



THE DRUM & BUGLE
Voice of the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table
June 2022, Volume 19, Issue 6

Speaker: Tyler McGraw
Topic: Emory Upton in Myth and Memory
When: Monday June 13, 2022
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

Tyler McGraw: "Emory Upton in Myth and Memory"

I'm 27 and have been a resident of Spotsylvania County since 2000. I've spent 15 years studying the battlefields in this area, and have been involved with the park in different capacities for the past 7 years. I have spent 3 years on Capitol Hill, and currently teach special education at James Monroe High School, as well as work at the NPS bookstores.

Tyler will discuss Emory Upton's early life, and his time at West Point. He will discuss the two campaigns of Rappahannock Station and Spotsylvania Court House in terms of Upton's roles at the campaigns. He will then discuss Upton's post war career, including his military reform campaign. Lastly, Tyler will discuss how Upton is remembered today.

**“Too much for Human Endurance: The George Spangler Farm's
Hospitals and the Battle of Gettysburg”**

by Ron Kirkwood

A Review of the May 2022 Program by Greg Mertz

Speaker Ron Kirkwood argued that the George Spangler farm was the most important farm on the Gettysburg Battlefield. While other farms hosted a lot more combat, Kirkwood contended that no other farm set up the Union army for its victory as did the activities on the 166-acre Spangler farm.

Roads across the farm connected the Baltimore Pike with the Taneytown Road -- the two most important arteries on the battlefield. Reserve infantry and artillery posted on the Spangler farm were funneled to critical points on the battlefield. The V Corps units which saved Little Round Top, VI Corps troops, and XII Corps troops sent to Culp's Hill all occupied the farm in succession before being dispatched to the front. All of the batteries of the army replenished their supply of ammunition from the artillery ammunition trains assembled on the farm – some 20,000 rounds were distributed during the battle.

George Spangler owned most of Power's Hill, which became army headquarters after army commander Gen. George G. Meade was forced to relocate from the Leister House during the bombardment before Pickett's Charge. Gen. Henry Slocum also established XII Corps headquarters on the hill.

The Spangler farm accommodated two hospitals. On July 1, 1863 the XI Corps medical staff selected the Spangler house, barn, summer kitchen and other outbuildings for their hospital. The Spangler family consisted of George 47, his wife Elizabeth 44, and children Harriet 21, Sabina 19, Daniel 17 and Benia 14. They were informed that they must either leave their home or all stay confined to one upstairs bedroom of the house. They chose to stay. An estimated 1900 soldiers were cared for at the hospital, with four

operating tables in use both day and night. One exhausted surgeon called the task “too much for human endurance.” To reduce the smell of the stench from infected wounds, boughs of pine were cut down and both hung in the tents and used for bedding. The hospital functioned for five weeks and two days.

Capt. Augustus Vignos of the 107th Ohio, was wounded in the right arm on July 1 at Barlow Knoll. Gangrene set in and the arm was amputated above the elbow at Spangler’s. Benefitting from the nursing of Rebecca Lane Pennypacker Price, Vignos went from near death to being sent home, where he married in 1866 and fathered nine children. He carried Price’s photo with him for 40 years, taking it to reunions and asking other soldiers if anyone knew of her whereabouts, hoping to thank her for the care she provided to him. Finally, Vignos received a letter from her asking if he remembered the tall nurse who provided him with clothes so he could return home. They met again at a GAR encampment in New York in 1906.

The most prominent patient at the Spangler farm hospital was 46-year-old Confederate Gen. Lewis Armistead, who fell within Federal lines during Pickett’s Charge. The story began when Armistead stepped off for the attack through the Henry Spangler farm, and the story ended on when he died on July 5 at the George Spangler farm – the farms of two half-brothers. The surgeon of the 154th New York indicated that Armistead arrived in an ambulance at the barn at dusk on July 3. He was covered with blood and told his caretakers, “You have a man here who is not afraid to die.” Even with the chaos of hundreds of wounded from the Pickett’s Charge fight reaching the hospital at the same time as Armistead, the arrival of a Confederate general caused the attendants of the hospital to take notice. Armistead was carried to the orchard, where he requested those attending to him not to step so close to him. He was in intense pain and was given stimulants and pain killers. At some point he was taken to the summer kitchen, where he died about 9:00 on the morning of July 5. Armistead was wrapped in blanket, placed in a coffin made from wood on the Spangler farm and buried in the orchard. In October, Armistead’s family had his remains transported by train to Baltimore and interred in Old St. Paul’s Cemetery.

Private George Nixon, III, of the 73rd Ohio died at the Spangler farm. He was 40 years old, had nine children and rented a farm, so was not very wealthy. He was the great-grandfather of President Richard M. Nixon.

Capt. Alfred E. Lee, of the 82nd Ohio, recovered from his hip wound and took a train home. He picked up a local newspaper only to read his obituary, discovering that his funeral was then taking place. He walked in on his own funeral.

Gen. Francis Barlow spent a week at the Spangler hospital, and with the help of his wife by his side, survived three wounds thought to be mortal. Corp. James Bronlee of the 134th New York was wounded seven times in the brickyard on July 1, including one wound that broke four ribs, and three wounds in the bowels; he remarkably recovered.

The Spangler family donated land for use as the Granite Schoolhouse, and that structure was the site of the little-known field hospital for Gen. John C. Caldwell's first division of the II Corps. This second hospital on the Spangler farm cared for the wounded and dying who had fallen in the horrific July 2, 1863 fighting in the Wheatfield and Rose's Woods, including men of the Irish brigade. Brigade commander Gen. Samuel J. Zook was treated for such a large gaping chest wound that the doctor could see his heart beating before he died elsewhere on July 3. Col. Edward Cross of the 5th New Hampshire died at the hospital, as did Lt. George A. Woodruff, who was mortally wounded on July 3 at Zeigler's Grove directing his battery.

Between the Spangler farm hospital and the Granite Schoolhouse hospital, the Spangler properties cared for nearly 3,000 wounded.

CVBT Annual Conference for 2022

Please take note of the Central Virginia Battlefields Trust 2022 Annual Conference "1862: The War Come to Fredericksburg" September 30 - October 2. All-inclusive weekend tickets are \$195 and the Saturday night Banquet only ticket is \$90. Historian John Hennessy will be the Keynote Speaker, talking about the Union occupation of Fredericksburg in the summer of 1862. Details can be found at <http://www.cvbt.org>.

8th Annual Emerging Civil War Symposium at Stevenson Ride - August 5-7, 2022

Theme: **Great "What Ifs?" of the Civil War**

Keynote Speaker: Gary Adelman: "Speculation Run Amok: Fun with Gettysburg's What If's."

Early Bird Tickets – \$200.00

Visit <https://emergingcivilwar.com/2022-symposium> to learn more

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.cwrft.org. As with our round table, things are subject to change due to the ups and downs of Covid.

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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