



## THE "OLD LINER" NEWSLETTER

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### Notes from the President 2/2017

BCWRT Community:

Historian and author Greg Clemmer looks into the life of CSA Gen. Edward "Allegheny" Johnson on February 28. Johnson's actions during the war, especially at Gettysburg, are still a source of controversy. On March 28, author David Craig take a different approach to the Civil War as he speaks on his latest book which focuses on vintage postcards from Gettysburg.

Our Annual Banquet will occur on Tuesday, April 30, at the Parkville Heritage Gardens, 7631 Harford Rd. Parkville Maryland Parkville Shopping Center). Our speaker will be the noted historian, author, tour guide and Chief Historian Emeritus of the National Park Service **Edwin Cole Bearss**. Be certain to get your tickets early as we expect this event to sellout.

If you haven't renewed your membership for 2017, please do so ASAP. Dues are \$20.00 for individuals and \$30.00 for families. Please make check payable to: **BCWRT** and mail to: **Ray Atkins, 1204 Fordham Ct., Belair, MD 21014.** (410-879-8828).

Remember, we are always looking for new members. Invite a friend to our meetings. The BCWRT has many good things happening. Please spread the word. Robert L. Ford,  
President

### National Cathedral continues to debate the Lee, Jackson windows

By Heather Beasley Doyle, Episcopal News Service, February 20, 2017

When sunlight shines through the Washington National Cathedral's stained glass windows, colors disperse. Hues take flight from the visual stories that normally confine them to a framed, defined space. Illuminated, the freed colors alight on cathedral walls as patches of blue, shades of pink and splotches of purple, transformed from visual narratives into an ephemeral pastel version of a Rorschach test.

The aftermath of a hate crime brought two particular stained glass windows at the cathedral into sharp relief. On the evening of June 17, 2015, Dylann Roof shot 12 people, killing nine of them, during a Bible study at Emmanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina. The racially motivated violence prompted many institutions to take down Confederate flags. At Washington National Cathedral, then-Dean Gary Hall called for the removal of two windows – one commemorating Confederate General Robert E. Lee, the other memorializing Confederate General Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson. Both are inlaid with a small Confederate flag, offering a clear acknowledgment of the Civil War-era South for which the generals fought.

Roof "surrounded himself in these Confederate symbols," said Rev. Kelly Brown Douglas, canon theologian at the cathedral and professor of religion at Goucher College. Acknowledging the modern-day violence associated with the symbols, the cathedral's chapter (its governing body) formed a task force

to recommend a way forward, rather than simply removing the windows.

In a report last June, the task force proposed leaving the windows in place for the time being: "The windows provide a catalyst for honest discussions about race and the legacy of slavery and for addressing the uncomfortable and too-often avoided issues of race in America. Moreover, the windows serve as a profound witness to the cathedral's own complex history in relationship to race." The report further urged the chapter to resolve the matter by June 2018.

Report in hand, the chapter decided that while the windows should stay, the inlaid Confederate flags could not, and swiftly replaced them with clear two clear glass panels, one blue and one red. "The [Confederate] battle flag is a problematic, racist image that has no place in the cathedral," said Washington National Cathedral Chief Communications Officer Kevin Eckstrom. Brown Douglas, who sat on the task force, agrees. "Whatever the Confederate flag meant historically, it has come to symbolize white supremacy," a stance in conflict with "Christian values," she said. Flags aside, Lee and Jackson "fought for the Confederacy, and in so doing, they were fighting to uphold the institution of slavery," Brown Douglas added.

Cathedral leaders haven't always believed that the Confederate legacy clashes with Episcopal principles. The cathedral accepted an offer from the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) to fund a memorial of Robert E. Lee, an Episcopalian, in 1931. UDC's top goal is "to honor the memory of those who served and those who fell in the service of the Confederate states." Twenty-two years would pass before



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the project came to fruition in the form of the stained glass windows. Cathedral archives included in the task force report show a friendly, supportive repartee between cathedral and UDC representatives. On paper, at least, no one seems to have questioned including the Confederate battle flag.

"It's taken us a while to get here," said Heidi Kim, the Episcopal Church's staff officer for racial reconciliation. While Washington National Cathedral's foundation was laid in 1907, decades after the abolition of slavery, Kim pointed out that slaves built many Episcopal churches. Many Episcopalians owned slaves and others, northerners among them, profited by trading slaves, a story told in personal terms in the documentary, "Traces of the Trade."

"The degree to which almost anyone in the nation who had any economic privilege benefited from slavery, in the North and the South" was considerable, said Rev. Dr. Robert W. Prichard, a professor of church history at Virginia Theological Seminary and author of "A History of the Episcopal Church."

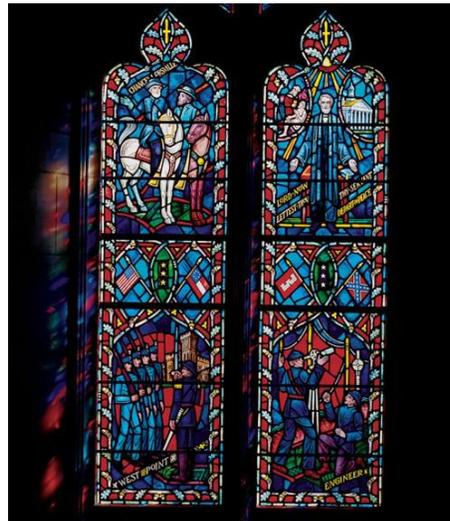
In 2008 the Episcopal Church apologized for its role in slavery. The apology followed a resolution passed at the General Convention in 2006 urging the church "...to address systemic racial disparities and injustice in the church and the wider culture" deepened that sensibility. Opinion on what this means and how far it should go varies among Episcopalians.

Many think the windows should stay at the cathedral as a reminder of the Episcopal Church's past. "There's something about taking away those windows that seems a bit of a denial of where we've been," said Danielle A.

Gaherty, a member and lay leader at Trinity Lime Rock in Lakeville, Connecticut.

"I don't think they should leave the building, especially at this time when there's so much controversy in the world over race relations," she said. "It just seems that it's more important now than ever to remember."

Retired parish priest William Thomas Martin of Williamsburg, Virginia, agreed. "By getting rid of the windows we [would] throw away the memory, and if we throw away the memory, we're going to repeat [our mistakes]. The Confederate flag is a symbol of our original sin, I think. It reminds us of our own fallibility and our need for God's grace."



A stained glass window dedicated to Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee window was originally donated to Washington National Cathedral by the Daughters of the Confederacy in 1953. Photo: Washington National Cathedral

Doug Desper, an Episcopalian in Waynesboro, Virginia, thinks the Lee-Jackson windows should leave Washington National Cathedral. Like Gaherty, Martin and Riley Temple, he felt compelled to comment on a

Religious News Service article about the windows posted on the ENS website in October. "I don't think that battle flags of any sort belong" in a house of worship, he says. More importantly, he doesn't like "the criminal South versus the virtuous North" feeling he gets from the discussion. That trope, he contends, ignores the complexities of mid-19th century American life. He advocates a reconciliation window to replace the Lee-Jackson windows, but "I don't think we need to keep apologizing. I think what we need to do now is to look at how far we've come from where our ancestors were."

As for a continued "we're sorry" mantra, Brown Douglas agreed that's not the answer. "Apologies are cheap grace," she said. "The church should be talking about repentance. You have to name the sin, then turn around and go in a different direction."

The point that Lee and Jackson were as complex as any men, the nuances of their life stories larger than stained glass windows, Rev. Delman Coates, senior pastor at Mt. Ennon Baptist Church in Clinton, Maryland, said that acknowledgment isn't enough to put him at ease about the windows, even if their context is explained. "For me as an African-American, those are symbols of a very painful, horrific past," said Coates, who participated in the cathedral's panel discussion "What the White Church Must Do" last July. So much so, he says, that leaving the Lee-Jackson windows as-is would "make it difficult" for him to feel fully welcome at the cathedral.

Former cathedral task force member Riley Temple wants the cathedral to beef up its efforts around the windows now. He thinks the events to date have been intellectual to a fault; that they fail to address the array of



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emotions at play. He wants the cathedral to address this imbalance. "No one's thinking about *our* level of discomfort and the continued injury and assault of the windows," he said. "They don't want to make white people uncomfortable. The truth is going to make us squirm, and we can't get to reconciliation without squirming."

But Brown Douglas cited another essential step in this process: "Before we can talk about reconciliation, we have to talk about justice." To that end, she said the cathedral is creating programs and forming partnerships, including one with Coates' congregation. During Lent, Brown Douglas will run a study program on social and racial justice. And on March 29, she will participate in the cathedral's panel "Saints and Sinners: Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson."

Mobilizing a social justice and reconciliation movement within the broader Christian church makes sense to Coates. "Racism and structural racism in America were justified theologically," he said. "In order to make progress on a range of social justice issues, we must reclaim and reimagine our own theology." Willie James Jennings, associate professor of systematic theology and Africana studies at Yale Divinity School, author of "The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race," agreed. "Racism has a deep Christian architecture to it, and there's no way to reckon with that past without coming through Christianity," he said.

The theological and ethical journey of reckoning for Episcopal churches and others with very few African-Americans must include an honest look within. "It does come down to a denomination having a sense of its

own whiteness," he says. "They don't understand how their Christianity and their whiteness feed each other. [As Christians] it is always important for us to show people what it means to be living in the truth."

The strong emotions unleashed when people talk about race warrant attention — they're important. Jennings pointed to "deep frustration about how people just refuse to honor the horror of all this." If there's good news on this challenging path, it's that "the church has a vital role in helping people come to terms with what they feel, not just what they think," he said.

Right now, feelings about the windows seem inextricably linked to a pervasive concern not about this country's past, but about its current interpersonal and political climate. "We're as divided a nation as we've ever been. We're as divided *racially* as we've ever been," Brown Douglas said. By calling its Lee-Jackson windows into question, the cathedral stepped squarely into that sensitive, uneasy space.

Whatever the outcome, Coates and Jennings credit cathedral leaders and community members for calling the question on their role in memorializing and glorifying a painful past with omnipresent fingerprints. "I want to acknowledge the courage it takes to see what others refuse to see," Jennings said. "I'm thankful that they're doing that. It's really important."

In its report, the task force recommended digging into the topic as a community with forums, an "audit" of the stories the cathedral close buildings tell and with art of all kinds. Brown Douglas hopes the process will answer the questions: "What are we suggesting about who we are? But more than that, what are

we saying about who God is?" She also hopes it will uncover "the voices that have gone unheard, the subjugated history." How to incorporate those voices into the National Cathedral and just how the Lee-Jackson windows will fit into a now-evolving narrative remains to be seen.

### Atlanta Cyclorama moving across town to new location

By JEFF MARTIN, Associated Press, February 9, 2017

ATLANTA (AP) — A colossal panoramic painting depicting the Battle of Atlanta from the Civil War will be lifted by cranes from the building where it has been for nearly a century and then trucked to its new location.

Moving the 6-ton Cyclorama — one of the world's largest paintings — from Grant Park to the Atlanta History Center across town marks a major milestone in its restoration, historians said.

"We're on the cusp of a historic moment," said Gordon Jones, a military historian and curator at the Atlanta History Center.

Crews began the delicate process Thursday, and the move was expected to take two days. Those in charge say they're using extreme caution to ensure the 15,000-square-foot painting is not damaged.

The painting's vivid scenes of charging soldiers, rearing horses, battle flags and broken bodies stretch the length of a football field when it is fully unfurled and on display.

"The Battle of Atlanta is one of the crucial moments in the campaign that really determined the outcome of the war," Jones said. "What happened here in Atlanta is absolutely critical to



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the outcome of the country we know today."

Before the move, the painting was cut at a seam into two pieces. Both pieces were rolled onto gigantic, custom-built steel spools, each taller than a four-story building.

Holes were carved in the concrete roof of the old Atlanta Cyclorama and Civil War Museum. Cranes will lift these spools of painted history through the roof, and then onto waiting trucks for the trip nine miles north to a brand new building at the Atlanta History Center, spokesman Howard Pousner said.

The artwork, created by the American Panorama Co. in Milwaukee in the 1880s, is one of only two such panoramas on display in the nation. The other one is at Gettysburg National Military Park in Pennsylvania.



Workers prepare cyclorama for moving – AP Photo

The Atlanta painting had long been housed in a corner of the city zoo, something of a historic oddity in a city whose modern persona is more entwined with civil rights than the Civil War.

But before the age of movies, the panoramas offered a 360-degree view of battles and other historic events, and their popularity gave rise to a lucrative business for painters. The American Panorama Co. hired many German immigrants to paint the giant scenes at the Milwaukee company.

Now, a collection of 140-year-old diaries written by one of the main painters — Friedrich Wilhelm Heine — is providing new insights about their visit to Atlanta to make sketches for the Cyclorama, and their return to Milwaukee in a frantic effort to meet a deadline.

"His diaries are essentially the only first-hand accounts of any of the painters who worked in Milwaukee at the time," said Kevin Abing, an archivist at the Milwaukee County Historical Society.

Art historian Michael Kutzer, a painter who speaks German, is working to decipher Heine's German diary entries. The intent is to give historians their first look at the step-by-step process of creating the mammoth panoramic paintings.

In summaries provided to The Associated Press, Heine describes a hurried effort to complete the Atlanta artwork on time, despite his painful battle with "frozen toes."

He recounts how the painters made sketches in Atlanta atop a 25-foot scaffold over railroad tracks, despite one painter being afraid to climb it.

The diary entries also show that the painters didn't always get along. Heine complained about the tardiness of one painter on his crew, and how the Austrians "chatter more than they are working." Once, after a few beers, a painter became drunk and angry at Heine "and entire Amerika."

After a lengthy restoration process, the "Battle of Atlanta" will go on display again next year in a new 23,000-square-foot building at the Atlanta History Center, officials said.

A viewing platform rising 12 feet above the gallery floor will offer "the sense of being enveloped by the 360-degree experience," history center officials said.

The new exhibit will also include the "diorama" featuring 128 plaster figures that will continue to be displayed in the foreground of the painting as they have been since the 1930s, Jones said.

Among those plaster figures is a dead Union soldier with Clark Gable's face. It was created after Gable and other "Gone With The Wind" cast members visited the Cyclorama during the film's 1939 Atlanta premier, Jones said. While visiting, the actor made an offhand comment to Atlanta Mayor William B. Hartsfield about his likeness being included in the display, Jones said.

"So Hartsfield contacted the guys who had done the plaster figures, and they promptly came up with a figure of a dead Union soldier lying in the grass with the face of Clark Gable and a big bullet hole in his chest," Jones said.

### Mary Tyler Moore remembered

SHEPHERDSTOWN — Most people remember Mary Tyler Moore as one of Hollywood's great funny ladies, and for good reason: Laura Petrie, and more recently, Mary Richards, left an indelible mark on American society. Moore's death today at age 80 is a real loss.

What many don't know is that Mary Tyler Moore had deep ties to the Civil War community.

Actress Mary Tyler Moore and her family share a connection with Shepherdstown — and Shepherd University — that university officials say will last for years to come.

Moore died Wednesday at age 80. She was best-known for appearing on "The Dick Van Dyke Show" and later starring in "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," but the actress left a local legacy behind.



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Her great-grandfather was Lt. Col. Lewis Tilghman Moore of the 4th Virginia Infantry, part of the legendary Stonewall Brigade. Col. Moore helped to lead the regiment during its many famous engagements from Henry House Hill at the First Battle of Bull Run to the end of the war in 1865. During the winter and spring of 1862, Jackson established his headquarters in Moore's home in Winchester. That house is today the Stonewall Jackson Headquarters Museum, Mary Tyler Moore was a generous donor to help pay for its restoration. Her great grandfather's house's connection to the Civil War remained important to her for the rest of her life.



The Moore House, Winchester, VA

She was also the great-great-great granddaughter of Conrad Shindler, who lived in Shepherdstown in what is today West Virginia. In approximately 1795, Conrad Shindler built a sturdy brick home at 136 German St. in downtown Shepherdstown that still stands. During the Battle of Antietam in September 1862, the Shindler House, like most of the other buildings in Shepherdstown, received wounded Confederate soldiers. In the 1990s, Shepherd University, which is roughly a block away from the Shindler house, undertook a major project to create a massive database of Civil War soldiers. That project needed a home, and when the Shindler house came

available in 1995, Mary Tyler Moore purchased the house and then donated it to the University. The Shindler house today is called the George Tyler Moore Center for the Study of the Civil War, named for Mary Tyler Moore's father.



Mary Tyler Moore at the dedication of the Center for Civil War research named for her father

Finally, while she is rightfully best remembered for her comic genius, Mary Tyler Moore also played another famous Mary, Mary Todd Lincoln, in 1988 opposite Sam Waterston's portrayal of the 16th President of the United States in a rare dramatic turn. Her performance won acclaim in playing the tragic former first lady of the United States. While we should all mourn the loss of a brilliant Hollywood star today, it's also important to remember that the Civil War community has also lost one of its greatest and most generous benefactors, and her loss will be keenly felt as a result.

## Anesthesia in the Civil War

National Museum of Civil War Medicine, January 22nd, 2017

When most people think of Civil War surgery they envision a poor soldier being forcibly held down while his arm or leg is amputated without the benefit of anesthesia. Almost invariably, they picture him "biting the bullet" to help relieve the pain. This Hollywood concept of Civil War surgery is far from accurate.

Anesthesia was used in 95% of Civil War surgeries.

Sulfuric ether had been discovered in Europe in the 1830's and was first used as an anesthetic by William Morton in 1846. After a successful public demonstration it became widely used in surgery. Chloroform, which had been discovered in 1832, was soon in common use as well.

By the Civil War, the anesthetic qualities of chloroform and ether were well known and widely used. Chloroform was the preferred anesthetic since a smaller quantity was needed and its effect was rapid.

Chloroform was administered by placing the anesthetic on a sponge at the top of a cone and putting the open end over the patient's nose and mouth. It was administered gradually to avoid shock. Once the patient was affected the cone was removed. The average time needed for the administration of chloroform was nine minutes.

Ether was used less frequently since more of the substance was needed to produce the desired effect and it took an average of seventeen minutes to work. The best method of administration was to use a folded towel or bell-shaped sponge which was large enough to cover the nose and mouth. This was then soaked with the anesthetic. Another



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drawback for using ether was that it was flammable, a dangerous matter in an era of gas and candle lighting.

Both ether and chloroform were manufactured in large medical laboratories run by the armies on both sides. Some private laboratories, like Squibb's, contracted with the Union Army to produce drugs and developed an improved way to distill ether.

Ether is made by distilling a mix of ethanol and sulphuric acid. It is highly explosive, so care must be taken both when manufacturing and administering the drug. Chloroform is an organic compound and is usually created by the chlorination of ester alcohol or methane. It is much more stable than ether and can safely be used around open flame.

Only a low dose of anesthetic was used during the Civil War, just enough to make the patient insensitive to pain. Surgeons worked quickly and could complete a major operation in a matter of minutes. Many men moaned and moved about due to the agitating effects of a light dose of anesthetic. Some had to be held down by assistants, but they were unconscious and could not feel pain. Outside observers may have assumed that the men were being operated upon with no anesthetic, not understanding that the groans and thrashing movements were caused by the chloroform or ether. These observations, combined with Civil War bullets found with pig's teeth marks, have helped lend credence to the myth of "biting the bullet."

In the rare cases where anesthetics were not used, a number of reasons were reported. Lack of supply, especially for the Confederates due to the blockade, is one of the most common. Another is that some gravely wounded men were already

unconscious and did not need an anesthetic.

A recent review of the primary sources from the Civil War—soldiers', surgeons' and nurses' diaries, plus medical manuals—failed to turn up any contemporary references to biting the bullet, especially during surgery. The surgical manuals do not advocate placing anything in the patient's mouth. Placing a bullet between the teeth of a prone man who is likely to scream in pain is not the smartest thing to do.

### **Pamplin Historical Park Executive Director to retire**

News release, January 25, 2017  
North Dinwiddie, Va. – A. Wilson Greene, the founding director of Pamplin Historical Park and the National Museum of the Civil War Soldier, has announced his retirement effective February 28.

Greene, 67, contacted Dr. Robert B. Pamplin, Jr. in 1992 regarding purchasing the first parcel of what would become Pamplin Historical Park. Dr. Pamplin of Portland, Oregon, whose family roots run deep in Dinwiddie County, agreed not only to purchase the land but instructed Greene to plan and build a historical park on the property. That facility, called Pamplin Park Civil War Site, opened in 1994.

Since then, Pamplin Historical Park has expanded to 424 acres. The Park includes four museums, four historic structures, five administrative and operational buildings, five miles of interpreted trails and the Civil War Adventure Camp. The Park is widely recognized as one of the best facilities of its kind in the country.

Greene began his history career in Petersburg in 1973 at Petersburg

National Battlefield. He served sixteen years in the National Park Service before becoming the first Executive Director of what is now the Civil War Trust. Greene began his full-time duties with Pamplin Historical Park in 1995.

"Being involved with the creation of Pamplin Historical Park has been one of the highlights of my professional life," said Greene. "We have preserved a nationally significant battlefield and four historic structures and interpreted them for a wide variety of visitors, ranging from school children to serious students of the Civil War period."

Greene, who holds bachelors and master's degrees in history, is the author of six books, including *Breaking the Backbone of the Rebellion: The Final Battles of the Petersburg Campaign* and *Civil War Petersburg: Confederate City in the Crucible of War*. The first of his three books on the Petersburg Campaign is due to be published by the University of North Carolina Press early next year. He is a nationally known speaker and tour guide, having worked for the Smithsonian and other organizations for more than three decades.

The Pamplin Foundation, which owns Pamplin Historical Park, is conducting a search for Greene's replacement and expects to have someone in place by the time Greene retires. Greene and his wife, Maggie, will reside in Walden, Tennessee. "I'm looking forward to finishing my books on the Petersburg Campaign, playing a little more golf, and continuing to lead tours and give talks," said Greene. "I will miss all of my friends and professional colleagues in Virginia but I am confident that Pamplin Historical Park will continue to thrive."



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### Dan Sickles and the First Use of the "Temporary Insanity" defense,

History and Headlines.com, February 19, 2017

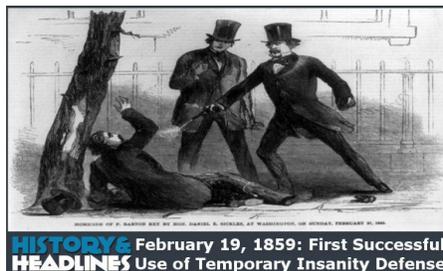
On February 19, 1859, New York Congressman Daniel E. Sickles made history as the first person acquitted by reason of "temporary insanity." The charge of murdering his wife's lover was all the more historically significant because the victim was the son of Francis Scott Key, author of our National Anthem!

The theory behind the temporary insanity plea is closely aligned with the idea that in the throes of extreme emotion (passion) a person cannot think clearly and may do something out of his or her realm of control. While this condition certainly seems to be something that can be readily accepted by many people (ie., Moi), proving that this mental state of mind was present during the subject crime is another story. So called psychological and behavior experts must be brought in to argue both sides of the debate in court, in order to convince a jury that such a state of mind existed and overwhelmed the accused person's normal thinking process.

Although crimes associated with an extreme psychological/emotional shock that take place in very close proximity (time wise) together seems credible, what about a long term situation when the crime takes place *not* simultaneous to the emotional event, but is caused by a build up of tension over a period of time? Such a defense has been used by battered wives and sexually abused victims.

It seems Representative Sickles was quite the character, having married a 15 year old girl when he was 31 years

old, though he falsified his own age by 6 years to appear younger, as this marriage was frowned upon by both families. Sickles had also been censured for bringing a prostitute to the New York Assembly chambers (when he was a representative there) and had taken a prostitute to a government trip to London as well, and compounding the breach of protocol by presenting the whore to the Queen of England using an alias with the last name of a political opponent! In spite of his own philandering, the hypocritical politician became enraged when he found out District of Columbia District Attorney Phillip Barton Key II was having an affair with Sickles's wife. Apparently in the throes of temporary insanity at such an extreme provocation, Sickles shot the hapless Key to death.



When arrested and jailed for the crime of murder, Sickles was treated as a celebrity and was allowed to keep his personal pistol with him in jail! Numerous politicians visited the accused murderer, and President Buchanan even sent him a note. A confession to the affair by Sickles' wife was presented in court, and the newspapers blared "news" that Sickles had rid the good people of the US of a dangerous womanizer. When acquitted, Sickles promptly made a public show of forgiveness to his wife, and did not resign from Congress. In fact, when

the Civil War broke out Sickles was commissioned as a General, having been previously a Major in the State Militia. When Congress refused to confirm Sickles commission as a general, Sickles rallied his political supporters and got his commission back. Sickles's service time was closely associated with that of Maj. General Joseph Hooker, and the 2 officers were known as womanizing hard drinkers. (The epithet "hooker" for a prostitute owes its origin to Joe Hooker and these bawdy wartime conditions of his command.) Sickles was the only Union General assigned as a Corps Commander without having graduated from West Point, but surprisingly most of his combat time reflected favorably on his courage and judgment.

Dan Sickles fought in the Gettysburg campaign, and even lost a leg there, winning a Medal of Honor in the process (34 years later), although he had blundered his unit into near annihilation. Sickles donated his mangled, amputated leg to the Government for medical research, and those remains are today located in the National Museum of Health and Medicine.

### Lost and Found at Bull Run, Confederate Class Ring

By John Banks, January 26, 2017

On Aug. 30, 1862, Captain Octavius Cazenove Henderson led five companies of 1st Virginia Infantry during vicious fighting at the Railroad Cut at the Second Battle of Bull Run. Sometime during the battle, a piece of artillery shell struck the 23-year-old officer in the left hand, between the third and fourth fingers, knocking away his precious Virginia Military Institute ring. Henderson had been a



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student at the prestigious school in Lexington, Va., and, when war broke out, was an assistant professor of French there.

With the air so full of artillery fire and bullets, the seriously wounded Henderson wisely thought it wasn't worth spending time looking for the ring, given to each of the 29 members of the VMI Class of 1859. Nearly 32 years later, in late August 1894, a young man walking through the woods on the old battleground stooped to pick up a rock to toss at a squirrel. On the ground, he spotted a piece of jewelry. He noticed the ring's setting was a bloodstone, and the letters "V.M.I." appeared above the Latin phrase "Sic hor ad astra" (Reach for the Stars) on the face. Inscribed inside the ring were the words "One of twenty-nine, O.C. Henderson, July 4th, 1859."



A post-war image of Confederate veteran Octavius Cazenove Henderson. (Virginia Military Institute archives)

Stories of the find were published in local newspapers, and the discovery "excited a great deal of interest in the

vicinity," according to C.D. Nourse, who visited with the young man who found the ring. Months after the great discovery, Nourse made an impressive Civil War find himself while turkey hunting near the banks of Bull Run: a Union canteen in a "wonderful state of preservation." Hopeful of finding the ring's original owner, Nourse wrote several letters, and eventually was contacted by Scott Shipp, the superintendent of VMI. A former Confederate officer in the 21st Virginia and 4th Virginia Cavalry, he also was a member of Henderson's VMI Class of 1859. Better yet, he told Nourse that Henderson was alive and "making a survey in the wilds of Georgia." After the war, Henderson, who graduated 26th in his class in 1859, was an assistant professor of infantry tactics at VMI and a civil engineer. Nourse, who had acquired the ring from the young man, corresponded with Henderson, and eventually returned the jewelry to the grateful veteran. The story gained wide circulation in contemporary newspapers, and was even mentioned in obituaries for Henderson when he died at age 59 in 1897.

The whereabouts of the prized Bull Run relic today, however, are unknown.

From BCWRT member Carleton Greene:



Photo: Carlton Greene, MD

Home of John Harrison Surratt, jr. Conspirator in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. 1016 West Lanvale street, Baltimore, MD. Son of Mary Surratt, Baltimore, MD. His mother was hanged along with three others. He escaped punishments for his role in the Lincoln assassination plot and died at about the beginning of WW1. His mother was hanged along with three others. I was touched by the visitation at this site. The home has three separate apartments now.



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