



HARDTACK

Indianapolis Civil War Round Table Newsletter

<http://indianapoliscwrt.org/>



April 9, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.

Meeting at Indiana History Center Auditorium
450 West Ohio Street

The Plan of the Day



photo from snakes-beauty.blogspot.com

Cold Blooded Envenomations of 1861-65

Perpetuated error: No snake bites to Civil War soldiers. Printed U.S. Civil War genre, written by soldiers and sailors of the time, frequently mentions seeing and having contact with poisonous snakes. However, over the past 125 years, the literature authored by those who did not participate in the Civil War has continued to perpetuate the error that snake bites to the soldiers did not occur. Individuals, still today, generate theories to justify their belief of such erroneous statements. Today, like 150 years ago, snakebites and associated fatalities in the United States were rare, but they did exist and still occur today. From May 1861, through May 1865, *Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion* documents 183 snake bites with 2 being fatal on the Union side. One would expect similar snake bite numbers on the Confederate side. Unfortunately, during the Richmond, VA, fires of 1865, the Confederate Surgeon-General records were lost. However, individual snake bite reports were described, some in great detail. In an effort to cease the perpetuated error that snake bites did not occur, it is imperative that historians and students of Civil War history receive accurate, researched information. Such research has discovered no fewer than 192 cases of snake bite to Union and Confederate forces, 4 of which were fatal. This presentation will review 13 case reports of snake bit soldiers, 7 on the Union side, 3 of which are clearly not captured in the Federal statistics with 1 being fatal. The other 6 cases are on the Confederate side. All 13 cases have a unique aspect. For example, 2 cases were published in the medical literature by the treating surgeon from their respective side. This presentation will also review the geographical range and

toxicities for the venomous serpents found on US Civil War grounds with a summary of treatment modalities according to the US medical literature from the period.

Objectives: Name two poisonous snakes that bit Civil War soldiers which still cause poisonous bites today. Recognize toxic signs and symptoms of bites from poisonous snakes occurring during the Civil War and today. Differentiate snake bite treatment for Civil War soldiers as compared to today's treatment.

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



Mark Laubacher, RN, paramedic, is a Certified Specialist in Poison Information since 1992 at the Central Ohio Poison Center located at Nationwide Children's Hospital, Columbus, Ohio. Prior to this, he was a full time staff nurse at Children's Emergency Department for 4 years. He received his Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Capital University in 1989. He is also currently a faculty member for Grant Medical Center Paramedic Program in Columbus, Ohio. Having delivered over 400 presentations, he routinely presents at the state and national levels on various topics of toxicological emergencies. A student of US Civil War history, Mark presented a paper on snake bites to Union and Confederate soldiers at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine Conference in 2013. He did the same at the Society of Civil War Surgeons Conference in May 2014. A review of unconventional weapons that were considered during the Civil War was given in New Orleans in September 2014 to the North American Congress of Clinical Toxicology. He is an active member of the following: 1st Ohio Light Artillery Battery A, Central Ohio Civil War Roundtable, Society of Civil War Surgeons, National Museum of Civil War Medicine, and Society of Civil War Historians. His publications include: Laubacher, Mark. "Snake Bit--Perpetuated Error: No Snake Bites to Civil War Soldiers." *Blue & Gray Magazine* 30, no. 5 (July 2014): 45-52. Laubacher, Mark. "The First Medical Man aboard USS *Monitor*," *Journal of Civil War Medicine* 19, no. 2 (April/May/June 2015): 60-71.

Roster of Officers and Committees for the 2017-2018 Campaign

Officers:

President: Dave Sutherland

Vice President: Tony Trimble

Secretary: Mark Thornton

Treasurer: Tony Roscetti

Immediate Past President: Chris Smith

Committees:

Preservation: Andy O'Donnell

Website: Ed Pope

Program Selection: Chris Smith, Jenny Thompson, Tony Trimble

Publicity: Peg Bertelli, Dave Sutherland & Tony Roscetti

Quiz Master:

Tony Trimble

HARDTACK Newsletter:

Editor: Jenny Thompson

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 jkt60jet@gmail.com by the tenth day following the preceding month's meeting.

2017-2018 Campaign Plans

May 14, 2018 – Meredith and Judy Wilson - James Davy's Civil War Diary

June 11, 2018 – Jennifer Murray – *On a Great Battlefield: The Making, Management, and Memory of Gettysburg National Military Park, 1933-2013*

Other Camp Activities

Hamilton County Civil War Roundtable: They meet at the Carmel City Hall, located at 1 Civic Square, Carmel, IN 46032. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and the program will start at 7:00 in the Second Floor Counsel Room. Join them for dinner at 5:15 p.m. at Dooley O'Toole's Restaurant at 160 E. Carmel Dr., Carmel, IN 46032. Meetings will be on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, September through May, excluding December.

April 11, 2018 - Dave Finney, "Stonewall Jackson's Last Days"

May 9, 2018 - Dr. E.C. Fields, "General U.S. Grant"

Madison County Historical Society Civil War Roundtable: They meet on the third Monday each month except July, August, and December at 7 p.m. at the Madison County History Center, 15 West 11th Street, in downtown Anderson.

April 16, 2018 - Brian Dirck - "The Black Heavens: Abraham Lincoln and Death"

May 21, 2018 - Tom Hamm - "Anti War Sentiment in Indiana"

June 18, 2018 - Mike Murphy - "The Fighting Kimberlin Family"

July and August - no meetings

September 17, 2018 - Jason Lantzer - "Rebel Bulldog"

October 15, 2018 - Steve Ritchie - "Robert E. Lee: West Point Cadet"
 November 19, 2018 - DVD "Finance and Supply"
 December - no meeting

Special Orders

A Walk Through Leadership on Our Country's Common Ground: The graduates of the IMPD Leadership Academy and Mr. Bill Westfall invite others to join them as they visit the Flight 93 Memorial, Gettysburg Battlefield and National Cemetery, and Antietam Battlefield on June 24 - 28, 2018. Dr. Harry L. Reeder, III will be the primary guide for the battlefields. The cost of \$526 per person covers the bus trip, four-night hotel room (double occupancy), three movies on the bus (Gods and Generals; Lincoln; and Gettysburg), box lunches, and other main meals. For more information, please contact Lt. Donald A. Bender at dbender1510@gmail.com or 317.506.1510.

Treasure Hunters Claim to Have Found Buried Gold Lost During The Battle of Gettysburg: Dennis and Kem Parada claim 52 gold bars, worth \$55 million, were buried under a fire pit at Dents Run during the Battle of Gettysburg. The wagon train carrying the gold from Wheeling to Harrisburg, only made it to St. Mary's. They found the wagons and the dead soldiers, but no gold. For more information about this, please visit <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5511135/FBI-site-Civil-War-gold-rumored-buried.html>. After two days of searching, the FBI, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the treasure hunters failed to find the gold. https://www.stripes.com/fbi-finds-no-lost-civil-war-gold-in-pennsylvania-dig-1.517842?utm_medium=email&utm_source=Stars+and+Stripes+Emails&utm_campaign=Daily+Headlines

Official Records

Attendance: 28

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.

Help Sponsor a Meeting: We are accepting donations in increments of fifty dollars to help pay the cost of our monthly rental: \$50 (Brigadier General); \$100 (Major General);

\$150 (Lieutenant General); and \$200 (General). Those who donate \$200 will be given the honor of leading the pledge to the flag before the meeting. Checks should be written to the Indiana Historical Society with "ICWRT" noted in the memo line and given to treasurer Tony Roscetti, so we can keep a record of the donations.

Book Raffle:

Chancellorsville and Gettysburg, by Abner Doubleday

Gettysburg, by Stephen W. Sears

The Darkest Days of the War: The Battles of Iuka & Corinth, by Peter Cozzens

Return to Bull Run: The Campaign and Battle of Second Manassas, by John J. Hennessey

Old Allegheny: The Life and Wars of General Ed Johnson, by Gregg S. Clemmer

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

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

1. On what battlefield would you find nine forts connected by earthworks twenty feet thick?
2. Who was the Radical Republican candidate who withdrew his candidacy in 1864 in order to prevent the election of McClellan?
3. Where was Harwood's Tobacco Factory? For what was it used?
4. Capt. Christopher Rodgers, U.S.N. wrote the following in a battle report, "The fires of hell were turned upon the Union fleet. The air seemed full of heavy shot, and as they flew they could be seen as plainly as a base-ball in one of our games." What battle was he describing?
5. What were "stone fleets?"

Answers to the March Quiz:

1. Name the pre-war band master who led a famous raid during the Vicksburg Campaign.
*** Col. Benjamin Grierson
2. On 20 March 1863, a skirmish was fought at Vaught's Hill. Where is it? *** near Milton, TN
3. By what nickname was the 37th Iowa Volunteer Infantry known? Why? *** Graybeard Regiment; no enrollee under age 45
4. Who wrote, "For four years have I waited, hoped, and prayed, for the dark clouds to break, and for a restoration of our sunshine. To wait longer would be a crime."? *** John Wilkes Booth
5. Name the Union officer who was vilified for the hanging of William B. Mumford for the offense of tearing down the American flag in front of a U.S. Mint. *** Benjamin Butler

The Newspapers Speak

From www.newspapers.com

The Charlotte Democrat (Charlotte, North Carolina) Tuesday, February 26, 1861, page 4

POISON - Its Antidote. - Farm, stock raising and cheese making have been my employment. I now say to your readers something which I think will be useful for them to know. The subject that I will introduce is poison and its sovereign remedy.

It is now twenty years since I learned that sweet oil would cure the bite of a rattlesnake, not knowing that it would cure any other poison. Practice, observation and experience have taught me that it will cure poison of any kind both in man and beast. I think no farmer should be without a bottle of it in his house. The patient must take a spoonful internally and bathe the wound for a cure. To cure a horse it required eight times as much as it does a man. Here let me say of one of the most extreme cases of snake bite in this neighborhood, eleven years ago this summer, where the case has been over thirty hours standing, and the patient given up to die by the doctors. I heard of it, carried the oil and gave him one spoonful, which created a cure. It is an antidote for arsenic and strychnine. It will cure bloat in cattle, caused by eating too freely of fresh clover; it will cure the sting of bees, spiders, or any insects; and it will also cure persons who have been poisoned by a low running vine growing in meadows, called ivy.

The Huntington Democrat (Huntington, Indiana) Thursday, April 11, 1861, page 3

Cure for Hydrophobia.

Mr. James A. Hubbard, of Boone county, Ill., in a letter to the St. Louis Republican, says:

Eighteen years ago, my brother and myself were bitten by a mad dog. A sheep was also bitten at the same time. - Among the many cures offered [sic] for the little boys (we were then ten or twelve years of age) a friend suggested the following which he said would cure the bite of a rattlesnake:

Take the root of common upland ash, peel off the bark, and boil it to a strong decoction, of this drink freely.

Whilst my father was preparing the above the sheep spoken of began to be attacked with hydrophobia. When it had become so fatigued from its distracted state as to be no longer able to stand, my father drenched it with a pint of ash root dose, hoping to ascertain whether he could depend upon it as a cure for his sons. Four hours after the drench had been given, to the astonishment of all, the animal got up and went quietly with the flock to grazing. My brother and myself continued to take the medicine for eight or ten days - one gill three times a day. No effects of the dreadful poison were discovered on either of us. It has been used very successfully in snake bites to my knowledge.

Cincinnati Daily Press (Cincinnati, Ohio) Friday, May 31, 1861, page 3

Extraordinary Cure of a Snake Bite.

From a private letter-writer from Texas, we copy the following interesting account of his success in treating the bite of a rattlesnake:

Before I forget it, let me inform you that the medicine chest arrived in due season, and that just as I opened it I had pressing use for one of the articles it contained. I was looking over the bottle, when one of my men came running in, saying he had been bitten by a rattlesnake. He was holding fast his left wrist, while two streams of blood were

running from one of his fingers, where the fangs of the snake had entered. As the man did not use tobacco, I told him to fill his mouth with salt and suck as hard as he could at his wounds. I next kept a rag well saturated with hartshorn on the wounds, to counteract the poison. I then put thirty drops of hartshorn in a teaspoonful of whisky and poured it down his throat. In five minutes I repeated the dose, and in five minutes more I gave him another just like it. By this time I had given him a quart of strong whisky and ninety drops of hartshorn, and thought the load was sufficient.

The man was an Irishman, an old soldier, and took the matter quite coolly. It was a great satisfaction to him to know that another man had killed the snake, which was coiled under a rail he was moving, not ten steps from the house. For three-quarters of an hour he sat quietly, and talked soberly and coolly while I kept renewing the hartshorn to the two wounds where the fangs of the snake had entered his finger. He said it was too bad to die from the bite of a "pizen sarpint," while I was astonished he could [sic] keep so sober with such a load of raw whisky on his stomach. In about an hour he commenced to laugh, then to whistle, next to sing, and finally tried to dance. I had him all right then; I knew that the whisky had got ahead of the poison, and had reached his vitals first. In five minutes more he was as drunk as Bacchus, sprawled out upon the floor, slept half a day, and next morning was at work as well as ever. So much for the first case I ever cured with the contents of the medicine chest. The hartshorn combined with the whisky effected the change.

Civilian of the Month



Photo from Find a Grave Memorial # 11826114; information from our speaker and www.newspapers.com
Dr. Silas Weir Mitchell studied rattlesnake envenomations in the late 1850s to 1860. His published work became famous and the speckled rattlesnake, *Crotalus mitchelli*, was named after him. During the war, he became known for his work in neurology at Turner Hospital.

The Waco News-Tribune (Waco, Texas) Monday, January 4, 1954, page 4

IN 1914, 40 years ago today, Silas W. Mitchell, American author and physician, died in Philadelphia at the age of 85. Also the son of a Philadelphia doctor, Mitchell was a surgeon in the War Between the States. He became widely known as an authority on nervous disorders and was especially renowned for his use of the "rest cure."

Dr. Mitchell wrote many medical monographs and articles on various subjects, and in 1863 contributed some fiction to the *Atlantic Monthly*. [sic] From then on, he

divided his interests between literary and professional [sic] pursuits. The doctor-author wrote juvenile fiction, historical novels and verse. Among the latter we find these lines:

"Up anchor! Up anchor!
Set sail and away!
The ventures of dreamland
Are thine for a day."

Historic Site of the Month



Ward at the Civil War Hospital

Photo from commons.wikimedia.org and quotation from http://www.philly.com/philly/opinion/20160320_At_a_medical_crossroads.html

Turner's Lane General Hospital was located between Girard College and Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. "Three contract surgeons - George Read Morehouse, William W. Keen, and S. Weir Mitchell - treated and studied thousands of amputees shipped to Turner's Lane after major engagements, including the Battle of Gettysburg. 'The opportunity was indeed unique and we knew it....It was exciting in its constancy of novel interests,' observed Mitchell. With the 1864 publication of *Gunshot Wounds and Other Injuries of Nerves*, the three physicians reported on their 18 months of experience tending to the grisly wounds of modern warfare. Their efforts 'created a body of work that effectively founded American neurology,' remarked Dr. Robert Hicks, director of the Mütter Museum. Mitchell, a man of letters as much as a man of medicine, coined the term phantom limb to describe the nervous system's reaction to amputations and experimented with different methods for treating causalgia, a painful syndrome common to victims of peripheral nerve injuries. In the decades after the surrender at Appomattox, Mitchell contacted several of his former patients to study the impact of combat injuries on their later lives, one of the first longitudinal studies of its kind."

Re-enlist NOW for the 2018-2019 Campaign

All ICWRT members may continue to receive the monthly newsletter, HARDTACK, via email at no additional charge. Members who prefer to receive the HARDTACK by U.S. Mail are asked to pay an additional \$12.00 to help cover printing and mailing costs.



Please bring your completed re-enlistment form (below) together with your payment to Indianapolis Civil War Round Table, and give it to Tony Roscetti, ICWRT Treasurer, at the next Round Table meeting, or mail your re-enlistment form and payment to:

Tony Roscetti
6260 Green Leaves Road
Indianapolis, Indiana 46220

Phone: (317) 475-9227
Email: anthony.roschetti@pnc.com

Please complete and detach the form below and include with your check:

ICWRT Membership Enlistment for July 2018 thru June 2019

Please print legibly!

Name..... Date

Address.....
.....

Phone: (.....) Email Address:

We must have a valid email address if you wish to receive the HARDTACK newsletter free of charge!

(please specify Membership Level):

_____ **\$30 Individual** _____ **\$35 Family** _____ **\$15 Student**

_____ **I wish to receive the newsletter via U.S. Mail for an additional \$12**

In addition to my membership dues, please accept my generous gift of \$ _____
to the ICWRT general operating account (This donation is not tax deductible)

If someone invited you to join the ICWRT, please list his or her name below:

Indianapolis Civil War Round Table
6019 Allendale Dr.
Indianapolis, IN 46224