of casualties unleashed. In 1861, there were two types of hospitals that surgeons operated in: field hospitals and general hospitals.



Photo of soldiers convalescing outside a hospital in Fredericksburg, VA in May 1864. Library of Congress

Field hospitals were located near the front lines and served as an initial treatment center for those soldiers evacuated from the battlefield. Often in homes, churches, barns, and other local buildings that were taken over to be converted into rudimentary hospitals, surgeries took place on dining tables or doors removed from hinges. Surgeons often had limited amounts of supplies and had to try to treat as many patients as possible. The experiences for many soldiers in field hospitals were chaotic and frightening, like after the first major engagement at First Manassas or after battles with large amounts of wounded like Gettysburg or Antietam.

During the First Battle of Manassas, Sudley Church was converted by Union forces into a field hospital. The pulpit was turned into an operating table and pews removed to make room for the wounded. Blankets and straw were laid down on the church floor for bedding. William Croffut, a local reporter who was present at the battle recorded "it was a sickening spectacle... pulpit had the appearance of a drug store...the church floors were so overcrowded with wounded that it was difficult to get across by stepping carefully". Homes close to the battlefield were also converted into hospitals. One house called Portici was on the battlefield and converted into a hospital early on the afternoon of the 21st. A visitor to Portici, Fannie Ricketts described the scene:

.... Two men dead and covered with blood are carried down the stairs as I waited to let them pass. On a table in the open hall a man was undergoing amputation of the leg. At the foot of the stairs two bloody legs lay and through all I went to I went to my husband...In the opposite room are ten dying or wounded men. Next to us are three, one with a gangrenous thigh where it is amputated. The smell is horrible. In another room are five Carolinians, one dying, son of Henry S. Middle-

ton. His father is with him... Downstairs there are some forty men in various stages of death or possible recovery. Blood runs on the floor, the smell is dreadful, but no language can describe it...

Many of these hospitals were understaffed so surgeons and nurses worked tirelessly to treat patients, sometimes to the detriment of their own health. Many medical personnel worked themselves to exhaustion. One such example was Dr. Edward Craighill, who worked in the Pringle House Hospital after first Manassas:

I attended to my wounded, making them as comfortable as I could. I had not a mouthful since breakfast and tried to find something to eat, at which I was not successful. I next thought of getting a little rest, and sleep if possible, knowing there was a strenuous day ahead of me next day. There was no place under shelter for a well man, and my only hope was to find the sheltering arms of a friendly tree. It was raining but not heavily, and wandering in the dark, I was attracted by a fire under one of the trees in the Pringle yard...

Two years later, a similar experience happened at Gettysburg. An observer from the Christian Commission in Gettysburg remembered one of the many hospitals in town, a Federal hospital along Rock Creek, that reflected the typical state of the hospitals throughout town:

The men here were in terrible condition. They lay upon the damp ground, many of them with nothing under them. In this hospital there were a usually large number of amputations, the amputated stumps lying directly on the ground; except when now and then elevated a little upon a handful of straw or a bunch of all rags. Many of the men, perhaps most of them, were in want of clothing. Suitable food was not to be had. The surgeons were overworked. There was an insufficient number of attendants.... nearby were nearly or quite a thousand rebels, most of them severely wounded... shrieking and crying for assistance continually...Destitute of clothing many of them nearly naked and covered with filth, without tents, lying in the mud...

Much of the time, soldiers had a very different experience in the general hospitals that were further away from the front lines. Many of these hospitals were located in major cities such as Richmond, Alexandria, Washington D.C., Philadelphia, or Knoxville. Soldiers usually arrived at these hospitals after they were stabilized at a field hospital. Recovering at a general hospital could spend weeks or months before a soldier was well enough to be sent back to the front lines, discharged, or assigned to the Invalid Corps as guards or clerks.

In the general hospitals, it was easier to follow the Medical Department's rules and regulations set forth to maintain the cleanliness of a hospital and the well-being of the patients. Many general hospitals were fully equipped with their own kitchens, laundries, mess-rooms, baggage-room, linen-room, storeroom, and guardhouse. Some hospitals even had a bakery, guardhouse, chapel, bathhouse, dead-house, as well as offices, houses, stables and privies in which nurses, surgeons, ward-masters and matrons worked. Within these buildings, hundreds of medical staff worked to treat patients.



Photography was taken in July 1864, depicting a convalescent camp near Alexandria, VA. Library of Congress

Daily life in a general hospital was monotonous for both patients and personnel. For nurses and medical stewards, cleaning was a daily chore. Spittoons, bedpans, and chamber-pots needed to be cleaned, bedding needed to be changed and washed, floors cleaned, and straw changed out of mattresses. Clothing had to be washed, meals cooked, dishes cleaned, and soldiers had to be bathed, and medical supplies needed to be inventoried. At the Academy Hospital in Chattanooga, Tennessee it was ordered that the floors were to be “scrubbed or dry-rubbed, and swept, bedding changed or arranged, and everything put in order between the hours of 5 ½ and 6 ½ o’clock in the morning, both watches assisting in this labor”. Their daily shift included making rounds to check in on their patients, feeding them, changing bandages, and administering medicines. It was during this time that some nurses stopped to talk with patients, write their letters, and provide comfort. Amanda Akin Stearns who worked at the Armory Hospital in Washington D.C, regularly worked an eighteen-hour day. She was “up at six, dispensed medicines, served breakfast, dispensed medicines, served dinner, wrote letters, dispensed medicine, served supper, and wrote letters”.

For soldiers being treated in these hospitals, life was monotonous especially when men were bedridden, with little to do except chat with their neighbors, sleep, read, until the nurses made their rounds, or they had a visitor. Once soldiers were able to get out of bed, it was easier to break up the tedium of the day. One soldier, Albion F. Hubbard of the 1st Massachusetts Calvary was unable to write with his ulcers and so Walt Whitman took up the pen for him, writing for Hubbard on June 12, 1863:

Dear friend,

As I have a favorable opportunity, by means of a visitor to the hospital, who is now sitting by the side of my bed, I write you again, making the second time this week, to let you know that I am tolerably comfortable, have good care & medical attendance, & hope to be up before long—have been up & moving around the ward both this forenoon & afternoon though I move around pretty slow as I am weak yet—A member of the Massachusetts Relief society has called upon me & given me a few trifles—My diarrhea is still somewhat troublesome yet I feel in pretty good spirits—I send you an envelope with my address on— Keep a copy of it & this one you please put a stamp on & write to me— Please give my love to the friends in the village & tell them I should like to hear from them, & give them my direction here in

hospital—Good bye for the present

Unfortunately, Private Hubbard died on June 20th, 1863, likely due to infection. Private Peleg Bradford, who lost his leg in Petersburg and was recovering in Columbian Hospital in Washington, D.C. wrote of his recovery in the hospital unable to sit up for very long and struggling learning to walk again:

I have got so that I can get out of bed and stand up on one leg. It was fun to see me the other day when I was trying to walk on crutches and... fell flat on the floor, and I have not tried it since... It is very warm here now. It is enough to kill a man to have to lie a bed as long as I have in this hot weather.

Bradford made a full recovery and went back home to Maine. However, not all soldiers were as fortunate. Being in a Civil War hospital was a dangerous place to be full of infection and disease due to a lack of sterilization and limited knowledge of germs. Soldiers were treated not only for battle wounds but illnesses such as dysentery, typhoid, measles, as well. Over the course of the Civil War, two-thirds of soldiers’ deaths were caused by disease and infection, rather than wounds. Taking care of patients, medical personnel were susceptible to these diseases as well. Life in a Civil War hospital was mundane, tedious, and a struggle for life or death, but without the dedication of the medical personnel treating them and the improvements of the hospitals and techniques over the course of the war saved thousands of lives.

Paige Gibbons Backus

Paige Gibbons Backus is a public historian who has been in the field for close to ten years focusing on educational programming and operations at several historic house museums throughout Northern Virginia. Her areas of focus include women’s history as well as the more morbid side of history such as death, disease, medicine, murder, or scandal in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Further Reading:

A Manual of Military Surgery, for the Use of Surgeons in the Confederate States Army: Julian J. Chisolm, M.D.

Learning from the Wounded: The Civil War and the Rise of American Medical Science: Shauna Devine

The Encyclopedia of Civil War Medicine: Glenna R. Schroeder-Lein

Civil War Hospital Newspapers: Histories and Exerpts of Nine Union Publications: Ira Spar, M.D.



We are always looking for content suggestions, comments, Book Reports, Family Civil War stories, advice.

Send your contributions to the Editor at sarwilliamssa@gmail.com

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Member Ancestors

Compiled from current and past member information.

Red Text indicates publication of a biography in the *Camp Communicator*

Current Members		Ancestor		Unit
Theodore J	Chamberlain	Chamberlain	Jeremiah M	Pvt, Co B 176 th OH Vol Inf
Keith Alan	Chapman	Stillman	Samuel	Pvt, Co B 94 th IL Inf
Steven	Chapman	Stillman	Samuel	Pvt, Co B 94 th IL Inf
Jeffrey L	Chubb	Brownell	(William) Henry	Pvt., Merrill's Horse, MO
Harold L	Cray	Bassett	George W	Pvt., Co F 54th Reg Ohio Inf
Rex	Dillman	Yaw	Benjamin Franklin	Pvt, Co G 26 th MI Inf Reg,
Richard	Gorske	Hackeman	Frederick H	Cpl, Co L 1 st IL Lt Artillery
Rodney Samuel	Krieger	Krieger	Jacob	Pvt, Co I, 19th MI Inf
Glenn	Palen	Palen	Charles	Pvt Co E 128 th IN Inf
Charles L	Pfauth Jr	Shopbach	Henry	Pvt, Co F 52 nd PA Vol Inf
Charles L	Pfauth Sr	Shopbach	Henry	Pvt, Co F 52 nd PA Vol Inf
Ray	Truhn	Goodenough	Alonzo	Sgt, Pvt, Co A 2 nd VT Inf
Steven Allen	Williams	Carter Mountjoy/Munjoy Wetmore Wetmore Wetmore	Oren George W Abiather Joy/JA Gilbert Helon/Hellen	Pvt, Co B 186 th NY Vol Inf Pvt, 11 th MI Vol Cavalry & 1 st MI Sharpshooters Pvt 66 th IL Inf Pvt 2 nd Reg NE Cavalry Pvt 13 th Reg IA Inf
Matthew Carter	Williams	Carter	Oren	Pvt, Co B 186 th NY Vol Inf
Past Members		Ancestor		Unit
Roger C	Gorske	Hackeman	Frederick H	Cpl, Co L 1 st IL Lt Artillery
Kenneth A	Gorske	Hackeman	Frederick H	Cpl, Co L 1 st IL Lt Artillery
Dennis L	Gorske	Hackeman	Frederick H	Cpl, Co L 1 st IL Lt Artillery
Michael	Gorske	Hackeman	Frederick H	Cpl, Co L 1 st IL Lt Artillery
Irving	Hackeman	Hackeman	Frederick H	Cpl, Co L 1 st IL Lt Artillery
Richard	Horton	Horton, Jr	William	
Virlin	Dillmam	Mason	Daniel W	
Daniel	Stice	Pegg	Henry Riley	Co E 17 IN
Amasa	Stice	Pegg	Henry Riley	Co E 17 IN
Douglas	Christopher Morales	Terwilliger	Albert Eugene	Co B Batt 9 NY HA

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