

THE REGIMENTAL DISPATCH: THE NEWSLETTER OF THE 12TH UNITED STATES INFANTRY, COMPANY A

Volume 3 Issue 1

Spring 2011

Important Dates:

- Drill 3/11 & 4/8—Oneida Presbyterian Church
- Drill 5/14—5/15—St. Marie Among the Iroquois
- Peterboro 6/10—6/12
- Erie Canal 9/10—9/11

Inside this issue:

First Call: New Season	2
Bored Soldier	2
A brief History of the Volunteers	3
A brief History of the Volunteers (contd)	4
Needlework History	4
2011 Events and Registration Due	5
Needlework History (contd.)	5
Artillery Danger Zone	6
U.S.S.C. Women aboard Hospital Ships	7

COMMANDERS CALL

Let me begin by thanking Charlie for all that he has done as Commander. Some of the actions he has taken were tough, but they needed to be done, and he has set the stage for us to grow and become stronger in our impressions. It is my intention to continue on the course that he has set.

We are entering the 150th anniversary cycle of Civil War reenacting and there is a lot that we should be able to experience as a part of that. We need to remember that we portray the Regular Army, and as such, we should flaunt our spit 'n polish, excel in our drill and do everything in our power to honor those who gave their all in the defense of freedom. This year's 150th Bull Run promises to be spectacular event and it an event in which we, as Regulars, can shine. We will reenact the Square to

guard against Cavalry attack and for those of you who have not been a part of that in previous years, it is a thing to experience. Scales and Har-dee hats will be an important part of the uniform.

There will be a regularly scheduled drill for the remainder of this off-season and then for succeeding off-seasons. This is an important part of recruiting as it gives us a way to invite folks who may show an interest in our hobby. I've already been able to take advantage of this feature by inviting a young man to join us on March 11 from Sherburne. There are several of us who are currently in the hobby that were introduced in this way. If someone says to you, "Gee, I'm kind of interested in that," you can tell them that we are meeting on such and such a date and invite them out with

no pressure to have equipment or to be in front of a lot of spectators.

Sara Barden has designed and produced a beautiful recruiting poster for us. I will be working a way to mount it and it will become an integral part of our recruiting booth. Thanks, Sara! The Newsletter is now being published on a regular basis, and is a critical part of keeping us all tied together. Thanks to Carol Mayers for her efforts and dedication to the Newsletter. The Web Site has had a lot of updates and there will be more. You can see Sara's poster there on the recruiting page.

I believe that this season will be filled with opportunities. Let's not let them slip by.

Capt Jim Hurd
12th US Infantry, Co A -
Commanding

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

As all of you know, the 12th recently held elections for all corporate positions, Non-commissioned officers and the Commanding officer. To all of you elected congratulations. I have been elected corporate president. I have some things that I wish to accomplish as president and I am floating ideas here about my agenda. I'll be brief.

First I want to make the recruiting committee a permanent standing committee. I believe we need to have a dedicated cadre working to actively recruit instead of the

hit and miss approach we have used in the past. I also want to tie in Public relations with the recruiting committee.

One of the things we used to do and do well is school presentations. I would like to see the 12th get back into doing these presentations as I believe it fosters a greater awareness of history in our young people and it also gets our presence out there as it were.

I want to foster a better spirit of comradeship in the unit. We tell ourselves we are a family but in the past it has been a rather dysfunctional

family. . I eagerly await your ideas on these subjects.

Finally, dues and insurance are coming due. Please send the appropriate amount (\$20 dollars per family for dues \$7.50 per person for insurance) to the new unit mailing address The 12th US Infantry, P.O. box 5384, Syracuse, NY 13220-5384. Please insure that your remittances are check or money order. Pay attention to the due dates for all events as well. Thank you all for a good season last year and let's move forward to the 2011 season. Neil

First Call: the New Season—

*Civil War Who's Who:
General Hiram Berdan*

A talented gunsmith who invented a musket ball, a repeating rifle, and other weapons of war, Berdan was an expert marksman who trained snipers for the Union Army.

Did You Know?

Most of the nine hundred fifty men who made up the 23rd Ohio, mustered into service in June 1862, swore that it was the finest unit in Federal service. At the time, no one guessed that members Major William McKinely and Colonel Rutherford B. Hayes would both occupy the White House before the end of the century

Blue and Gray Q & A

What general gave up poker, as penance, after three of his children died of scarlet fever in a single week during January 1862?

As we approach the start of the 2011 season, there have been changes in the structure of the unit. In the past, appointments to non-commissioned officer were made by the commanding officer. In recent by-laws changes that were voted on and passed, this has been changed. Non-coms are now elected for a one-year term and there is a rank structure in place that determines how many are allotted based on number of rifles. We are allotted one 1st Sgt. and two corporals given our current numbers. For those

The Bored Soldier

Ever been to an event, and didn't know what to do with yourself? Brass already polished? Drill done? Rebels sent packing? Sutter's explored? How about trying some of the same diversions of 150 years ago?

Mexican Monte:

Start with a deck of 50 cards. Remove the 10s, 9s, and 8s. The dealer (banker) has a supply of money he's risking in view of the players.

The baker then draws one card from the top of the deck, and one from the bottom, placing both face up on the playing surface. The rest of the deck is then placed in a stack face down. The players then place their bets on one or both of the layed out cards. Once all bets are made, the deck is turned over. The banker pays 1:1 any bets on a matching suit.

If the revealed card does not match the suit of the two layed

of you who held rank previously and no longer do, please understand that this **was not** a reflection of your abilities or dedication to the unit. This move was taken to give the unit a more historically accurate presentation and avoid looking like a zebra farm. If any of you have issues with this please contact me privately and we will discuss it at which point I will pass it up the chain should you desire me to.

We have drill dates scheduled for Mar. 11, Apr. 8 and a drill

out cards, the dealer takes the bet. The two layout cards, and the revealed card are then discarded, and the next round is played.

Monte was probably learned and brought back to the U.S. from soldiers during the Mexican War.

Faro:

One of the most popular gambling games of the 19th century. Sometimes called "Bucking the Tiger" Be careful with who you play this game with, it was a frequent target of cheating!

For rules of Faro, check out: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faro_\(card_game\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Faro_(card_game))

High/Low:

High and low is about a simple a dice games as possible. Players bet that the total of two rolled dice will add up to six or less, exactly seven, or eight and

weekend for May 14 & 15 at Sainte Marie Among the Iroquois. Also if you plan on attending Bull Run get your registration in ASAP!

Work on your drill and your impression. Remember we are regulars and we should reflect that in our drill department and our appearance!

Union and Liberty now and forever!

1st Sgt MacMillan

higher.

The bank pay odds of 1:1 for 6 and under and 8 and over. Seven pays 4:1.

Races:

Perhaps the simplest of all soldier's free time activities was the race. If something could be raced it probably was, from foot races to horse races and so on. Why not challenge your mess-mates to a friendly sprint?

Cpl Grant Denis

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE VOLUNTEERS

We think of the Civil War, many times, in modern terms. The army is the army. In fact, the army as students of the Civil War will tell you was divided into the standing army (Regulars) and the State regiments (volunteers). Why did the army need the volunteers? What were the differences and what were the historical foundations of the divide? Pull your brogans on and we'll journey into a land of history and myth.

When the Constitution was adopted, Congress passed strict limits were placed on the size of the standing army. The young nation realized rather quickly that a standing army was needed but the fears of a standing army left over from the Colonial era and the myth of the prowess of the virtuous amateur militia volunteer. Yes, I said myth. George Washington realized very early on that his troops could not stand against the British with out stern discipline and training both were provided by General Von Steuben and yet the myth endures to this day. Why? We view the revolution as a war won by stalwart amateur soldiers and in fact, one of the very few cases where the militias won over the professionals of the British army was at Lexington and Concord. The revolution, in fact, was won by trained soldiers and with the help of France, Spain and the Netherlands^[1]. The militias performed vital police duties at home including preventing British inspired slave uprisings and patrolling to warn against attacks by Native American nations allied with the crown or taking advantage of the war with Britain (Wills, Garry, *A Necessary Evil: a History of American Distrust of Government* Pages 35-38 Touchstone books New York, NY 2002). The fact is the bulk of troops in both the War of 1812 and the Mexican War were volunteers. Both wars however disproved the myth. Make no mistake; the volunteers were needed in those wars and the Civil War. The size of the standing army was limited in 1861 to 16,000 soldiers of which ten regiments were infantry and the rest Cavalry, artillery and support units (Reese Timothy J. Sykes' *Regular Infantry Division, 1861-1864*) Page xviii McFarland

and Company Jefferson, NC 1990).



Caption: Volunteers of the 28th NY Infantry wait to go into the fight (Photo courtesy of Peggy Reilly)

So why did young men join a volunteer regiment rather than the Regulars? Most towns had a militia company. Many of the young men belonged to what was more social club than military training unit. Here in Syracuse Militia units including the 50th Citizens Bank Militia drilled on makeshift drill fields. One of these fields was the green in front of the Presbyte-

(Continued on page 4)

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE VOLUNTEERS (CONTD.)

Did You Know?

Disease was the chief killer during the war, taking two men for every one who died of battle wounds. Some of the killer diseases were tuberculosis, diphtheria, dysentery, typhoid fever and malaria.

Civil War

Vocabulary

Shebangs: the crude shelters that Civil War prisoners of war built to protect themselves from the sun and rain.

Bookmarks

- Bound in books during Tudor period 1485—1603
 - Loose—1584—Presented to Queen Elizabeth I
 - Machine women silk—1860
- Gretchen Allgier—*PieceWork* July/Aug 2005

(Continued from page 3)

rian Church on West Seneca Turnpike in the Valley area of the city. When President Lincoln's call for 75,000 volunteers went out, Washington was flooded with men. Many joined because they wanted excitement or because their friends joined. A few were shamed into joining by paramours who would not tolerate a reluctant beau. AS the war progressed the states began offering bounties that increased as the war dragged on and many who joined did so to gain the bounty and skipped out as soon as possible so they could enlist in another company or regiment and gain yet another bounty.

The Regular units were not allowed by law to offer bounties

and regular units had a five-year enlistment. Discipline was considerably harsher in the regular units than the volunteer regiments. Enlistments in volunteer units ranged in length from ninety days to three years.

Quality of training varied wildly in the volunteer units. Some units received as little as three weeks training. Others such as the Fire Zouaves (11th New York Infantry) raised by Elmer Ellsworth received copious pre-war training and were almost as competent in their drill as the Regulars.

Finally many men joined units based on their ethnicity such as the Irish Brigade or the many German units in the Eleventh Corps or New York's Gari-

baldi Guard (33rd NY Infantry). For the vast majority of volunteers just as their regular counterparts, the war had to be won and the volunteer regiments rose to the task. AS we move into the 150th anniversary cycle, be proud that you portray Regular but also raise a glass to the volunteers, brave men who bore up under truly horrific conditions.

[1] Though not providing land forces in the continental United States Spanish and Dutch forces did fight against the British in the Caribbean Sea and the Dutch were the first nation to recognize the American flag

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NEEDLEWORK HISTORY—CAROL MAYERS

Union ladies had many forms of needlework with which to use to create items to sell to support the soldiers. A good majority had their origin in Europe. Here is a brief list I have found with the date of introduction, author of the article and date of *PieceWork* magazine. Most of the information has been published in *PieceWork* magazine.

- Embroidery on Net—Needrun, darning on Net, popular during 1830—1840's, Cotton net—

machine made pattern in 1809—Ray Wilson March/April 1994

- Tambour work—18th Century pulling loops of thread or yarn through fabric or mesh
- Silk Ribbon Embroidery - 18th Century France early 19th century America—Judith Baker Montano—March/April 1995
- Ayshire Whitework—1824, Lydia Green March/April

1995

- Embroidery Charts—16th Century
- Free Charts—early 19th Century to promote women's magazines, and standardize materials—Lilo Makrich—Sep/Oct 1998
- Berlin Work—19th Century—Embroidery on Canvas background with bright color wools using tent stitches—Deborah Cannarella—March/Aril 1995
- Jacobean Embroidery—

(Continued on page 5)

2011 EVENTS AND REGISTRATION DUE DATES

Date	Time	Event	Location	Registration Due by:	Registration \$	Mess Fee
3/11/2011	7:00 pm	Drill	Oneida Presbyterian Church	N/A	N/A	N/A
4/8/2011	7:00 PM	Drill	Oneida Presbyterian Church	N/A	N/A	N/A
4/15—4/17		The Bombardment of Fort Sumter	Fort Ontario, Oswego, NY		\$5.00	
4/29—5/1/		Neshaminy	Bensalem, PA	3/26/2011	\$10.00	
5/14 / 5/15		Drill & Recruiting	St Marie Among the Iroquois, Liverpool, NY			
5/30		Camillus Memorial Day Parade	Camillus, NY			
6/10—6/11		19th Annual Peterboro Civil War Weekend	Peterboro, NY	5/14/2011	\$0.00	\$12.00
7/22—7/24		150th Anniversary 1st Manassas	Manassas, VA	4/1/2011	\$20.00	
8/19 - 8/21		Hamlin Beach Reenactment	Hamlin Beach State Park, NY	7/20/2011	\$5.00	
8/27—8/28		Massena Civil War Weekend	Robert Moses State Park, Massena, NY	7/6/2011	\$5.00	TBD
9/10—9/11		Erie Canal Civil War Weekend	Rome, NY	8/1/2011	\$5.00	TBD
TBD		12th Harvest Dinner	TBD			

NEEDLEWORK HISTORY—CAROL MAYERS (CONTD.)

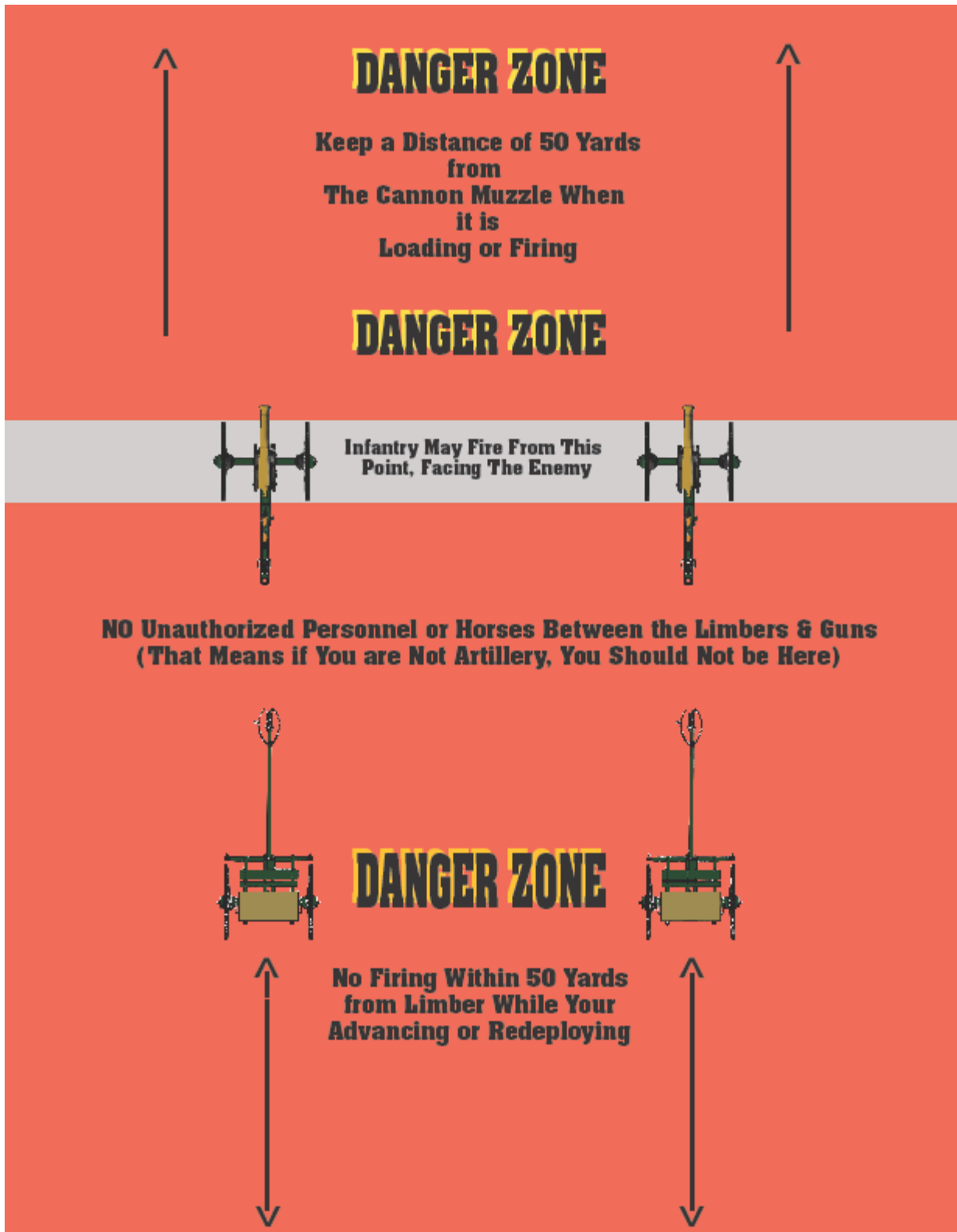
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- 1500's
- Blackwork—15588—Margaret Horton—Sep/Oct 1995
- Knitting Lace—Shetland 16th Century, Knitted Lace Europe 14th Century, Margaret Stove, March/April 1998
- Knitted artifacts dating from 13th Century—Estonia—Eastern Europe, Nancy Bush, July/Aug 2005
- Crochet Buttons—particularly popular 1860—1915, revived in 1940, Nancy Nehring, March/April 1994
- Filet Crochet—origins undocumented. Popular in Europe and US in mid 19th Century
- Crocheted Collars—Mid to late 19th Century, Nicole Scallezza, May/June 2002
- Sewing thread on spools—factory made after 1820
- Quilting—Paper template piecing—1718, Laurel Horton, March/April 2003
- The American tradition of young women nearing the age of marriage making quilts for their trousseaux began in the late 1700's
- Whitework Quilts—Early 19th century to 1861 when the outbreak of the Civil War make fine white cotton fabrics virtually unobtainable, Kimberly Wulfer, May/June 2006
- Bobbin Lace—16th Century, Mary Stewart Sale, July/Aug 2003
- Needle lace arrived in Greece and Italy early in 12th century, probably from Asia Minor, Margo Krager, Jan/Feb 23006

Did you know

A sewing kit during the 18th Century and 19th Century was called a “housewife”. It was designed to hold needles and thread. They were often included in care packages to soldiers

ARTILLERY DANGER ZONE



U.S.S.C. WOMEN ABOARD HOSPITAL SHIPS—BILL MAYERS

The role of women during the American Civil War was almost unimaginably circumscribed when compared to expectations today. Their service proved invaluable, but getting there and having their worth recognized was a long, hard row to hoe. At the war's beginning, women who attempted service were considered highly improper. Jail sometimes awaited those who "transgressed" a woman's "proper role" - unless one enjoyed the somewhat exalted status of association with men of position and power.

Following the medical debacles attending the early battles, wherein the Quarter Master Department was overwhelmed with many troops and supplies, the sick and wounded lay unattended and often unprotected for days, awaiting transportation to hospitals. This totally inadequate response led Civilian relief groups to charter, staff and supply their own hospital steamers to help relieve the distress.

The USSC secured agreement with the War Department to equip, supply and manage hospital boats chartered by the Government, and invited several women associated with the WCRA (women's Central Relief Association) to join them as "nurses at large, or matrons" on the boats. Allied by class and social status with the officers and physicians of the commission, these women were assured the supervisory powers and social defense which had escaped their nurses in Washington's military hospitals.

Among this elite group were Georgeanna Woolsey and her sister Eliza Howland, Caroline E Lane, Christine Kean Griffin, Ellen Ruggles Strong, Harriet Douglas Whettin and Katherine Prescott Wormely. The commissioners could be counted on to ensure that the women would be adequately supervised and not left unattended.

The USSC's floating hospitals were under the direction of General Secretary Frederick Law Olmstead. Aside from the actual crew, the boats were staffed by the USSC in New York, Boston, or Washington. The commission employed or accepted as volunteers a wide range of personnel: physicians, female superintendents of nurses, male and female nurses, dressers (usually medical students), stewards, apothecaries, baggage men and servants. The boats were outfitted by the Commission and divided into wards. Ideally, each ward was assigned a surgeon, on or two Ward Masters, and a complement of nurses and their assistants - contrabands, servants, or convalescent soldiers. The Medical Director of the ship arranged the watches.

The female superintendents were assigned to duty by Olmstead where he felt they were most needed and frequently arranged their own hours of rotation. They were expected to oversee the linen, the patients' clothing, the storeroom, and household supplies. In addition, they were in charge of all the cooking for the sick and had a "general superintendence" over all the wards and the other nurses. But they were not allowed to go ashore without the permission of either Olmstead or the surgeon in charge. This plan ingeniously gave the superintendents some independent authority while it accounted for their whereabouts and kept them at a distance from the more traditional hierarchy of hospital wards. Under these conditions, they were less likely to come into direct conflict with either the surgeons or the medical student dressers.

These were unusual circumstances for women attempting to serve. Dorothea Dix's nurses endured no end of hostility, insult and impediment at the hands of the male establishment as they attempted to carry out their duties. While their worth was quickly recognized and gratefully accepted by the patients - though even here that was not universal - they were often viewed as interfering, meddlesome, quarrelsome by others. Shipboard nursing was unique in its relative lack of conflict between the women and the rest of the ships' denizens.

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SONGS OF THE TIMES



Day is done, gone the sun,
From the lake, from the hills, from the sky;
All is well, safely rest, God is nigh.

Fading light, dims the sight,
And a star gems the sky, gleaming bright
From afar drawing nigh, galls the night.

Thanks and praise, for our days,
'Neath the sun, 'neath the stars, 'neath the sky;
As we go, this we know, God is nigh.

— Excerpted lyrics from "Taps"