

Our meeting is **MONDAY, JULY 21** — one week early this month

On **MONDAY, July 21**, the roundtable welcomes **Peter J. D’Onofrio PhD** to speak on the “*Medical Advancements of the Civil War*”. The Civil War resulted in the highest number of U.S. casualties per capita of any of our wars. During the war rapid advances were made by American medicine, which were not appreciated then, or even today. Several of these advances are the basis of techniques and procedures that are still used today.

Peter J. D’Onofrio PhD is visiting with us from Reynoldsburg, OH, a suburb of Columbus. He earned a Doctoral degree in American History in 1998. Peter is the President of the Society of Civil War Surgeons, which has over 300 members. Since 1986 he has set up the medical reenactments for several battlefield reenactments, both in the Eastern and Western theaters. Peter was instrumental in setting up the first medical living history weekend held on the Gettysburg battlefield.

The Roundtable would like to thank the irreproachable **Liz Stringer** for her presentation in art . . . “*Pickett’s Charge*.” Liz took the unusual approach to the subject by discussing Pickett’s Charge in art and photos. Of particular note was the lithograph, ‘It’s All My Fault’, from Mort Kunstler (shown). Kunstler was assisted by John Heiser, Gettysburg NPS historian, in ensuring all the details of the scene depicted were correct. Since the assistance rendered by John is all in his job description, he was not paid for this help but instead Kunstler



inserted his likeness into the art work as the flag holder immediately to the rear of Gen Robert E. Lee. He is shown in profile. MRRT members should be very familiar with John. He was our guide at Gettysburg in 1995 and again in 2007.



Following Liz’s presentation she and the members had a robust and informative discussion of all things Pickett’s Charge and Gettysburg in general. A great evening was had by all and we thank our good friend Liz for her presentation.

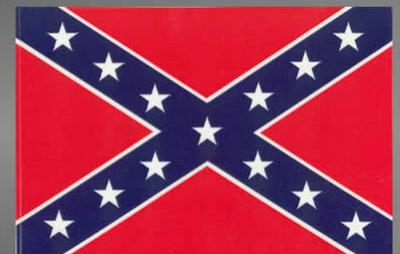
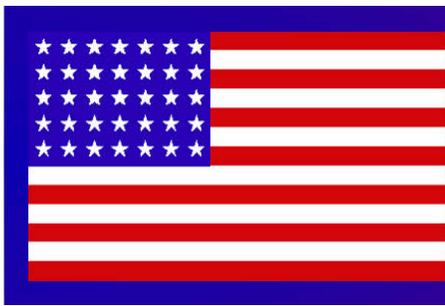
Quiz Questions: This month’s questions and answers pertain to medical advances that occurred during the Civil War.

1. How successful were Union Surgeons with amputations?
2. What was the significance of the inhaler?
3. What was Surgeon Benjamin Howard’s contribution to medical advancements during the war?
4. Who was Doctor Gurdon Buck?
5. What improvements to ambulances did Jonathan Letterman, medical director of the Army of the Potomac, make?

Odds & Ends:

- The website of the month is CivilWarTraveler.com (www.civilwartraveler.com). This site claims to have everything you need to know to plan a Civil War trip. An excellent write-up of Lee’s retreat is included.
- The unnamed recipient of the Jerry Maxwell History Award from last month’s newsletter was Nic Flynn.

Minutes for May 19, 2014: The **Call to Order** was at 6:30 pm. The **Pledge** was dedicated to the veterans at risk from the VA. **Trip Report:** The trip is “*Grant’s Road to Victory: Five Forks to Appomattox*,” led by Scott Patchan, Saturday (Oct 25) and Sunday (Oct. 26). The projected cost is \$180 per person but this may decrease if more than 25 persons sign



up for the trip. The Saturday banquet will be held at *Crab Louis*—a 250 year old historic tavern—at an additional cost of \$40 per person. Hotel reservations can be made at the Hampton Inn—Richmond-Midlothian Turnpike, 800 Research Rd, Richmond VA 23236. Phone 804 897-800. The tour will leave from and return to the Inn each day. Questions may be emailed/phoned to Mollie at 313 530-8516 mmgalate@gmail.com; Jeanie at 248 851-9320 grahamjeanie@hotmail.com; or Linda at 586 749-6075 lindagerhardt@comcast.net. **Items of Interest:** The Ice Cream Social at Pine Grove, the Wisner House, headquarters of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society in Pontiac, is Saturday July 26 from 11 am to 5 pm. Over 500 people attended last year. Ron Cleveland will be there again to terrify Pontiac dogs with his cannon. A motion was made and passed to renew our membership with Historic Fort Wayne, for \$75. The **Minutes for April 28, 2014** were approved.

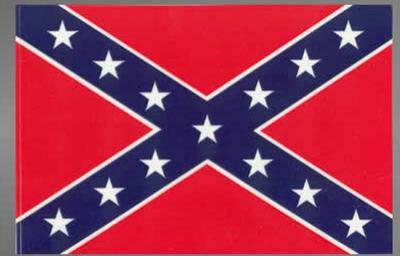
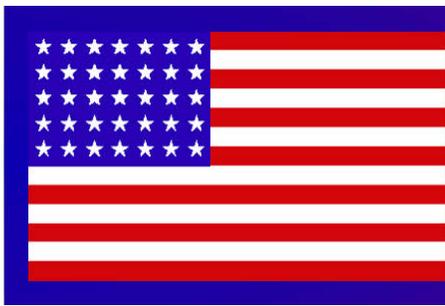
Minutes for June 30, 2014: The **Call to Order** was at 6:35 pm. The **Pledge** was dedicated to Hudson Meade; Charles Reed (captured 150 years ago and was sent to Andersonville Prison); and Shelby Kilroy Emmons (who found her great grandfathers grave in Webberville Cemetery and had a new marker put on the grave in a special ceremony by Sons of Union Veterans). **Introduction of Guests and New Members:** Suzanne Clinton and new member, Mike Hrivnak. **Newsletter Report:** Bob read from NYC Dispatch, Toledo Mini Bulletin, Cleveland Charger, Cincinnati Canister, and Indianapolis Hardtack. **Preservation Report:** Joe indicated that the USS Monitor Center has been reopened after the Federal Government pledged \$220K for preservation. CWT and SVBF are trying to raise \$370K to save 429 acres at Port Republic, VA. So far, \$980K has been raised out of \$1.350M, with a 5-1 match. The CWT is also attempting to save 665 acres at North Jericho Mill, site of the first day's battle at North Anna in 1864, part of Grant's Overland Campaign. **Trip Report:** The cost of the trip has gone down to \$155 now that we have 35 people signed up. There is room for a few more—40 is the limit due to the size of the dinner venue. A \$100 deposit is due at the July meeting with the balance due in August. \$40 will also be due for the Saturday night dinner. **Items of Interest:** Ken, while exploring Mobile Bay, learned that the site of the monitor Tecumseh is marked. He also reported he got seasick. Larry indicated that June 3, the birthday of Jefferson Davis, is a holiday in Alabama—it has been suggested by some that other people might be more deserving of the honor. The Detroit GAR building restoration is almost complete. Our next meeting is a week early, July 21, due to a library conflict. The Wisner House Ice Cream Social is Saturday, July 26, from 11 am to 5 pm. Ron will be there with his cannon. The **Minutes for May 19, 2014** were not available at the meeting but were approved anyway.

Civil War Essentials: Civil War Essentials: This month we will continue our look at the essential role the horse played in the cavalry, the 'glamour' service of both armies. The cavalry used their horses to move quickly through the countryside and, once entering the fight, could fight either mounted or dismounted. The cavalry was the best path to glory in the Confederate army.

The Confederate cavalry was superior early in the war because Southern society required cavalry type horses. The South had mounted militia companies many years before the war began. Young men learned how to drill, ride, and charge with the saber. Also, the Southern love of horse racing encouraged the development of cavalry-type horses. Almost every town had a race track, which resulted in a supply of pure-bloodied, fleet-footed horses.

Before the war, Northern horses were used for farming. As a result, strong draft horses unsuited for the cavalry dominated. Northerners familiar with horses preferred to join the infantry instead of taking care of them during the war. As the war progressed, Union quartermasters wisely began purchasing the Morgan horse known for its endurance, versatility and courage. By mid-1863, the Union cavalry became competitive





with their Southern counterparts and enjoyed mounts in much better physical condition, particularly as the war entered 1864 and 1865. The Union cavalry became increasing proficient on the battlefield and was inflicting major damage on the Confederate cavalry as the war came to an end.

Both armies adapted the McClellan saddle as standard equipment. Both the McClellan saddle and cavalry manual were developed by General George McClellan, who interesting enough, never served a day in the cavalry. The new saddle was cheaper, light enough not to bother the horse, and sturdy enough to support the rider. The Confederate's adopted the McClellan saddle in 1863, partially to unburden their horses as they became thin from an inadequate diet. Approximately 500,000 McClellan saddles were made during the war.

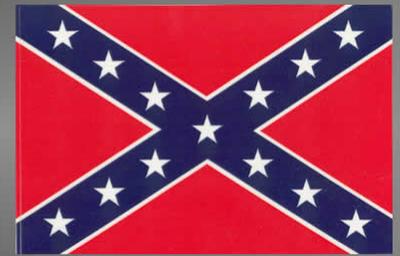
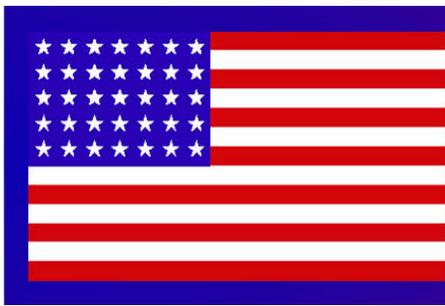
The Southern cavalymen had to provide their own horses, unlike their Union counterparts, which resulted in shortages of trained horses and men. During the Gettysburg campaign, horses were taken from the Pennsylvania farmers but were unsuited for immediate use in combat.

The cavalryman and his horse became a team, with deep bonds between man and horse. Captain George Baylor of the 12th Virginia Cavalry described the bond, "*The cavalryman and his horse got very close to each other, not only physically, but also heart to heart. They ate together, slept together, marched, fought and often died together. While the rider slept, the horse cropped the grass around him and got as close up to his rider's body as he could get. . .*"

Civil War Sesquicentennial (July 1864): **3 Jul:** In the Eastern Theater, Jubal Early's Confederates are engaged by troops under Franz Sigel. Over the next couple days, Early drives the Federals back towards Harper Ferry, WV. In Charleston, SC, two assaults by Union forces on forts are repelled. **4 Jul:** Lincoln pocket vetoes the Wade-Davis Bill passed by the senate and instead stays the course with his more lenient reconstruction policies as being applied to Louisiana and Arkansas. **5 Jul:** Early's forces cross the Potomac and enter Maryland. **6 Jul:** Early forces capture Hagerstown, MD. **7 Jul:** Reinforcements arrive in D.C. to face the threat posed by Early. **9 Jul:** Early's Confederates encounter a blocking movement at Frederick, VA, by 6,000 troops under Lew Wallace. The Federals are quickly routed. Early continues his movement towards the capital. **11 Jul:** Early's men arrive at the outskirts of the capital. At one point, Lincoln observes the action looking out over the parapets. During the day, Federal reinforcement continue to arrive and Early decides to give up the attack. **12 Jul:** Again, action the next day is observed by Lincoln at Fort Stevens where one officer shouts to him, "*get down, you fool.*" Before departing the capital, the Confederates burn down the home of Postmaster General Montgomery Blair. **13 Jul:** 15,000 troops under Gen Horatio Wright take up pursuit of Early. **14 Jul:** Early's forces cross the Potomac at Leesburg. On the western front, Union troops under AJ Smith at



Tupelo, MS, repel several assaults by Forrest and Gen SD Lee. **15 Jul:** Skirmishes continue between Smith and Confederates at Tupelo. Worried about short supplies, Smith retreats. Forrest is wounded in this action. **17 Jul:** Jefferson Davis relieves cautious Johnston from command of the Army of Tennessee and replaces him with the aggressive Gen John Bell Hood. **19 Jul:** The Federals catch Early at Berryville, VA. Jubal Early, concerned about his supply train being cut, retreats towards Strasburg, VA. **20 Jul:** Back to the west, the Confederates now commanded by Hood launch an attack with troops commanded by Hardee on Gen 'Rock of Chickamauga' Thomas at Peachtree Creek. After fierce, and at times, hand-to-hand fighting, the Confederates fall back with heavy losses. **21 Jul:** Determined to wage an offensive war against Sherman, Hood directs Wheeler and Hardee to attack Gen James McPherson's Army of the Tennessee near Decatur, GA. **22 Jul:** The attack on McPherson's position by Hardee and Wheeler ultimately fails after



hard fighting on both sides. During this action, McPherson happens upon Confederate skirmishers. When asked to surrender, McPherson instead tips his hat to the skirmishers, bolts, and is shot dead from his horse. **24 Jul:** Jubal Early's forces attack Union troops under Gen George Crook at Kernstown, VA. Crook's troops are routed. **28 Jul:** Sherman is continuing to tighten his grip on Atlanta but Hood, attempting to dislodge the Federals, sends Gen SD Lee to attack the Federals at Ezra Church. The Confederates are repelled with heavy losses. **29 Jul:** Jubal Early again crosses the Potomac to enter Maryland and Pennsylvania. His men are engaged in a series of fights. **30 Jul:** Back at Petersburg, the day has finally arrived for Burnside's mine tunneled under the Confederate's fortifications. The prior day, the IX Corps black troops, specifically trained for this mission, are substituted with troops from Ledlie 1st Division. On the second try, the explosives are detonated and a massive explosion rips a hole in the Confederate earthworks 170' long, 60' to 80' wide, and 30' deep. Initially the Confederates are thrown into turmoil. Ledlie's men enter the tunnel but become disoriented, disorganized and find their position untenable as the Confederates regain their senses. For the Confederates, it's like shooting fish in a barrel. In desperation, the black troops were also sent into the tunnel. In short, the scheme is a disaster and the Union suffers 3,748 casualties of the 20,208 men engaged. Confederate casualties are estimated at 1,500. Also on this day, Jubal Early's cavalry rides into Chambersburg, PA. In the west, Sherman's plan for Stoneman and McCook to disrupt Confederate supply lines encounters serious problems. Stoneman and 700 men are captured and McCook has to fight his way out of encirclement at Newman, losing 500 men. For info on Michigan sesquicentennial events, visit <http://seekingmichigan.org/civil-war>.



The Crater at Petersburg Virginia after the battle

Quiz Answers:

1. Union surgeons only lost 25% of their amputation patients. For similarly injured civilians' the mortality rate was 75%. Several of the amputation techniques developed during the war are still in use today.
2. Confederate doctor Dr. Julian Chisholm invented a 2.5 inch inhaler, which only required a 1/8 oz. of chloroform, compared with the normal 2 oz. dosage. As a result, the Confederates put out almost as many wounded for surgery as the Union doctors, with only a fraction of the chloroform supply that the Union doctors had.
3. Surgeon Howard created a life-saving procedure for chest wounds that included closing the wound with metal sutures and creating an air tight seal. Survival rates quadrupled
4. Doctor Gurdun Buck was the father of modern plastic surgery. During the war he and other Union Surgeons completed 32 '*plastic operations*' on disfigured soldiers.
5. Mr. Letterman added caravans of 50 ambulances to carry wounded to field hospitals, spring suspensions were added to ambulances, and it became harder to steal supplies from the ambulance.

Monday, July 21, come out to hear **Peter J. D'onofrio PhD** speak on the "*Medical Advancements of the Civil War*". The meeting will begin promptly at 6:30 pm. For back copies of newsletters, information on the field trip, and a myriad of all things MRRT, check-out our website at www.farmlib.org/mrrt/.