



THE DRUM & BUGLE
Voice of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table
September 2023, Volume 20, Issue 9

Speaker: Dave Welker
Topic: “A Keystone Rebel: The Diary of Joseph Garey”
When: Monday September 11, 2023
Location: Brock’s Riverside Grill
Times: Social Time Begins 6:00 pm, Dinner 6:45 pm, Meeting Begins 7:30 pm
Our Website: www.rappvalleycivilwar.org
Our Facebook: www.facebook.com/rvcwrt

Dave Welker “A Keystone Rebel: The Diary of Joseph Garey”

David A. Welker is a historian and the author of *The Cornfield: Antietam’s Bloody Turning Point*, *Tempest at Ox Hill: The Battle of Chantilly*, and *A Keystone Rebel: The Civil War Diary of Joseph Garey*. He also has published numerous magazine and newspaper articles and given diverse presentations about the war. He currently serves as a historian and military analyst with the US Government, a post he has held for over 35 years. David holds a master’s degree from American University in Washington, DC and a

bachelor's degree from Westminster College in Pennsylvania. He lives in Centreville, Virginia with his wife.

Author and historian David A. Welker will share the story of Confederate Private Joseph Garey's Civil War experiences, spent as an artilleryman in the war's Western theater. Unusual as a Southern enlisted man's first-hand account from this region, Joseph's diary goes beyond the usual daily weather and movements to reveal his feelings, thoughts, and experiences undoubtedly shared by other Confederates in the war's optimistic early days. David will relate not only Joseph's experiences—reaching from his enlistment, through the Battle of Shiloh, to surrender to Union troops at Vicksburg—but share some of the most revealing, poignant entries during the war and beyond. Join us to explore this young man's Civil War service and transition from idealistic naïf to a battle-tested, eyes-opened soldier.

**“U.S. Army Provost in the Civil War”
by Brian Withrow**

A Review of the August 2023 Program by Greg Mertz

As with so many of our military terms, the word “provost” is French, meaning “in charge” and it is properly pronounced “pro’ vo.” Provost Guards were first introduced to American armies in the Revolutionary War by George Washington to help control the undisciplined young men who volunteered in mass to comprise his army.

The Provost Guard was not a regular fixture in the post-revolutionary army however. It was reinstated during the Civil War when Federal Gen. Irvin McDowell had a similar problem to what George Washington had experienced. McDowell established a ten soldier Provost Guard as the young men in his own army got into trouble in the bars and brothels of Washington, DC. When Gen. George B. McClellan was called in to take over after McDowell was defeated at First Bull Run, he directed Augustus Porter and the 16th U.S. regulars to serve as the Provost Guard.

In 1862, Porter fell ill and was relieved. He was succeeded by Gen. Marsena Patrick who was formally assigned as Provost Marshall. Patrick was embarrassed at being virtually powerless to stop the massive looting of Fredericksburg by the Army of the Potomac. He barely survived the criticism and was able to retain his job, but the pillaging of Fredericksburg had

massive consequences to the Provost Guard and the formalization of their role and procedures.

The duties of the Provost Guard varied depending upon several factors. One important component was whether the army was in camp or in the field. An important function was to suppress the depredations of soldiers against civilians and to investigate complaints of local citizens. The Provost Guard was also responsible for maintaining order and discipline of the troops when in camp as well as when they ranged outside of the camps. When on the march, they dealt with the army's stragglers and deserters. The Provost Guard inspected and regulated the quality and the price of goods offered by the sutlers entering the camps, and when near cities, approached the bars, brothels and markets to attempt to keep the soldiers out of trouble. Anyone moving between the lines needed a "pass" from the Provost Guard and had to justify their need to make the trip. Whenever Confederates were captured as prisoners or entered Federal lines as deserters, the Provost Guard dealt with them and collected information from them. And lastly, the Provost Guard was responsible for delivering any punishment which soldiers engaged in poor behavior might be sentenced.

The most distasteful duty performed by those assigned to the Provost Guard was the dispensing of punishment upon their fellow soldiers. Punishments were determined by either the commanding officer of the unit to which the soldier belonged or the Provost Marshall, but it was disseminated by the Provost Guard. The penalties were designed to not only change the behavior of the offender, but were also meant to be very public, acting as a deterrent to all other soldiers who witnessed the punishment. The punishment was meant to be humiliating and uncomfortable. Shaming the offender was prominent, including the wearing of signs such as "too fond of whiskey" or "gambler" so all observing the punishment would know just what the soldier had done to merit the public embarrassment.

While offending soldiers could be placed in hand cuffs and shackles, punishments were often rather inventive, utilizing whatever happened to be at hand. A straggler who did not keep up on the march, might be tied to a spare wagon wheel and jostled about for an uncomfortably rough ride. They might take an empty barrel that had supplied rations and cut a hole in it for

the reprobate's head to pass through and make him wear it as he was paraded around camp with the nature of his offense painted on the barrel.

Early in the war, the punishment for desertion and cowardice was often a ceremony for the drumming out of the military. The soldier who shirked his responsibility in battle was sent home and the humiliation of being known by all of your family and neighbors as a deserter or a coward for the rest of their life was considered to be sufficient punishment. But as the war progressed, more desperate measures were needed to deal with the problem. Court Martials were held for capital crimes and many of those found guilty were executed.

As the 1863 Enrollment Act was passed, implementing a draft to draw more men into military service, the Provost Guard were called upon to split their duties between those pertaining to discipline and order among the soldiers to other duties away from the army. The Provost Guard managed the draft, including dealing with the several draft riots. Sometimes the two types of duties overlapped.

One of the problems that grew out of the shortages of manpower, were the consequences of offering a bounty of as high as \$300 or \$400 to those who decided to join the Federal army. That practice did not set well with those soldiers who had signed up to serve their country earlier in the war without the incentive of the bounty. Some such soldiers deserted, went to a community other than their own to sign up for a bounty, and returned to the army in their new unit. Some did so multiple times, being labeled as "bounty jumpers." The job of dealing with draft dodgers, deserters and bounty jumpers became a major duty of the Provost Guard for the last half of the war.

Members of the Provost Guard had typically come from existing infantry or cavalry units. Sometimes the assignment was envisioned as a "reward" or an opportunity for the soldiers to take a break from their more dangerous front-line duties. Some soldiers liked the assignment; some thought it was not a desirable duty – especially the aspect of passing judgement on their fellow soldiers.

But as the war dragged on, the behind the lines provost duty, such as managing the draft, fell to disabled soldiers in what was first called the Invalid Corps. These veteran soldiers who had recovered from their wounds, but

were unable to endure the hardships of serving back on the front line, were able to perform many Provost Guard duties, enabling fully able-bodied men to serve in the field. Since “IC” stood not only for “Invalid Corps” but had also been applied to goods that had been “Inspected and Condemned,” the name was changed to the Veteran Reserve Corps.

Friends of Central Virginia Battlefield Trust

As you know CVBT is a land trust. We focus on purchasing endangered battlefield properties. We do produce a large three-day annual conference, standalone events and need to interpret and maintain our lands, we need help in all of these. In the past, CVBT has had individuals from organizations assist us, and we are grateful, but now we would like to create an official volunteer group who would enjoy being part of CVBT’s volunteer core.

We have created “**The Friends of CVBT.**” The intent is for this all-volunteer group is to be the “On Call” core of CVBT’s volunteer group assisting in events and battlefield related needs. Active volunteer members will have the unique opportunity to be involved with events hosted by nationally acclaimed historians, assist in tours, and work on preserved battlefields. Participating volunteers will also be enrolled in the membership ranks of CVBT every year they contribute. CVBT will provide each volunteer with a CVBT volunteer staff shirt and CVBT official hat to wear at events or whenever wanted. We will be limiting this new group to 18 volunteers.

CVBT is now beginning our 27th year of preserving our local battlefields, the very battlefields you study and walk upon. We would be honored to have you join the ranks of CVBT volunteers to help us further our mission of preserving our Nation’s history.

If interested please email our Executive Director **Terry**

Rensel at executivedirector@cvbt.org .

Office: 540-374-0900

CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE OF FREDERICKSBURG (CWRTF)

CWRTF meets 9 times a year on designated Wednesdays at Mary Washington Jepson Alumni Executive Center, 1119 Hanover Street. They offer a buffet dinner followed by a Civil War-themed presentation.

Reservations are required. Speaker/topic schedule can be found on their website at www.cwrta.org, as well as below.

CWRTF Schedule

September 27, 2023 – Greg Mertz, JACKSON IS WITH YOU: THE BATTLE OF CEDAR MOUNTAIN

October 25, 2023 - Sarah Kay Bierle, THE BATTLE OF CEDAR CREEK

November 15, 2023 - Ken Rutherford, AMERICA'S BURIED HISTORY: LANDMINES IN THE CIVIL WAR

January 24, 2024 – Bert Dunkerly, THE BROWN'S ISLAND EXPLOSION

February 28, 2024 – Scott Boyd, *THE HUNLEY*

March 27, 2024 – Christian Keller, SOUTHERN STRATEGIES

April 24, 2024 – Doug Crenshaw, RICHMOND SHALL NOT BE GIVEN UP

May 22, 2024 – Gary Gallagher, PATHWAYS TO NEW NATIONAL LOYALTY

June 19, 2024 – Paul Brueske, THE LAST SIEGE: THE 1865 MOBILE CAMPAIGN

Who We Are

The Drum and Bugle Newsletter is published monthly by the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table, Post Office Box 7632, Fredericksburg VA 22404. The newsletter is available on our website at www.rappvalleycivilwar.org. Yearly membership dues are \$40 for individuals and \$50 for families. Students are free. Membership is open to anyone interested in the military, political and social history of the American Civil War.

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