

The Sentinel

Civil War “Soldiers” We Never Hear Of

As Civil War buffs, we have spent a lifetime in many cases learning names, units, battles, leaders, strategies and all those things that we don't seem to be able to resist cramming into our heads. But how many of us have considered the lowliest of the war's participants, there not because they had a political opinion, an ax to grind or even a patriotic bent towards either Old Glory or the Stars and Bars? These were the company and post mascots that were ubiquitous on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line as friends, loyal companions and even occasional participants in the lines of battle. Member Jeff Allen brought a comprehensive and fascinating picture of these mostly ignored or forgotten buddies who were very important to the lives of the common soldier, if not to the annals of history.

One of the most famous of these soldiers' friends was Sallie, the bull terrier mascot of the 11th Pennsylvania Infantry. Adopted by the regiment almost at the beginning of the war, Sallie grew up with her comrades. She was everyone's pal in camp and the unit's spirit in battle. Not one to be left behind, Sallie knew her place was with her soldiers when they fought, from Cedar Mountain to 2nd Bull Run, from Chancellorsville to Antietam, from Gettysburg to Spotsylvania, where she was wounded but soon recovered. Sallie even gave birth to pups before Antietam, but still maintained her duties, both in camp and on the battlefield (the father's identity has been lost to history). Her heroism eventually caught up with her, though, when she was found dead on the battlefield at Hatcher's Run. The remaining members of the 11th never forgot Sallie and made her a permanent fixture at the feet of a soldier on their monument at Gettysburg, where she can still be visited today. Be sure to take a dog biscuit.

Many other dogs became mascots. Dog Jack of the 102nd Pennsylvania went through several battles and was wounded at Malvern Hill. The 69th New York adopted two Irish wolfhounds. Dash the Fire Dog was a firehouse mascot in Philadelphia who went to war when his firemen formed the 23rd Pennsylvania. Candy was the name of the dog with the 4th Texas and was devastated when her soldier/keeper was killed at Gaines Mill. She later disappeared at a Federal field hospital. There were

two Curlys in the war, one serving with the 23rd Massachusetts, the other with the 11th Ohio. Major of the 1st Maine was noted for snapping at minie balls, but died when hit by one at Sabine Crossroads in 1864. Sergeant of the 3rd Louisiana, Robert Lee of the Troupe Artillery of Northern Virginia, Stonewall Jackson of the Richmond Howitzers, Harvey of the 104th Ohio, the Barking Dog Regiment — all of these and many, many more were canine companions who made life a bit easier for their human masters throughout the war.

Dogs were not the only animals that became mascots. Roosters were very popular because of their “portability.” The 3rd Mississippi had a musical gander. The 42nd New York sported a pigeon at Antietam and other battles. An owl named Minerva followed another unit through the war. A Louisiana regiment appropriately adopted a pelican. And the Richmond Howitzers

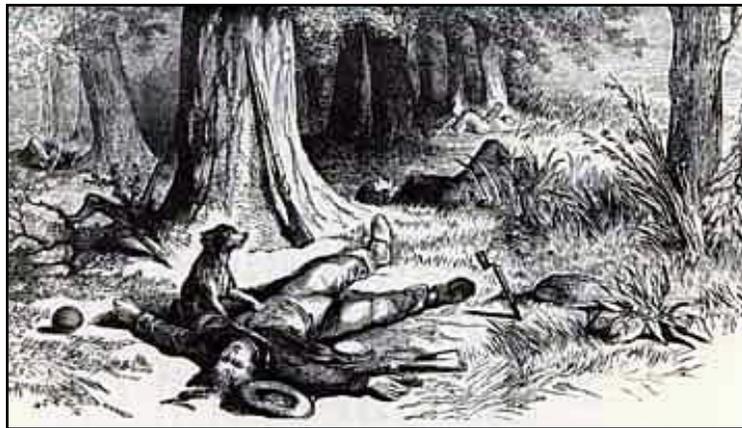
couldn't just settle for their little dog Stonewall Jackson; they also had a black crow that received a full military funeral when it died.

Even Robert E. Lee had a pet that travelled with him, a hen who gave him an egg every morning under his bed. Unfortunately, the siege of Petersburg in 1864-1865 was too much for the hungry soldiers, and this loyal hen ended up as some soldier's dinner. And Old Abe, the eagle, survived the war and became the honored

veteran member of the 8th Wisconsin until his death from smoke inhalation at the Wisconsin state capitol building in 1881. Other even stranger mascots included raccoons, badgers (for Wisconsin units, of course!), a wildcat for an Arkansas regiment, and even bear cubs. There were pigs, a camel, a donkey, Dick the Lamb, and even an alligator. A turkey named Jack was the mascot of Tad Lincoln at the White House and, when Tad found out his friend was to become a holiday dinner, Jack was pardoned and a tradition still followed to this day at the White House every Thanksgiving was born.

With both the crushing boredom of being a soldier away from home and the horrors of battle, it is no wonder that lonely and frightened men would latch on to pets as something to give them happiness, solace, and even companionship. There are pet therapies today, but they are nothing over the therapy provided to Civil War soldiers on both sides during the war by their animal comrades and friends.

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During and after the war, stories were told of a loyal dog guarding a dead or wounded master. An illustration from Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly.

Rare Monroe County Civil War Document Available

An out-of-state collector has an exciting opportunity for anyone interested in Civil War documents, and this one is directly related to Monroe County, Indiana. **Thomas Leszkai, who has Bloomington roots in his family**, got from his father-in-law a beautiful commemorative company roster of Co. I of the 10th Cavalry (125th Volunteer Regiment), formed in Monroe County in 1863 by, among others, Isaac Buskirk, who is most likely in the same clan as our local hero of the 27th Indiana, “Big Dave” van Buskirk. The item is in excellent condition, is in its original frame and is for sale. The owner has contacted us at the MCCWR and the History Center because he feels it rightly belongs back in the county of its origin. Anyone interested in discussing the purchase of this rare item should **e-mail him at Powercarpetkleen@bex.net**. Or call him at 419 -265- 8427.

Podcast News

As we noted in the last issue of *The Sentinel*, a brilliant series of lectures by the noted scholar David W. Blight are available free for download via the iTunes store: <http://www.apple.com/itunes/download>. We have since learned that it can also be accessed at <http://oyc.yale.edu/history/civil-war-and-reconstruction/>. This site has the original course syllabus and reading list for a history class at Yale and, unlike the original students, no papers will be due.



Old Abe, the veteran of many battles as the mascot of the 8th Wisconsin Infantry. The eagle died in 1881 and was stuffed and mounted for public display.

Overlease Library volunteers needed

The Overlease Library has grown and has a number of interesting things to look at, but there is little time for browsing during our monthly meetings. We would like to open it up a bit more for general availability, so we would need volunteers to monitor it. This would be likely for three hours a month on a Saturday morning, although other times might be possible. A volunteer would simply sit with the library in the morning hours (afternoon might be possible, too) one Saturday a month. She or he would check out books, take them in, or stand by while readers read them or do research. The schedule of available user-times would be published in *The Sentinel* each month and on our web site, depending on other activities at the Monroe County History Center. It is likely that the volunteer would technically be a volunteer for the Monroe County History Center, our parent organization, so he or she could handle the greeter's desk at the same time. If you are interested, call Steve Rolfe at 322-0628 or 336-0757, or e-mail him at srolfe@indiana.edu.

Assassination Tour Reservations Begin

This may be a bit far afield for us in Indiana, but if you happen to be planning a trip to the east this spring, this looks to be a quirky and different way to experience and examine Civil War history. Reservations will be accepted beginning “mid-January” for the popular *John Wilkes Booth Escape Route* spring bus tours offered by the Surratt Society in Clinton, MD. The 12-hour tours, set for April 10, 17 and 24, cost \$75 and sell out fast. For details, go to <http://www.surratt.org/>.

Next Meeting

What role does Congress play during a war? We struggle with that question today, and they really struggled with it during the Civil War—The Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War, a committee no one wants repeated.

Join us at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 9th to explore this subject with Roundtable member Rick Watson.

Rick is also our Webmaster and will fill us in about the latest developments of our website <http://www.mccwr-in.org>.

Experience the War in 3D

It's not *Avatar*, but an interesting way to literally look at the Civil War is to study the stereoscopic photos that were the rage of the day during the war years. It takes a bit of visual "self-training," but it's fun and interesting to see what the "technology of the day" was in the 1860s and think about how it brought the war into people's living rooms, perhaps in a way similar to the way the Vietnam war was brought into our living rooms by the media in the 1960s. While there are some books out on this subject, complete with 3-D glasses, the Civil War Preservation Trust now has an on-line site where you can experience this on your own. You will need the special 3-D glasses, and there are directions on the website on how to get them for free. For more, go to <http://www.civilwar.org/photos/3d-photography-special>.



General Asboth and his dog York gallop at the battle of Pea Ridge. From Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly.

Civil War Vignette — Civil War Graves in the Smokies

This "Civil War Vignette" was contributed by Steve Rolfe, MCCWR member, as a sort of "test case" and may be something we can do again. If you have a fascinating tidbit from your own Civil War interests or research, send it to Steve, srolfe@indiana.edu, and we will try to include some in future newsletters, depending on available space.

Many people are familiar with East Tennessee today because of tourism and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The Civil War in the area was extremely contentious because that part of the state was strongly pro-Union while the middle and western areas' residents were definitely Confederate sympathizers. According to the old-timers in these mountains, three Civil War soldiers are buried in a cemetery just off the Rough Fork Trail in the Cataloochee area of the park. Elzie Caldwell and Levi Shelton are buried together in one grave and another unnamed soldier in a separate grave. The soldiers were killed on April 1, 1865 by a notorious raider who, upon being given a Union commission, headed a mountain guerrilla force out of east Tennessee. He was actually a Confederate deserter and opportunist. With his troops, he plundered Cataloochee Valley before being driven back into Tennessee by a local Confederate unit. The next time you visit the Smokies, visit these, or any of dozens of such Civil War soldiers' graves throughout the park's 140 plus cemeteries.

Two Ideas to Consider at a Future Meeting

It has been proposed that, entirely at the discretion of those present, an informal period of time be set aside after the program at each meeting for discussion of topics and issues related to the Civil War.

In addition, very soon our web page will have one or more blogs available for the discussion of such topics and issues related to the war. Potentially the blogs would be opened to millions of wanderers on the Internet, so it may be advisable to limit access to members and friends on our mailing list.

A Sampler of Possible Topics & Issues

For discussion at meetings or on the blogs

(Developed, re-worked and amended, initially from a list by David Blight.)

1. Why did the North win the war, if it did? 2. Why did the South lose the war, if it did? 3. What did waging war mean to the common soldier, his officers, or to the women at home or at the front. 4. What effect did the war have on 19th century beliefs and attitudes? 5. What did the people, not just the soldiers, of North and South think were the causes and purposes of the war? 6. What were the consequences, the results, of the war in the long or short run? 7. Why were the slaves freed and when they were, or were they really? 8. Was the war a second American revolution, a second founding of the nation? 9. Was the war a "just war"? 10. What is the meaning of the war in our time? Then there are all those intriguing "what ifs," for example: What if Jackson had not been killed at Chancellorsville? What if McClellan had followed up after Antietam? What if "Baldy" Smith had pushed into Petersburg in June 1864?

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