



# HARDTACK



Indianapolis Civil War Round Table Newsletter  
<http://indianapoliscwrt.org/>

January 14, 2013 at 7:30 p.m.  
 Meeting at Indiana History Center Auditorium  
 450 West Ohio Street

*The Plan of the Day*  
**Unexpected Soldiers: Gender, Duty, and Women's Experiences in  
 the Civil War**



Sarah Edmonds Seelye served two years in the Second Michigan Infantry as Franklin Thompson (left). In 1886, she received a military pension.

Photo from <http://americancivilwar.com/women/>

Defying common perceptions of nineteenth-century U.S. military composition, approximately 400 female soldiers served in the Civil War. These women assumed new gender identities in order to join the Union or Confederate forces, and in the process, they challenged mainstream ideas of womanhood through their participation. From multiple letters and diaries left by these women, scholars have begun to piece together the diverse experiences of these women. Their records shed light onto often overlooked perspectives of women, and these writings also reveal how Civil War provided new opportunities for some women. By recognizing existence—however, uncommon—of the female soldier, we might reconsider the historical associations drawn among, gender, civic obligations, and citizenship.

## **JOIN US BEFORE THE MEETING AT SHAPIRO'S DELI!**

**All ICWRT members and guests** are invited to join us at 5:30 P.M. at Shapiro's Delicatessen, 808 S. Meridian St. (just south of McCarty Street) before the meeting to enjoy dinner and fellowship.

### *Our Guest Speaker*



Meredith Clark-Wiltz has served as an Assistant Professor of History at Franklin College of Indiana since 2011. She earned her undergraduate degree in History, English, and Political Science from the University of Louisiana, Lafayette. She received her masters' from Bowling Green State University and her doctorate from Ohio State University. Her teaching and research interests include U.S., women's, and African American history. Her article, "Persecuting Black Men and Gendering Jury Service," will appear in a forthcoming collection of essays, *Interconnections: Gender and Race in American History*, published by the University of Rochester Press. She is also currently working on a book manuscript, *Revising Constitutions: Race and Sex Discrimination in Jury Service, 1868-1979*.

### *Roster of Officers and Committees for the 2011-2012 Campaign*

#### *Officers:*

President: Dr. John Wernert

Vice President: Dave Klinestiver

Secretary: Frank Bynum

Treasurer: Tony Roscetti

Immediate Past President: Jerry Thompson

Programs: Jenny Thompson

#### *Committees:*

Preservation: Andy O'Donnell

Website: Paul Watson

Publicity: Peg Bertelli, Dave Sutherland & Tony Roscetti

#### *Quiz Master:*

Tony Trimble

#### *HARDTACK Newsletter:*

Editor: Jenny Thompson

### *Schedule of Greeters*

Jan: Nikki Schofield

March: Dave Sutherland

Feb: Frank Bynum

April: Jerry Thompson

May: John Wernert

**Members are encouraged to wear their badges to the meetings, so people will know who you are.**

If you have a short article, book review, or some other item that may be of interest to our members, please submit it via email to the editor at [jkt60@att.net](mailto:jkt60@att.net) by the tenth day following the preceding month's meeting.

### *2012-2013 Campaign Plans*

February 11, 2013	Tom Mason – “The Papers of Lew and Susan Wallace”
March 11, 2013	Bob Bain – “The Armies Gather”
April 8, 2013	Harry Bulkeley – “I Propose to Fight It Out: The Story of Ulysses S. Grant, A One Man Show”
May 13, 2013	Lee Peters – “The Battlefield Growth of Lew Wallace – a study in decision making – from Romney to Monocacy”
June 10, 2013	Phil Tichenor – “Andersonville: A Visual Presentation”

### *Other Camp Activities*

**Hamilton County Civil War Roundtable:** The Carmel-Clay Civil War Roundtable is now the Hamilton County Civil War Roundtable. They meet at the Conner Prairie Interactive History Park located at 13400 Allisonville Road. Doors open at 7:00 p.m., and the program will start at 7:30 in the Lilly Theater on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of their main office building. We will have plenty of free parking, and people should enter through the main entrance where the ticket office is located. Camp coffee and hardtack should be available. Meetings will be on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month, September through May, excluding December.

1/16 James Tremblay – “Railroad Men of the Civil War”

2/20 John Rutherford – “From Riding with Morgan’s Raiders to General Counsel of the L&N Railroad – The Adventures of a Southern Rebel from the Hoosier State”

3/20 Chris Kolakowski – “Tullahoma Campaign”

4/17 Del F. Jarvis – “The Battle at Shiloh Church”

5/15 Donald Parman – “John T. Wilder’s Military Career – Wilder’s Lightning Brigade”

**Madison County Historical Society Civil War Roundtable:** They meet at 7 p.m. at the Madison County History Center, 15 West 11<sup>th</sup> Street, in Anderson.

### *Special Orders*

**The Battle of Fredericksburg:** This digital history collection includes 170+ books by participants in quick easy to find pdf files, 35 eye-witness accounts, Volume 21 of the Official Records, 45+ photographs, 60+ images – Art Collection, 40+ maps of the battle, and Order of Battle with 100+ photographs of participants (all photographs, images and maps are in hi-resolution 300 dpi). The contents of this enormous digital collection are all in public domain and can be downloaded, copied, reprinted, used in publications, or e-catalogued for general and public use. To buy the collection (for \$39.95 on DVD-ROM or \$49.95 (+ \$3.00 shipping) on USB Flash Drive) or to see samples of the collection, visit <http://civilwardigital.com>. For more information, contact Chet or Mike at [info@civilwardigital.com](mailto:info@civilwardigital.com).

**Seminary Ridge Museum update:** The construction phase of the museum is complete. Exhibit installation is scheduled to begin in January and the museum will open to the public on July 1, 2013. The museum will occupy 20,000 square feet on four floors of the historic Schmucker Hall on the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. Visitors will be able to explore history where it happened, walk halls where wounded soldiers suffered, experience General Buford's view from the Seminary cupola and stand where many on both sides lost their lives. To see more about this museum, visit [www.seminaryridgemuseum.org](http://www.seminaryridgemuseum.org).

***This Wicked Rebellion*, reviewed by James M. Gallen:** Members of the Civil War/War Between The States community are always looking for new insights into the struggle and the Wisconsin Historical Society Press has brought us a gem. *This Wicked Rebellion* consists of a collection of letters written to families and local newspapers by Wisconsin soldiers. Editor John Zimm has searched the Society's massive collection for representative samplings that bring the war to life in the words of the men who fought it. From farewells to family, camp life and reports from battlefields, hospitals and prisons we are treated to life as the warriors lived it. We readers are privy to accounts from where Wisconsin's banners faced the foe: Bull Run, Shiloh, Winchester, Shiloh, Vicksburg, Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, Spotsylvania and Atlanta. Some letters provide real time impressions of the issues of the day: slavery, emancipation, the purposes of the war and the wounds it left on the hearts of those who fought it. Whether or not you have a particular interest in Wisconsin, regardless of whether you favor Blue or Grey, these observations, emotions and letters are certainly typical of those written to other states for they, and we, all share a common humanity. This is a fairly short book that could be read quickly but it should not be. It is a book to be savored, letter by letter and word by word, as we try to understand those men who closed our great national schism. *This Wicked Rebellion*, John Zimm, ed, Wisconsin University Press, 2012, ISBN 978-0-87020-504-0.

**Caruth Smith Washington:** Caruth Smith Washington, 104, the daughter of Civil War Medal of Honor recipient, Color Sergeant Andrew Jackson Smith, passed away November 20, 2012 at Cranbury Nursing Home in Monroe, New Jersey. Her memorial service was held December 5. To read about her father's Medal of Honor, see [http://www.indianapoliscwrt.org/Hardtack/2008-09/HARDTACK\\_Nov\\_2008.pdf](http://www.indianapoliscwrt.org/Hardtack/2008-09/HARDTACK_Nov_2008.pdf).

### *Official Records*

**December attendance:** 39

**Alan T. Nolan Memorial Youth Scholarship Fund:** The Executive Board of the Indianapolis Civil War Round Table has established this fund to provide membership dues, annual tour expenses or other worthwhile purpose for any full-time student of any age. Please see Tony Roscetti to donate to this fund.

**Facebook:** The Indianapolis Civil War Round Table is on Facebook. We invite you to join our group. Feel free to post Civil War related messages on our site.

**Charitable Sponsors:** In an effort to upgrade our speakers and programs, the board of ICWRT is asking members and organizations with which they are involved (companies or charitable organizations) to consider sponsoring one or more speakers. This could be done as a gift now, or a person could opt to make a bequest in a will for that purpose. Because of our limited membership, we can't bring in as many national speakers as we would like to. If you are interested or want more info, call Chris Smith at 450-7430.

**2013-2014 Possible Changes:** We are considering moving to a different location for our meetings in 2013-2014, or we may have to raise dues to cover expenses of meeting at the Indiana History Center. Our monthly cost is \$190. If you would like to continue meeting at the Indiana History Center, would you be willing to donate money to cover the cost of a monthly meeting? If so, please contact Tony Roscetti.

**Book Raffle:**

*Stop the Evil: A Civil War History of Desertion and Murder*, by Robert I. Alotta

*Noble Women of the North*, edited by Silvia G.L. Dannett

*Grierson's Raid*, by D. Alexander Brown

*Grant Moves South*, by Bruce Catton

*Battle Tactics of the Civil War*, by Paddy Griffith

**\*Anyone wishing to donate books for upcoming raffles should either bring them to Tony Roscetti at the January meeting or contact him to make arrangements for pick up.**

*Test Your Civil War Knowledge (with Trimble's Trivia)*

1. Name the only Civil War general to be killed by Indians. (HINT: It was after the war.)
2. On what battlefield would you find Benner's Hill?
3. Name the U.S. warship named for an Asian flower.
4. On what battlefield would you find Priest Cap?
5. Who wrote the following to his wife: "By some strange operation of magic I seem to have become *the* power of the land. I almost think that were I to win some small success now I could become dictator...?"

Answers to the December quiz:

Identify the Civil War figure who was given each of the nicknames below:

1. "Gath" \*\*\* George A. Townsend, Correspondent, New York Herald
2. "Mother" \*\*\* Mary Ann Bickerdyke, USSC
3. "Indian" \*\*\* Col. Ely Parker
4. "Long Blade" \*\*\* Maj. Heros von Borcke
5. "Old Pete" \*\*\* Gen. James Longstreet

### *The Soldiers Speak*

Martha Lindley, who served in the Union cavalry, wrote: “I was frightened half to death...but I was so anxious to be with my husband that I resolved to see the thing through if it killed me.” – DeAnne Blanton and Lauren M. Cook, *They Fought Like Demons: Women Soldiers in the American Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2002), 31.

Robert Hodges, a Confederate soldier, wrote: “One of the soldiers directed my attention to a youth apparently about seventeen years of age well dressed with a lieutenant’s badge on his collar. I remarked I saw nothing strange. He then told me the young man was not a man but a female.” – Lauren Cook Burgess, *An Uncommon Soldier: The Civil War Letters of Sarah Rosetta Wakeman, alias Pvt. Lyons Wakeman, 153<sup>rd</sup> Regiment* (Pasadena, MD: The Minerva Center, 1994), 3-4.

Sarah Edmonds, who served as “Frank Thompson” in the Union army, wrote: “I could only thank God that I was free and could go forward and work, and was not obliged to stay at home and weep.” – Blanton & Cook, 44.

Orlando M. Poe, wrote about Sarah Edmonds: “A single glance at her in her proper character caused me to wonder how I ever could have mistaken her for a man, and I readily recall many things which ought to have betrayed her, except that no one thought of finding a woman in soldier’s dress.” – Blanton & Cook, 57.

A reporter wrote about “Frank Martin,” a female who served in a cavalry regiment: “She is represented as an excellent horseman....She has seen and endured all the hardships and privations incident to the life of a soldier, and gained an enviable reputation as a scout, having made several wonderful expeditions, which were attended with signal success.” – Blanton & Cook, 65.

Mark Nickerson, 10<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry, found a Confederate woman killed during Antietam: “A Sergeant in charge of a burying party from our regiment reported to his Captain that there was a dead Confederate up in the cornfield whom he had reason to believe was a woman. He wanted to know if she should be kept separate, or brought along with the others. The Captain after satisfying himself that this Confederate was a woman ordered that she be buried by herself. The news soon spread among the soldiers that there was a woman among the Confederate dead, and many of them went and gazed upon the upturned face, and tears glistened in many eyes as they turned away. She was wrapped in a soldier’s blanket and buried by herself and a head board made from a cracker box was set up at her grave marked ‘unknown woman CSA.’ Nothing in my experience up to that time affected me as did that incident. I wanted to know her history and why she was there. She must have been killed just as the Southerners were being driven back from the cornfield.” – Blanton & Cook, 91-92.

A Confederate officer wrote about the Union woman captured at Catlett’s Station on August 22, 1862: “...there was a good deal of merriment among the young staff-officers at headquarters concerning one of our Catlett’s Station prisoners...who, just as we were

sending off the main body of these prisoners to Richmond, had been discovered to be a good-looking woman in full Federal uniform. In order that she might follow to the field her warlike lord, she had enlisted as a private soldier in the same company with him, and now claimed to be excepted from the rest of the prisoners as a privilege of her sex. It was decided, however, that this modern Jeanne d'Arc must share the fate of her comrades for the present, and further decision in the case was left to the Richmond authorities." – Blanton & Cook, 80.

A soldier in the 1<sup>st</sup> Minnesota Artillery wrote to his sister about the death of Sgt. Luther: "One of the members of the 1<sup>st</sup> Kansas Reg't died in the Hospital...After death the somewhat startling discovery was made by those who were preparing the body for burial, that their companion, beside whom they had marched and fought for nearly two years was a woman. You can imagine their astonishment. The Reg't is camped near us and I went to the Hospital and saw her. She was of pretty good size for a woman with rather masculine features. She must have been very shrewd to have kept her secret so long when she was surrounded by several hundred men...This girl enlisted after they went to Missouri, so they know nothing of her early history. She doubtless served under an assumed name. Poor girl! who knows what trouble, grief, or persecution drove her to embrace the hardships of a soldier's life. She had always sustained an excellent reputation in the Regiment. She was brave as a Lion in battle and never flinched from the severest fatigues or the hardest duties. She had been in more than a dozen battles and skirmishes. She was a Sergeant when she died. The men in the company all speak of her in terms of respect and affection. She would have been promoted to a Lieutenancy in a few days if she had lived." – Blanton & Cook, 99.

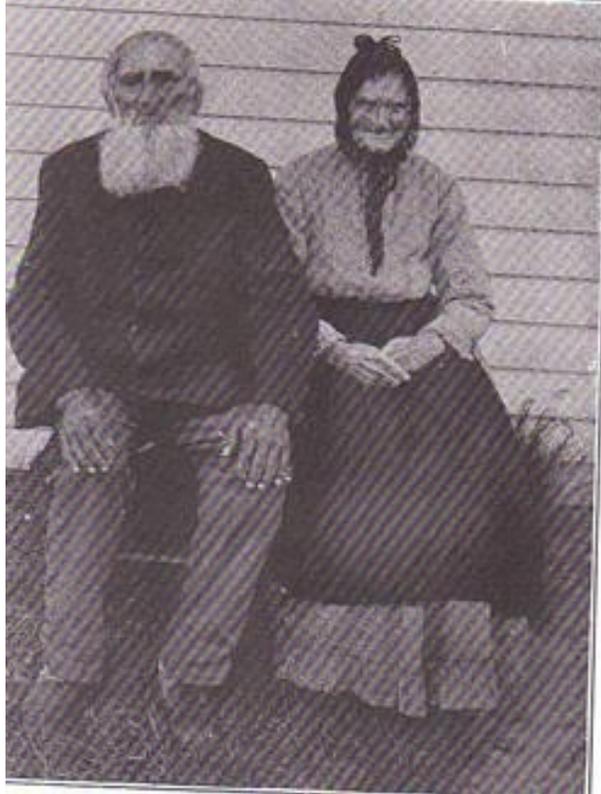
Captain Ira B. Gardner, 14<sup>th</sup> Maine, wrote about a soldier who served two years before being discovered as female: "I did not learn of her sex until the close of the war. If I had been anything but a boy, I should probably have seen from her form that she was a female." – Burgess, 3.

Col. Elijah H.C. Cavins wrote: "A corporal was promoted to sergeant for gallant conduct at the battle of Fredericksburg – since which time the sergeant has become the mother of a child. What use have we for women, if soldiers in the army can give birth to children? It is said that the sergeant and his Capt. occupied the same tent, they being intimate friends." – Burgess, 5.

Col. Adrian Root, 94<sup>th</sup> NY Infantry, wrote about a corporal who gave birth to a baby boy while on duty in winter camp along the Rappahannock River in Virginia: "When I was on duty as General Officer of the Day I came across a very singular case of illness out on the picket line....A corporal of a New Jersey regiment who was on duty with the pickets complained of being unwell, but little notice was given his complaints at first. His pain and other symptoms of severe indisposition increased, becoming so evident that his officers had him carried to a nearby farmhouse. There the worthy corporal was safely delivered of a fine, fat little recruit for the...regiment!" – Blanton & Cook, 103.

Mary Livermore wrote in her 1888 memoirs: "...I am convinced that a large number of women disguised themselves and enlisted in the service, for one cause or other, than was dreamed of. Entrenched in secrecy, and regarded as men, they were sometimes revealed as women, by accident or casualty. Some startling histories of these military women were current in the gossip of army life; and extravagant and unreal as were many of the narrations, one always felt they had a foundation in fact." – Blanton & Cook, 7.

### *Soldier of the Month*



John and Elizabeth Finner, Picture and info from Find a Grave Memorial

Elizabeth and her husband John Finner both served together in Company D of the 81<sup>st</sup> Ohio. Her gravestone in the Military Section of South Park Cemetery in Greensburg, Indiana, says "She served in male attire until her sex was detected when she was detailed as a nurse serving 3 years."

## *Historic Site of the Month*



Sarah Edmunds, picture from Clarke Historical Library

The **Clarke Historical Library** at Central Michigan University has the letter that Sarah Emma Edmunds Seelye, who served in the Civil War as Franklin (Frank) Thompson, wrote requesting an increase in her pension. The transcription of this letter can be viewed at: [http://www.michiganinletters.org/2009\\_07\\_01\\_archive.html](http://www.michiganinletters.org/2009_07_01_archive.html).

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