

My Fellow Roundtable Members: Our next meeting is on Wednesday, May 9, 2018 at 7 pm at La Navona, 154 North Hamilton Road, Gahanna, Ohio 43230. Our speaker will be John Fazio. His topic is "The Great Kidnapping Myth." Mr. Fazio will expose as a gigantic myth the all-but-universally accepted history that Abraham Lincoln's assassin, John Wilkes Booth, led an action team in a conspiracy to kidnap Lincoln, but had a change of heart and decided, at almost the last minute, to murder him instead. John will prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Booth never intended to kidnap anyone and that, pursuant to instruction from his handlers in the Confederate Secret Service, under the overall direction of the highest levels of the Confederate government, multiple assassinations were always his purpose and goal. Please see our website <https://centralohiocwrt.wordpress.com> for more information on Mr. Fazio.

I have attached Tom Ayres' Report of Dan Welch's excellent presentation at the April meeting.

Here is our Treasurer's Report:

Treasurer's Report for April 2018

Beginning checking account balance 4/1/2018 = \$3224.93

April receipts = \$204.00 (\$100.00 from dues; \$86.00 from book raffle; \$18.00 from Ed Chapdelaine aluminum can sales)

April expenses = \$125.00 to Daniel Welch for speaker fee

Ending checking account balance 4/30/2018 = \$3303.93

January started a new fiscal year for the Roundtable, so dues are once again due. Our dues are:

- *Single* \$25.00
- *Family* \$35.00
- *Student* \$15.00

We have not raised our dues for many years, and I have no plans to do so in 2018. Please continue to support our book raffle. Once again, I will match raffle sales up to \$50 if everyone at the meeting buys at least one ticket. Please make a point of getting your dues in to Dave DeLisio or me as soon as possible.

I received the following email message regarding the Civil War Institute Conference in Gettysburg in June which I agreed to share with our membership:

Hello Jamie: We are interested in partnering with the Central Ohio Civil War Roundtable as well as with other Civil War Roundtables across the country as part of our promotional efforts for our 2019 summer

conference. We were wondering if your organization might be able and willing to advertise our conference to your members in exchange for a 15% discount to this event. We would also feature the name of your organization as official CWI partners in all of our conference literature.

For over 35 years, the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College has hosted an annual summer conference bringing leading historians and public audiences together for battlefield tours, small group discussions, lectures, and roundtable conversations about the Civil War era. Sessions, lodging, and meals are held on the 200-acre college campus. You can explore further details about our conference on our website<<https://www.gettysburg.edu/cwi/conference/>>, as well as check out our schedule for this year's event.<<https://www.gettysburg.edu/cwi/conference/schedule.dot>>

The 2019 CWI Conference will feature a wide range of additional topics, including the 1864 Atlanta campaign, the political crisis of the 1850s, Civil War artifacts, Nat Turner's Rebellion, the demobilization of Lee's army, and more. 2019 promises to be a blockbuster year of CWI speakers. We are thrilled to feature eminent Civil War scholars, Gary W. Gallagher, Ed Ayers, and Carol Reardon within our line-up of over 35 distinguished speakers and tour guides.

In addition to touring the Gettysburg battlefield, participants will have the opportunity to visit a variety of other nearby battlefields and historic sites on tours that will explore Antietam northern Virginia's Mosby country, Stonewall Jackson's leadership at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, and more. This conference will continue the Saturday evening tours (just added to this summer's conference) of the Gettysburg battlefield and town, as well as both "lunch-in" and "dine-in" discussions with CWI faculty. The 2019 conference will offer something for everyone, from longtime students of the Civil War to those who are new to Civil War history.

We would greatly appreciate your help in promoting and advertising our conference to your organization. If you are interested in partnering with us, please let me know by May 1, 2018 so that we can include your name in our upcoming promotional literature. We are also happy to supply any promotional language, fliers or postcards for you to pass out or use to advertise.

We hope to have the opportunity to partner with you to help continue the educational missions of both your Roundtable and the Civil War Institute. Please let me know as if you have any questions, and we look forward to hearing from you in the near future!

Thank you!

Heather Miller

Administrative Assistant

Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College

I have told Ms. Miller that we will partner with the college, so please ask for the 15% discount if you attend the conference.

I have also attached a couple of PDF files that Wayne Motts sent to me regarding the Civil War roundtable conference in Gettysburg in August. If anyone from the Roundtable would like to attend this conference as our representative, please let me know.

Finally, our member Bob Ruth provided the following information: The Grove City branch of the South West Public Library, 3959 Broadway, Grove City (about one mile south of the Outerbelt) will host a three-part series on the Battle of Gettysburg on May 17, May 24 and June 7. Each session will start at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free. Retired U.S. Marine Master Sgt. Stephen Walter will lead the sessions. Portions of the movie *Gettysburg* will be shown at each session. Also, Civil War re-enactors will make presentations.

Also, Grant Days will occur in Georgetown, Ohio the weekend of April 27-29. The festivities in the town where Grant grew up will cover all aspects of his life. Most of the presentations will be Saturday.

James G. Ryan

President, Central Ohio Civil War Roundtable

William Child tends to the 5th New Hampshire regiment

William Child missed the battle of Antietam on September 17, 1862, the deadliest single day in the history of American warfare.

Lucky him.

His regiment, the 5th New Hampshire volunteer infantry, fought at the Sunken Road, one of several crucibles of death and destruction in the day's nine hours of combat. This was typical of the 5th NH, which fought in every battle in the East, from Yorktown on the Virginia peninsula in 1862 all the

way to Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox in April 1865. And it suffered the highest casualties — killed, wounded and captured or missing — of any comparable unit, North and South, in the entire war. The 5th NH lost 18 officers and 277 enlisted men killed or mortally wounded in battle and two officers and 176 enlisted men of disease.

The 5th NH was part of General Edwin V. Sumner's II Corps on the Union left flank at Antietam. Sumner was known by the nickname Bull Head after he was struck in the head by a spent musket ball, which did no discernible damage. At 65 Sumner was the oldest battlefield commander on either side. Antietam would not be his best day.

Sumner commanded three divisions under Israel Richardson (which included the 5th NH), John Sedgwick and William French. Richardson, a native of Fairfax, Vermont, was known as "Fighting Dick" for his aggressiveness on the battle field. His style would be on full display that day.

The 5th NH was part of a brigade commanded by General John Caldwell of Maine. Commanded in absentia, actually. Caldwell was not to be found during the day's action. More politician than military man, Caldwell was reported to be hiding behind a haystack and avoided action all day.

Actual command fell to Colonel Edward Cross, who distinguished himself that day. Ordered to relieve an Irish regiment, the 5th NH swept across the field, broke the rebel line and captured many enemy soldiers. But the 5th NH was not supported by artillery or other units. Until, the 81st Pennsylvania and the 7th New York regiments joined them to repel a Confederate counterattack. In the action Colonel Cross was wounded by shell fragments in the head and a bullet to the right arm.

The 5th NH lost a third of its numbers.

The 5th NH charge on the Sunken Road, with other units, was so successful that it might have been possible to break the Confederate line in half. If Richardson had had his way, this might have happened. Subjecting rebels to enfilading fire at the Sunken Road and directing artillery on the disorganized rebels, Richardson was struck and mortally wounded by shell fragments. Expected to survive the wound, Richardson soon became infected and died of pneumonia on November 3.

The fighting in the middle of the Confederate line turned the Sunken Road into what is known as Bloody Lane. The combat from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. produced 5,600 casualties.

Yes, Child did miss this terrible combat...but as a doctor he would not have been in direct combat. However, and almost worse, he had to deal with the hundreds of wounded men who survived the battle but faced a painful, uncertain future in a makeshift "hospital."

Emerging Civil War historian, lecturer and writer Daniel Welch, who also teaches music in the Youngstown area, told the story of Child's war experiences at the April meeting.

Child was born February 4, 1834, in tiny Bath, New Hampshire (it's still tiny), in the Connecticut River valley. He attended Dartmouth College downriver in Hanover and graduated from its medical school in 1857. He practiced medicine in Bath until he was commissioned assistant surgeon (later promoted to full surgeon) in the 5th NH in August 1862.

Child arrived at Sharpsburg on October 4. He was greeted by sprawling carnage. Most of the 3,650 men on both sides who had been killed during the battle still lay in the field. The 17,000 men who had suffered wounds were being treated, after a fashion, anywhere and everywhere, in houses, barns, sheds — any structure that provided shelter.

An open air "hospital" was being set up for Union wounded in the two weeks following the battle. It would come to comprise 80 tents and be known as Smoketown Hospital. This is where Child, as one of 11 doctors, would tend the wounded.

Under Dr. Jonathan Letterman, lately installed as medical director of the Army of the Potomac, the treatment of active soldiers and the wounded would be revolutionized. Food and diets were vastly improved. Sanitary conditions were dramatically upgraded. No beards were allowed; these were breeding grounds for lice. Latrines were located downstream of water supplies. Triage was introduced.

Smoketown was directed by B.A. Vanderkief, whom Welch described as a genius who tried and adopted many new treatments and procedures.

Vanderkief's surgeons were remarkably successful. Of 2,723 patients treated at Smoketown, the death rate was 6%. But the facility was not a real hospital physically. And winter took a toll as many of the tents did not contain stoves.

At Smoketown Child became an articulate, keenly observant and prolific writer as a diarist and letter writer to his wife Carrie and their three children. Child would often write up to four to five letters home per day. He would write throughout the day as time allowed and send these progressive letters home. In many he would berate and beseech his spouse to write more frequently. Some passages sound like the pleadings and self pity of a homesick summer camper away from home for the first time.

Smoketown closed on May 20, 1863, its operation well documented by Child, who is also captured in photographs taken over the course of hospital's existence. He seemed to be everywhere.

Child happened to be in Washington, D.C., following Robert E. Lee's surrender on April 9. He decided to attend the play *Our American Cousin* at Ford's Theater, a performance on April 14 also attended by Mary Todd and Abraham Lincoln. Yes, Child was in the audience and witnessed the assassination.

He wrote to Carrie, "Wild dreams and real facts are but brothers. This night I have seen the murder of the President of the United States. It seems all a dream — a wild dream. I cannot realize it, though I know I saw it only an hour since...I shall remember the fiend-like expression of the assassin's face while I live..."

After his discharge Child resumed his surgical practice in Bath and for many years was chairman and president of the New Hampshire State Medical Society, delivering many papers to the society.

Child's *A History of the Fifth Regiment, New Hampshire Volunteers in the American Civil War, 1861-1865* was published in 1893. His collected letters were published in 2001.

Dr. Child died July 20, 1918, at North Haverhill, New Hampshire, and is buried in the Bath Village Cemetery.

