



THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

Project aims to honor Civil War dead with 620,000 trees

By STEVE SZKOTAK, AP, January 11, 2015

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — From Thomas Jefferson's Monticello in Virginia to Pennsylvania's Gettysburg, an ambitious memorial is slowly sinking roots: the planting of 620,000 trees representing the Civil War's human toll.

With only about 2,000 trees in the ground, the goal of the nonprofit Living Legacy Project will likely extend well beyond the Civil War's Sesquicentennial, which concludes this year. The project is undaunted, with 8,000 plantings scheduled in 2015.

Organizers already are looking ahead to another milestone for completion of the \$65 million memorial.

"What I personally envision is 50 years from now, when this country commemorates its bicentennial of the Civil War, these trees will be in full bloom," said Shaun Butcher, spokesman for the project. "Future generations can visit this region and see that there is a national memorial for the Civil War fallen."

The project is part of the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership, a national heritage tourism nonprofit that aims to highlight the rich American history along the 180-mile route through Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia and Virginia. It is not limited to Civil War attractions, such as Harpers Ferry in West Virginia and historic Frederick, Md.

Designated a National Scenic Byway by Congress, the historic, 75-mile-wide corridor claims 13 national parks, nine presidential homes and hundreds of sites recognizing African-

American and Native American heritage sites.

It also traverses the largest concentration of Civil War battlegrounds, with Virginia claiming the most.

The Living Legacy tree plantings will be within the scenic byway but it will not be an unbroken green line. The trees are being planted on public and private land, as well as at tourist attractions such as Oak Hill, James Monroe's former estate in Leesburg.

Butcher said the tree plantings are intended to honor every single Civil War death, including the many felled by disease, not just towering figures such as the South's Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson.

"There's a big Jackson statue at Manassas and other places," Butcher said. "But then there are a lot of enlisted who don't have a memorial, who don't have a big statute of them on a horse in granite. The idea is to honor those individuals."

Each of the fallen, in fact, will be recognized by name through each individual tree, though many of the war dead remain unidentified.

At Bliss Farm at Gettysburg, for instance, 168 apple trees were planted to restore an orchard that thrived before the battle. Students from around the country were recruited to research the soldiers who fell at the orchard and to whom the trees were dedicated.

The trees were geo-tagged to allow smartphone users to learn the story of the soldiers by going to the Living Legacy website.

Besides apple trees, a palette of seasonal trees are being used to create the memorial. They include redbuds, red oaks, red maples and red cedars. The trees' colors peak at various seasons. The red color

scheme symbolizes bravery and sacrifice.

Individuals, businesses, schools and community groups can participate in the project, which is seeking \$100 contributions for each tree. Donors may select a soldier to honor.

Butcher said the project is gaining momentum as more people and groups sign on, including nurseries. "We feel we're beginning to reach a tipping point," he said.

The Living Legacy Project has worked with local communities to enlist their support and ideas for a Civil War memorial, said Cate Magennis Wyatt, who heads the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership.

They told her, "We don't want another flagpole. We don't need another monument," she said.

Monte and Darby Gingery's Somerset Plantation have planted red maples and redbuds, among others, as part of the Legacy Project. Located between Culpeper and Charlottesville, the farm saw many Civil War battles.

Gingery is working with the local historical society to get local names of the war dead linked to the trees.

"We just thought as a family it was a proper and fitting way to honor the brave fallen men from the Confederacy and the Union," Gingery said.

How the Civil War Created College Football

By AMANDA BRICKELL BELLOWS,
New York Times, January 1, 2015

At a ceremony in Cambridge, Mass., on June 10, 1890, the philanthropist Henry Lee Higginson declared, "I ask to make [Soldiers Field] a memorial to some dear friends who gave their



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lives ... to their country and to their fellow men in the hour of great need — the War of the Rebellion." The 31 acres of marshlands and pasture that Higginson donated to Harvard College, his alma mater, would serve as the site of the country's oldest concrete football arena, Harvard Stadium, built over a decade later in 1903. As he memorialized the Civil War dead, the Union veteran addressed a group of 400 male students and alumni, most of whom were too young to have experienced and learned from the horrors of battle during the nation's bloodiest war. Like Higginson, however, many late-19th-century Americans saw a deep connection between the battlefield and the athletic field, believing that collegiate athletics, including football, could teach the next generation their "own duties as men and citizens of the Republic" and train them to manage "the burden of carrying on this country in the best way."

Prior to football's postwar rise in popularity, antebellum Americans enjoyed sporting events like boxing, harness racing and early forms of baseball. According to the historians Elliott J. Gorn and Warren Goldstein, however, the Civil War "engendered an ethos of sacrifice, of dedication to the heroic cause" in male soldiers who played a variety of organized sports on teams within military units. After the war's end, universities took on the role of creating student athletes through organized sports initiatives that inculcated young men with the Victorian virtues of masculinity and sportsmanship. Educational institutions began to emphasize the importance of athletics; in 1872, The New York World remarked: "There can scarcely be any question ... that the increasing

impulse towards athletics in all our colleges is in itself a good thing."

Football was one of the most popular of these new collegiate activities, and it developed rapidly. The first intercollegiate American football game occurred on Nov. 6, 1869, when students from Princeton and Rutgers faced off in an informal match. Rutgers confronted Columbia in 1870, and Harvard and Yale first battled in 1875. University football teams continued to multiply in number after Princeton, Yale, Columbia and Harvard established the Intercollegiate Football Association in 1876.

A hybrid of early American folk football and British rugby, post-bellum American football was a violent sport that, according to the historian Allen Guttman, appealed to young men hoping to "demonstrate the manly courage that their fathers and older brothers had recently proved on the bloody battlefields of the Civil War." Bravery was a prerequisite for players in an era preceding the widespread use of helmets. In 1905 alone, 18 players were killed and 159 sustained severe wounds, statistics that motivated several universities to shut down the sport on their campuses. Despite its rough nature, football continued to flourish at many leading institutions.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Americans imbued football games with military significance. In 1908, The New York Tribune noted that "football as played in America today between schools or colleges is not a mere game," but "an intercollegiate contest [that] assumes in the minds of players, coaches, students, graduates, and the affiliated public the importance of war."

Many viewed football as a way of training the next generation of men

for military service. Harper's Weekly stated in 1898 that "the value of football as a means of keeping alive a martial spirit in time of peace has been abundantly dwelt upon," and that "veteran football-players would be expected to excel ... if war came." Describing Princeton's triumphant football team in 1897, the sportswriter Caspar Whitney declared, "Had those same men been drilled in the science of war instead of in the science of football, the same persistency of purpose and unity of endeavor would have attained the same conquest over their opponents."

For many, football was itself training for war. Football manuals of the late 19th and early 20th centuries describe the sport as a military endeavor. In his 1895 "Book of College Sports," Yale's coach, Walter Camp, encouraged players to exhibit the bravery of a soldier entering a difficult battle, writing that a player should "face it like a man ... on the side of the men who want no chance of retreat or escape, only a fair contest and certain victory or defeat at the end of it." In 1921, Charles Daly, the coach of the United States Military Academy, called football "a war game" and described troops marching to battle, teams combating an enemy squad, scouts reconnoitering and linemen charging in his manual "American Football: How to Play It." Striving to show the "remarkable similarity [that] exists between war and football," Daly even advocated the application of military exercises to players, arguing, "No soldier ever benefited more by intensive and carefully planned drill than does the football player."

Football's traditions further reveal its martial sensibilities. The political scientist Michael Mandelbaum notes that athletes stream onto the field in



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brightly colored uniforms, marching bands perform rousing tunes and students collectively sing to encourage their champions. Intriguingly, early fight songs reveal that memories of the Civil War persisted in the popular mind during the postwar era. Just six years after the war ended, Rutgers students chanted, "We'll quickly bury all the slain / And to-morrow the living are ready again, / To follow that bully foot-ball" in their "Foot-Ball Song."

Reflecting on the nation's wartime wounds, educators sought to equip young men for military action by teaching them about masculinity and courage through collegiate football. Americans' desire to remember or learn from the conflict shaped the sport's militaristic rules, lexicon, rituals and popular perceptions. As a result, football's Civil War lineage is still perceptible today

The Birth of 'Dixie'

By *CHRISTIAN MCWHIRTER*, *New York Times*, March 30, 2012

In a New York apartment on a rainy day in March 1859, Daniel Decatur Emmett sat down at his desk to write a song for his employer, Bryant's Minstrels, and its upcoming stage show. Then 44 years old, Emmett had been composing minstrel songs — to be performed primarily by white actors in blackface — since he was 15. Looking out his window at the dreary day outside, Emmett took his inspiration from the weather. A single line, "I wish I was in Dixie," echoed in his mind. Before long, it would echo across the country.

Few of us remember "Dixie" as antebellum America's last great minstrel song. We see it as most did two years after its creation — as the anthem of the Confederacy. And yet as phenomenally popular as it was

the North before the war, "Dixie" was slow to catch on in the South. Lacking the Yankees' enthusiasm for minstrelsy, most Southerners were unaware of the tune until late 1860. By sheer chance of fate, its arrival coincided with the outbreak of secession. As newly minted Confederates rejected the anthems of their old nation, they desperately sought replacements.

Indeed, once it reached the South, "Dixie," despite being a song written by a Northerner, rose to prominence with exceptional speed. One songwriter recalled how it "spontaneously" became the Confederacy's anthem, and a British correspondent noted the "wild-fire rapidity" of its "spread over the whole South." The tune received an unofficial endorsement when it was played at Confederate President Jefferson Davis's inauguration in February 1861. This was coincidental — it was recommended to a Montgomery, Ala., bandleader who knew nothing of the tune — but "Dixie's" inclusion gave the appearance of presidential approval. The Confederate government never formally endorsed "Dixie," though Davis did own a music box that played the song and is rumored to have favored it as the South's anthem.

Repeated performances of "Dixie" by Confederates confirmed its new status. Even before Virginia seceded, the *Richmond Dispatch* labeled "Dixie" the "National Anthem of Secession," and the *New York Times* concurred a few months later, observing that the tune "has been the inspiring melody which the Southern people, by general consent, have adopted as their 'national air.'" Publishers recorded that sales were "altogether unprecedented" and,

when Robert E. Lee sought a copy for his wife in the summer of 1861, he found none were left in all of Virginia.

"Dixie" became so connected so quickly with the South that many Americans attributed its very name to the region. In fact, the precise origin of the word "Dixie" remains unknown, though three competing theories persist. It either references a benevolent slaveholder named Dix (thus slaves wanting to return to "Dix's Land"), Louisiana (where \$10 notes were sometimes called Dix notes), or — and most likely — the land below the Mason and Dixon's line (the slaveholding South). Regardless, Emmett's tune made it part of the national vocabulary. During the Civil War, soldiers, civilians and slaves frequently referred to the South as Dixie and considered Emmett's ditty the region's anthem.

This popularity is remarkable, as little about "Dixie" recommends it as a national anthem. The melody lacks gravitas, and only the first verse and chorus express anything approximating Southern nationalism:

I Wish I was in de land ob cotton,
Old times dar am not forgotten
Look away! look away! look away!
Dixie Land.
In Dixie Land whar I was born in,
Early on one frosty mornin',
Look away! look away! look away!
Dixie Land.
Den I wish I was in Dixie,
Hooray! hooray!
In Dixie Land I'll take my stand,
To lib and die in Dixie,
Away, away, away down south in
Dixie,
Away, away, away down south in
Dixie.



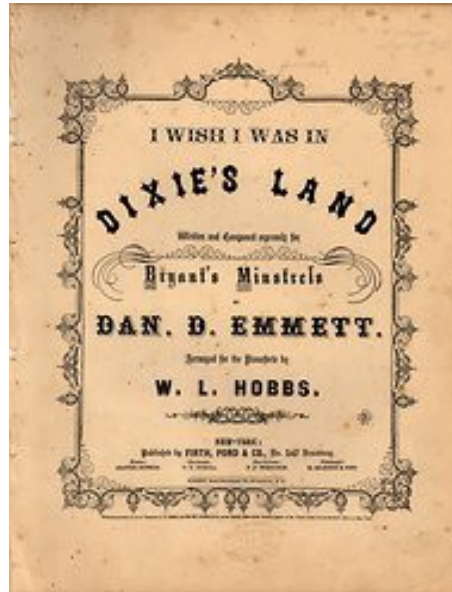
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The rest is unmistakably the work of a songwriter utilizing various minstrel clichés. "Dixie's" speaker is a slave who worries that his plantation mistress is being seduced into marrying "Will de Weaber," the "gay deceiver" who outlives her and inherits her plantation. Although the speaker expresses his desire to live in the South until he dies, the song provides little else to endear it to Confederate patriots.

Nevertheless, a sort of inertia pushed the song's reputation higher and higher in the Southern mind. Confederates performed "Dixie" enthusiastically and remained devoted to it even when an alternative anthem — Harry Macarthy's "Bonnie Blue Flag" — became available. The more Americans on both sides believed that "Dixie" was the Confederate anthem, the more it became so. This was especially true for soldiers, who were some of the first to embrace "Dixie" and increasingly associated it, amazingly, with sacrifices made for the war. For one Confederate surgeon, the song "brings to mind the memory of friends who loved it — friends, the light of whose lives were extinguished in blood, whose spirit were quenched in violence."

To be sure, many Southerners were well aware of "Dixie's" obvious deficiencies. Most simply ignored these problems, though some tried to reconcile them with the Confederacy's history and objectives. The Richmond Dispatch stretched its credibility attempting to prove that the song was a parable for secession. It argued that "Will de Weaber" was not a minstrel stereotype but, in fact, Abraham Lincoln, who seduced the nation into voting for him, leading to the South's rebirth as the Confederacy. To conclude the piece,

the author triumphantly asked, "Can any one now fail to see that, in the verses of this deservedly popular song, an epitome is given of the events which, since last November, have shaken this land?" Emmett surely disagreed, as he reportedly declared that, had he known the Confederates would adopt "Dixie" as their anthem, "I will be damned if I'd have written it."



David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University Original sheet music for "Dixie"

Other Southerners were more disturbed by "Dixie's" apparently undeserved status and sought more extreme solutions. Many rejected it outright. "It smells too strongly of the [negro] to assume a dignified rank of the National Song" declared one malcontent, while another argued it was "absurd to imagine that Dixie, a dancing; capering, rowdyish, bacchanalian negro air" could be sung by "a nation of free men ... with any respect for themselves." Others recognized that most of the song's appeal came from its catchy melody and simply drafted new lyrics.

Numerous such revisions appeared throughout the war but none achieved much success. Only one, by the Confederate Indian agent and general Albert Pike, enjoyed even a limited popularity and continues to appear occasionally in histories, songbooks and public performances. Even Lincoln recognized the song's power and, at the end of the war, attempted to reclaim "Dixie" as an American, rather than Confederate, song. "Our adversaries over the way attempted to appropriate it, but I insisted," he told a crowd of admirers in Washington, "that we fairly captured it."

Despite these efforts and the continued protestations of some Southerners, "Dixie" remained wedded to its Confederate identity. Although a simple minstrel ditty, 150 years of history have loaded the song with indelible political, racial, military and social connotations. For better or for worse, "Dixie" was the South's anthem, and will most likely remain so for generations

PBS Announces Civil War Drama Executive Produced by Ridley Scott

Comingsoon.net, January 22, 2015
PBS President and CEO Paula A. Kerger announced today that a new Civil War historical drama, shot in Virginia, will join the PBS Sunday night drama lineup. The first season of six episodes is slated for a winter 2016 premiere.

Based on true stories, the new drama follows two volunteer nurses on opposite sides of the Civil War. Mary Phinney, a staunch New England abolitionist, and Emma Green, a willful young Confederate belle, collide at Mansion House, the Green



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family's luxury hotel that has been taken over and transformed into a Union Army Hospital in Alexandria, Virginia, the longest-occupied Confederate city of the war. As the boundaries of medicine are being explored and expanded, the role of women is also broadening. Here, in the collision of a wartime medical drama and a family saga of conflicted loyalties and moral dilemmas, the series plays out a story of the highest stakes.

Executive produced by Ridley Scott (*Gladiator*, *Thelma & Louise*), David W. Zucker (*The Good Wife*) and Lisa Q. Wolfinger (*Desperate Crossing*, *The untold story of the Mayflower*) and written by David Zabel (*ER*), the new drama is set against the backdrop of doctors and female nurses valiantly struggling to save lives while facing their own trials and tribulations. In the end, Mary and Emma will learn a vital lesson in a country split in two and ravaged by war: Blood is neither blue nor grey — it is all one color.

The series is created by Lisa Q. Wolfinger and David Zabel and based on research conducted over the last three years. The story is inspired by the memoirs and letters of actual doctors and female nurse volunteers at Mansion House Hospital. In addition, the writers and producers have worked with a prominent group of historians and medical experts, including James M. McPherson (*Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*), Thavolia Glymph (*Out of the House of Bondage: The Transformation of the Plantation Household*) and Jane Schultz (*Women at the Front: Hospital Workers in Civil War America*).

Beth Hoppe, Chief Programming Executive and General Manager, General Audience Programming,

PBS, said, "Viewers know that Sunday nights are a destination for original drama on PBS. It has been more than a decade since our Sunday night drama lineup has included truly American stories. With this new series, we will look into one of the most complicated, tumultuous and dramatic moments in our country's history, the Civil War. I'm delighted to have this new series join an impressive history of past American dramas on PBS."

Lisa Q. Wolfinger said, "We think of the Civil War as a brutal, devastating chapter in American history, but it was also a moment of remarkable transition that presented opportunities unthinkable just a few years before. Doctors, faced with mass casualties on an unprecedented scale, pushed the boundaries of medical science, women left the confines of the home and volunteered as nurses, and thousands of escaped slaves got their first taste of freedom. All of these elements come together in Alexandria's Mansion House Hospital — a dysfunctional and unpredictable world filled with conflict and passion. Our characters (many based on real people) are colorful, complicated and completely relatable. This series is not about battles and glory, it's about the drama and unexpected humor of everyday life behind the front lines. It's a new twist on an iconic story, one that resonates with larger themes we still struggle with today."

David Zabel said, "Speaking as a writer, it would be difficult to find an event in American history more dramatic and riveting than the Civil War. It was an extraordinary time that served in so many ways as transitional from an earlier world — we see massive change enacted in a range of areas, including medicine, social mores, military practices,

transportation, media, commerce and government. And yet, as these transformational moments were unfolding, people tried to live their lives and maintain some normalcy while in the midst of a great upheaval. The locus of Alexandria at this time as a crossroads of North and South, war and peace, old and new, offers a wealth of characters and situations that is a gift for a storyteller and a perfect setting for a great American story."

The series is not only set in Virginia, it will also be filmed there. Production is scheduled to begin in the spring in and around Richmond, where so much of this history took place.

Protesters urge Confederate group to move event held on MLK weekend

BY CARRIE WELLS, The Baltimore Sun, January 17, 2015

It was, according to some, not a sight one would expect to see on the weekend celebrating Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday — dozens of men in Confederate regalia marching in the streets of Baltimore and giving speeches praising generals Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson.

A group of about 50 protesters stood in silent opposition across the street from the ceremony Saturday morning. If you feel you must honor your Confederate ancestors, they asked, why not move the event to another date?

"I feel like they're trying to make a point," said Suraju Kehinde, 17, holding a large sign that said "Change the Date." His mother, Ann, said she and her mixed-race son live near the annual Confederate ceremony and he inspired her to start



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organizing the silent protest with local Quakers three years ago.

But members of the local chapters of the Sons of Confederate Veterans and United Daughters of the Confederacy said they were honoring Confederate generals Lee and Jackson at a time near their birthdays, which fell on Jan. 19 and Jan. 21, respectively. King's birthday was Jan. 15, while the federal holiday in his name is held on the third Monday of each January.

"We get sometimes very inappropriately branded because of what our ancestors did as their duty," said Jay Barringer, Maryland division commander of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, who wore a kilt and other regalia and played a bagpipe during the march. "We get called racists, and nothing could be further from the truth."

Barringer, a North Carolina native who lives in Eldersburg, insisted the event was not intended to "antagonize" or detract from King's legacy. "Everyone should be proud of their ancestry," he said.

The annual ceremony, held at the Lee-Jackson monument near the Baltimore Museum of Art, has been held on the third weekend in January for years, the Confederate group said, though members were not sure when it began. Some in the Confederate group, which numbered about 80, said they had been attending annual ceremonies at the monument in some form since the 1950s.

The Confederate descendants, many dressed in gray war uniforms and carrying Confederate flags, marched along Wyman Park Drive to the Lee-Jackson monument, where they gave speeches, saluted the Confederate and United States flags, whooped and prayed together. "We thank you

for the gifts of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson," said the woman leading the prayer.

Michael Glenn, 73, of Harford County said the event was "about history, not politics."



Photo Baltimore Sun

"We're here to honor the two great men who fought for a cause they believed in," he said. "They're men of honor and integrity."

The hour long ceremonies haven't garnered much attention until recent years. Several people walking by asked for more information from the protesters and were handed fliers. A few joined them. "Freaking ludicrous," said one woman, shaking her head.

Tessa Hill-Alston, president of the Baltimore chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, said the group had been unaware of the Confederate ceremony until the Quaker group called and asked them to join the protest, which they did gladly. She said the event made her "very uncomfortable."

Ireland and the Civil War

by ROBERT FISK,
Counterpunch.org, January 01, 2015

While the start of the Great War of 1914-18 has been commemorated to the point of spiritualism these past 12 months, who remembers that this week we enter the 150th anniversary year of the end of the American Civil War?

In US history, it is a profound event that we should all remember; here, after all, lie the original bones of the Union, its victory consecrated among some of the units whose soldiers were sent to their deaths in Iraq in 2003, its brutality ghosted into the future narrative of American military records, its equalities reflected in the large number of black soldiers who died in present-day Mesopotamia. But for the Irish, too, the civil war of 1861-1865, is a sombre anniversary.

They reckon that 210,000 Irish soldiers fought in British uniform in the First World War, and that 49,300 were killed. Yet almost as many Irishmen fought in the American Civil War – 200,000 in all, 180,000 in the Union army, 20,000 for the Confederates. An estimated 20 per cent of the Union navy were Irish-born – 26,000 men – and the total Irish dead of the American conflict came to at least 30,000. Many of the Irish fatalities were from Famine families who had fled the desperate poverty of their homes in what was then the United Kingdom, only to die at Antietam and Gettysburg. My old alma mater, Trinity College Dublin, is collating the figures and they are likely to rise much higher as Irish academics mine into the American Compiled Military Service Records for the regiments of both sides.

In *An Cosantóir*, the archaeologist and historian Damian Shiels, writes that the very first Irish soldier to die in the American war in 1861 was an Irishman from Co Tipperary, mortally wounded when his arm was blown off. Private Daniel Hough, of the 1st US Artillery, was a gunner firing a salute permitted by the victorious Confederates after the capture of Fort Sumpter, South Carolina, on 12 April. The second soldier to be killed in the same war died that night. He was



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Edward Gallway from Co Cork. Of the fort's military garrison of 86 men, 38 were from Ireland.

The best Irish-born Union general of the war was 32-year-old Brigadier-General Thomas Smyth, a Cork man leading his brigade across the Appomattox river in 1865 in pursuit of Robert E Lee. Riding to the front line, a bullet fired by a Confederate sniper hit the left side of Smyth's face, entering his neck and spinal column. He died on 9 April. "Less than 12 hours later Lee surrendered the Army of North Virginia to Ulysses S Grant..." Shiels writes. "The former farmer from Ballyhooly, Co Cork, thus became the last Union general to die in the war."

As Shiels says, many of the Irish affected by the civil war were Famine-era emigrants, "for whom the war represented the second great trauma of their lives". Take Charles and Marcella O'Reilly, who left Ireland in the 1840s. Their eldest son enlisted on the Union side in August 1862 and was joined by his father Charles in the New York Heavy Artillery more than a year later. Father and son were fighting side by side at the Battle of Cedar Creek in 1864 when the Confederates launched a furious attack. Shiels quotes a terrifying account of what happened, written by a comrade of both men in a style so familiar to accounts of the Great War almost exactly 50 years later:

"...Anthony Riley [sic] was shot and killed; his father was by his side; the blood and face of his son covered the hands and face of the father. I never saw a more affecting sight than this; the poor old man kneels over the body of his dead son; his tears mingle with his son's blood; O God! What a sight; he can stop but a moment, for the rebels are pressing us; he must

leave his dying boy... he bends over him, kisses him on the cheek..."

Just over five months later, Charles O'Reilly died of disease contracted in the trenches of Petersburg, Virginia. The loss of her husband and eldest son was disastrous for Marcella and her remaining children. In 1871, her property was seized by the sheriff and sold – an English-style misery that must have been harshly familiar to the widow.

The last known Irishman to have fought in the civil war was still alive in 1950. But memories were mixed. While 146 Irishmen were awarded the Medal of Honour in the war, the Irish Brigade lost heavily (although most Irishmen fought in non-ethnic units). If 25 per cent of the New York population were Irish – which accounts for the large numbers fighting for the Union – the rising casualty toll reduced the army's recruitment. Two-thirds of the protesters in the New York Draft riots – following Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in September 1862 – were Irish. Which proves that romance has little place in history. And in Ireland, there is today not a single memorial to the Irishmen killed in that great conflict on the other side of the Atlantic.

Crews Anticipate Civil War-Era Discoveries Ahead of Riverbed Cleanup in South Carolina

By Jon Street, the Blaze.com, January 21, 2015

An environmental cleanup project near Columbia, South Carolina, is turning into something of a history lesson.

The energy firm SCANA Corp. is planning to remove about 40,000 tons

of tar from the bottom of the Congaree River, but before it can do that, it will need to build a dam around parts of the river in order to allow crews to assess the 150-foot wide, 1,800-foot long, 2-foot deep tar bed – and that could take up to three years, The State newspaper reported. In the process of building the infrastructure, workers are likely to revisit a moment steeped in American history: The riverbed is home to about 1.2 million cannon balls, 6,000 unfinished weapons, 4,000 bayonet scabbards and 3,100 sabres all dating back to 1865.

It's the site of where Gen. William Sherman and his Union army of about 60,000 troops torched the Confederate capital of Columbia and raided the South's armory. The North took what possessions it could, but threw the rest in the Congaree River. Years later, a tar spill coated the historical relics only to be uncovered again today.

The project, which environmental regulators are currently reviewing, would mean the construction of a 17 1/2-foot tall, 3,990-foot long dam with a 60-foot base. All that would be surrounded by 2,100 feet of fencing, 210 warning signs and security guards.

All told, crews will remove some 22,000 tons of "debris" from the riverbed, according to The State.

Residents and tourists have stumbled upon random objects from the Civil War treasure chest throughout the years. Despite that, marine archaeologist James Spirek isn't sure the findings will be all too big.

"I'm sure there will be some interesting items. I don't anticipate huge volumes," Spirek said.