

Battlefield Dispatch

VOLUME 26, ISSUE 2

APRIL 2008

Bits and Pieces

By LBG Rick Hohmann

The March 21 business meeting was postponed due to the Easter weekend. The meeting was rescheduled for April 18. The major business to be discussed involves changes to the by-laws that were

will not fade as readily as the previous model that was all blue. We will keep a close eye on the way the new color performs and make any necessary changes.

We expect the zoning issue involving our new office/library to be favorably resolved in the near future. Loring Schultz, owner of the Farnsworth House, has informed us that we may store items there securely until Gettysburg Borough Council deals with the matter. Jim Clouse's Building Committee is on top of the situation and there are contingency plans should they become necessary. The Executive Council agrees that the best course is

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The President's Column

posted in the last issue of the *Dispatch*. Guillermo Bosch is scheduled to present the continuing education program.

The uniform committee has selected a new ball cap for the Guide force. It is actually the same hat with a blue bill and gray top that hopefully

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Emmitsburg Road Clean Up-Please Help!

The ALBG is in charge of cleaning up trash along the Emmitsburg road. The 2008 schedule is:

- | | | |
|----------------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| Saturday, April 19 | 6pm | *Notice the |
| Saturday, June 28 | 6pm | October date has a |
| Saturday, August 23 | 6pm | different start time! |
| Saturday, October 18 | *5pm | |

Meet at 105th Pennsylvania monument. Gloves and vests will be provided.

Please help! **LBG Don Walters** is often out there nearly alone. Let's pitch in and clean up some of our beautiful battlefield!

Upcoming Continuing Education Programs:

**April 18,
Bosch on
Meade, the
Engineer**

**May 16,
George
Newton on
The Artillery
in the Peach
Orchard**

**Don't Miss
them!!**

Bits and Pieces

(Continued from page 1)

to be patient and wait out the process, obtaining the office space we really want.

We will box up books and plan to move by the weekend of April 12. We have been told that we must vacate the old Guide room by no later than May 1, but we should be cleared out by mid-April. The consensus of the Executive Council and the Building Committee is that it is the Foundation's responsibility to adequately furnish the Guide room in the new Visitor Center. The budget funds that we have allocated will be used almost

exclusively for our new office/library. A new copier will be purchased when the office does open. The Park has agreed to provide us with one of the wooden conference room tables and also a number of chairs.

Paul Marhevka has resigned as vice-president for personal reasons. I will appoint George Newton to that position. If confirmed at the April 8 meeting of the Executive Council, George will be the new vice-president through the end of the year. All other members of the council have agreed to stay on board.

It is extremely important that problems with the new computerized reservation system be written up on the form in the Guide room and placed in either my mailbox or Guillermo Bosch's. If problems are not documented they DID NOT OCCUR. The Association will maintain copies of those reported problems, and I will personally give copies to Cheryl Cline. Time will tell whether two computer monitors will be sufficient to handle the volume of Guides trying to sign in, to change availabilities, and to scan ticket receipts during our busy season. Guides would be well advised to arrive by 7:30 am if they wish to participate in the 8:00 draw. The payment system seems to be functioning well enough, although the direct deposit feature has only recently been implemented. Again, time will tell how Guides will be

impacted as far as efficiency of scheduling and impact on gratuities are concerned.

The busy season is about to begin. I sincerely hope that all Guides will be able to throw themselves into the work we have all enjoyed in the past and to overcome recent difficulties. Those difficult moments were produced by arrogance and lack of respect for our organization that was consistent with the way others have been dealt with. The majority of our membership concluded that we would no longer accept that kind of treatment, and I assure you that has not changed. More difficulties may lie ahead. We will be professional in the way we deal with them, but we will not accept arrogant or rude treatment, especially from people who are not our employers.

The September seminar this year will focus on the Peach Orchard. Presenters will include Stuart Dempsey, Ralph Siegel, George Newton, et al. Details will be forthcoming in April.

Finally, the new Visitor Center and Museum, due to open on April 14, will be critiqued fairly in upcoming issues of the *Dispatch*, as will the computerized reservation system, still a work in progress. As moving day approaches we will need volunteers to help move items to either the Farnsworth House or the new Visitor Center. Dates and times will be posted shortly. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

The Battlefield Dispatch

C/O ALBG, Inc.
PO Box 4152
Gettysburg, PA 17325
Email: albgdispatch@hotmail.com

Editor Ellen Pratt

Staff Ed Pratt
Jim Clouse

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Gone Fishing

Submitted by LBG Stuart Dempsey

It was while in this camp [near Sharpsburg, MD] that I was witness to an incident which you can relate or omit as suits you. General A. A. Humphreys, the division commander, out ranked General McClellan in the regular army, he being a major while McClellan was only a captain in the Engineer Corps. Humphreys was chief of Engineers before he died. He was a very smart and well-read man but as innocent as a child when brought face to face with the tactics to which the men would resort to gain their point. As I had to get his signature to all requisitions before I could draw on them, I started very early one morning to have one countersigned before I started for Harper's Ferry. The General was not yet up and while standing by his tent I noticed a private of his command walk over the line on which the Headquarters Guard walked his beat and go into the General's retiring room, or water closet which was a few yards in the rear on the left of the General's tent.

GONE FISHING

In a few minutes the General came out and after I saluted him and he bade me good morning saying he would attend to my papers in a few minutes. He started for the water closet. When I heard the following conversation, "Here! What in the hell and damnation are you doing in here?" The reply was, "Hush you damn fool. Do you see that you frightened all the fish? If you don't keep quiet I will knock your damned head off. I just had a bite and you frightened it away and it was a whopper." The General came rushing out and yelled, "Doctor, Doctor? Guards...call the Doctor and then go in and arrest that fellow who is

in there. Bring him out here and hold him for the doctor to see. Do not hurt him. He is as crazy as a loon and I will have him discharged."

The doctor, who had come on the grounds while the General was talking said, "I will have to examine him and have him before a board to test his sanity before I can discharge him." The General blurted out, "Examine hell! He is as crazy as a loon. Do you suppose any one but a crazy man would be fishing in there?"

It was then the guards appeared with his prisoner who had a small twig with some spool thread tied to it and a bent pin. Humphreys said, "Doctor, make out his discharge immediately. I will have it approved and send him off. He is not safe here." When the form was filled, the General took it himself to the corps headquarters and as a personal favor had Fitz John Porter order the discharge. He then sent a corporal and two men with the lunatic as far as Harper's Ferry to keep him from harm and start him on his way home.

After the corporal had seated him the corporal handed him his discharge he said, "Well, Johnny, tell me what you were fishing for. You now have your discharge and it won't hurt you." The supposed lunatic brightened up, stuck the paper in his jacket and said, "I bet with a comrade ten dollars that I would get my discharge inside of three days and I fished for it and got it from a bigger fool than I am."

Gildea, James, [A Magnificent Irishman from Appalachia: The Letters of James Gildea, First Ohio Light Artillery, Battery L](#), Milford OH: Little Miami Publishing, 2003. pp 42-43.

ALBG News Briefs for Spring 2008

LBG Hope Coates gets the most valuable player award for breaking her wrist on Little Round Top, BUT finishing the tour. Get well soon!

LBGs Howie Frankenfield and Mike Kanazawich will be celebrating birthdays on April 23 and 24 respectively. Happy Birthday, Friends!

Mike Kanazawich also gets Congratulations for the publication of his book *Remarkable Stories of the Lincoln Assassination*. Check it out, it's a great read!

LBG John Tudor will be celebrating a birthday on May 31. Happy Birthday, Johnny T!

Who's That Guide?



How cute! In the photo on the right, our future Guide is in the middle. Climbing on a cannon, tsk, tsk, tsk. He was a handful, even back then!

Visitor Center Statistics

STATISTICS-- Jan-Feb 2008	TOTALS	CHANGE	PERCENTAGE
Visitors at Visitor Center	27,179	-5,062	-15.7%
Car tours	371	-96	-20.6%
Van tours	21	-4	-16.0%
Bus tours	108	+21	+24.1%
Cemetery walks			
Total tours	500	-79	-13.6%
Guides available	394	-101	-20.4%

War Quotes

A good infantry is without doubt the backbone of the army, but if it had to fight long against superior artillery, it would be discouraged and disorganized.

Napoleon Bonaparte

Wise, Jennings C. Long Arm of Lee, p 152.

Dispatch Submission Deadline Schedule 2008

June Issue
August Issue
October Issue
December Issue

May 20
July 20
September 20
November 20

Submit material on disk to the editor, Ellen Pratt, via my mailbox at the Guide room or by email to albgdispatch@hotmail.com. If you don't have access to a computer, just talk to me in person or call me at 717.549.3700.

Library Committee Report

By LBG Jim Clouse

It appears our library and archives will have to go into temporary storage pending our finding a suitable, affordable location for an ALBG office. I hope to arrange the storage so that items can be retrieved if necessary upon request. Meanwhile, we have added many books to our shelves from various sources:

DONATED BY EASTERN NATIONAL:

- "Douglas and Lincoln" by Paul and Stephen Kendrick
- "Did Lincoln Own Slaves? And Other Frequently Asked Questions about Abraham Lincoln" by Gerald J. Prokopowicz
- "President Lincoln, the Duty of a Statesman" by William Lee Miller
- "Lincoln and the Court" by Brian McGinty
- "From Midnight to Dawn: The Last Tracks of the Underground Railroad" by Jacqueline L. Tobin and Hettie Jones
- "Sidelights and Lighter Sides of the War Between the States: A Feast of History Cooked up in Small Bites" by Ralph Green
- "Drummer Boy Willie McGee, Civil War Hero and Fraud" by Thomas Fox
- "Go If you Think It your Duty [3rd Minnesota Infantry] A Minnesota Couple's Civil War Letters" by Andrea R. Foroughi
- "The Women Will Howl: The Union Army's Capture of Roswell and New Manchester, Georgia, and the Forced Relocation of Mill Workers" by Mary Deborah Petite
- Voices of the Confederate Navy, Articles, Letters, Reports, and Reminiscences" edited by R. Thomas Campbell
- "Confederate Guerilla Sue Mundy, A Biography of Kentucky Soldier Jerome Clarke" by Thomas Shelby Watson with Perry A. Brantley
- "100 Things to Know about the Battle of Gettysburg" by Sandy Allison, editor
- "George Stoneman, A biography of the Union General" by Ben Fuller Fordney
- "The Making of Robert E. Lee" by Michael Fellman
- "The Rebel and the Rose, James A Semple, Julia Gardiner Tyler, and the Lost Confederate Gold" by Wesley Millett and Gerald White
- "The Gettysburg Diaries" by Mark Nesbitt (2 copies) [previously published as "35 Days to Gettysburg"] [soldiers in 12th PA Reserves and 15th Georgia]

DONATED BY LBG DAVE RICHARDS:

- "Black Flag Over Dixie: Racial Atrocities and Reprisals in the Civil War" edited by Gregory J.W. Urwin

DONATED BY LBG DENNIS CONROY:

- "Pickett's Charge: The Last Attack at Gettysburg" by Earl J. Hess
- "Eye of the Storm" written and illustrated by Private Robert Knox Sneden [40th New York Infantry but author not at Gettysburg]
- "North with Lee and Jackson, the Last Story of Gettysburg" by James A. Kegel
- "Personal Memoirs of Ulysses S. Grant"
- "Gettysburg July 1" by David G. Martin (1st edition)
- "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, vol. II"

DONATED BY LBG JOHN FUSS:

- "The Diary of a Lady of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania from June 15 to July 15, 1863" by Sarah M. Broadhead

DONATED BY LBG RICK HOHMANN:

- "The Making of Robert E. Lee" by Michael Fellman
- "The Confederate Field Manual" [for ordnance officers]
- "Lee at Gettysburg...Commentary on Defeat" by A.M. Gambone
- "Come Retribution, the Confederate Secret Service and the Assassination of Lincoln" by William A. Tidwell
- "The Battle of Monocacy, a Documented Report" by Edwin C. Bearss
- Maps of Monocacy Battlefield
- "The Men of Fort Ward, Defenders of Washington" by William J. Miller
- "Civil War Harrisburg, A guide to Capitol Area Sites, Incidents, and Personalities" edited by Lawrence E. Keener-Farley and James E. Schmick
- Copies of the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th GNMP Seminar booklets
- "Mapping for Stonewall, the Civil War Service of Jed Hotchkiss" by William J. Miller
- "Digging into Custer's Last Stand" by Sandy Barnard
- "Pray Tell, Private Hell" [poetry] edited by Steven Bartel

Captain Nelson Ames, Battery G, 1st New York, Light Artillery

By *LBG Ellen Pratt, Dispatch Editor*

Nelson Ames was born on November 24, 1838, in Mexico, Oswego County, New York. His father, Edwin, owned a profitable farm in Mexico, and Nelson and his brothers assisted with the farm work.

In September of 1861, Nelson helped to recruit what would become Battery G, 1st New York Light Artillery. As the men gathered to board wagons for the nearest train, their loved ones and other townspeople gathered to say goodbye. In October, Ames was mustered in for three years at Elmira, New York, as First Lieutenant of Battery G, with J. D. Frank as Captain. At the end of October the unit was sent to Washington, DC, and in November the battery was equipped with six ten-pound Parrott rifles.

After a winter spent drilling, Battery G was transported to the Virginia Peninsula with the 2nd

Corps and assisted in the siege of Yorktown. It was engaged at the battle of Seven Pines as well as the Seven Days' Battles. Lt. Ames was severely wounded at the battle of Malvern Hill. Battle injuries had depleted the battery to such an extent that Ames was assisting to load a cannon, and an artillery shell exploded near his head. The explosion stunned him, "forcing his body into the wheel of the gun...while he was fast in the wheel the gun was fired causing by its recoil an injury to the back..." The explosion also caused Ames to become deaf in his right ear. He was sent to New York to recover. While he was away, the battery drew six Napoleons to replace the Parrott rifles, which were ruined at Malvern Hill when the battery was forced to overload them to keep the enemy at bay.

Because of his injury, Lt. Ames missed the battle of

Antietam, but he was back with the battery by the end of September, 1862. At the battle of Fredericksburg, the Union Army was attempting to force a crossing of the Rappahannock River. Confederate rifleman on the opposite bank picked off the engineers as they at-

tempted to lay the ponton bridge for the crossing. Battery G assisted in driving off the Confederates and enabling infantry units to cross and set up a beachhead. Shortly after the crossing, a caisson of Ames' section overturned on a steep incline, trapping the drivers under the horses. Although he was ordered not to endanger himself by assisting, Ames disobeyed, calling to his men to right the caisson and save the drivers, all the time exposing himself to enemy fire.

In early 1863, Captain Frank was discharged because of illness, and Ames was promoted to Captain of Battery G effective April 4, 1863. At Chancellorsville on May 3, 1863, Stonewall Jackson's flank attack crushed the Union 11th Corps. Battery G literally had to pass through fire to reach the front as the Wilderness

burned. Upon arriving, Ames attempted to rally the retreating 11th Corps. He stated, "It seemed to the men of the battery that the officers of the Corps were more frightened than the men." Following Chancellorsville, Battery G was transferred to the Artillery Reserve.

Two months later, at Gettysburg, Battery G was engaged on July 2nd at the Peach Orchard. According to Ames' official report of the battle, the battery had two guns facing east and the other four facing south. While there is no doubt Battery G was in the Peach Orchard on that day, there is some debate regarding the actions of Battery G on the third day. In Ames' report, dated September 7, 1863, he states that the battery was ordered to "move to the rear and take shelter behind a piece of woods." Ames then states that his

(Continued on page 7)



Nelson Ames, from History of Battery G

battery was advanced and engaged when the enemy infantry appeared. Later though, in the report he wrote for *New York at Gettysburg*, he claims that the battery took part in the cannonade preceding Pickett's Charge on July 3rd. The marker for Battery G's position on that day is immediately north of the intersection of United States and Hancock Avenue.

In May of 1864, Battery G was present at the Wilderness but not engaged, because the trees and dense undergrowth provided no field of fire. The men were witnesses, however, to the horror of that field. Ames would write: "It was one of the most fearful sights to witness of all the horrors of the war, to see comrades...fall and perish in that fire.... Poets may write of the glory of the battlefield, but the writer of this narrative believes that war is nothing less than the furies of hell turned loose." Later that month, the battery manned the Bloody Angle at Spotsylvania and brought off nine captured guns. During these campaigns, Ames twice escaped serious injury. At the crossing of the North Anna river, a bullet hit Ames' coffee cup as he was about to drink from it. A few days later, he was slightly wounded in the elbow when a bullet glanced off the metal plate on his sword belt.

In the fall of 1864, Captain Ames was court-martialed for "permitting men under his command to do violence to an officer." He was found not guilty, but explained the reason for the charge:

"[I]t was because he had ordered a guard to tie to the wheel of a gun carriage, Chaplain Burdick, of the Sixty-First New York Volunteers, who came into the battery under the influence of liquor and tried to ride over a guard, when ordered out of the gun park by the guard. The reverend gen-

Mark your calendars – Important Dates



April 18, 6:30 PM
ALBG Business Meeting
G.A.R. Hall— Continuing
Education: Guillermo
Bosch, “Meade, the
Engineer.”

Bosch’s presentation will follow the business meeting. **This business meeting takes the place of March’s meeting, which was postponed because of Good Friday.**

May 16, 6:30 PM
ALBG Business Meeting
G.A.R. Hall— Continuing Education:
George Newton, “The Artillery at the Peach Orchard.”

George’s presentation will follow the business meeting.

July 18, 6:30 PM
ALBG Business Meeting
G.A.R. Hall— Continuing Education:
Michael Kanazawich, “John Wilkes
Booth—Actor Turned Assassin.”
Michael’s presentation will follow the business meeting.

Association of Licensed Battlefield Guides **717.337.1709**

The ALBG was founded in 1916 as the official organization to represent and promote licensed guiding at Gettysburg. Interested individuals who do not hold guide licenses may join the ALBG as Associate members by submitting annual dues of \$25. Membership includes a subscription to the *Dispatch* and covers July 1-June 30.

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