

THE DISPATCH

The Civil War Round Table of New York, Inc.

Volume 69, No. 8

645th Meeting

May 2021



If you can't use a computer to Zoom and want to listen in by phone, leave your phone number at 718-341-9811 and we'll call you with the Zoom phone number and id codes.

• Guest:
John Allen
on **The Civil War's long Shadow in Southern Hunterdon County**

• Date:
Thursday, May 20th

• Place:
Zoom

• Time:
at 7:00 pm

John Allen

The Civil War's Long Shadow in Southern Hunterdon County

Too many of us think the men who fought in America's Civil War simply put down their weapons and went back home to live peaceful lives. The truth is far different and asks us to honor their memory as human beings who experienced extraordinary violence.

This slide presentation focuses on the post-War lives of the men who settled in southern Hunterdon County, New Jersey. Many of them were maimed during the War, fighting in the 15th New Jersey Infantry Regiment. The regiment has the dubious honor of making Lt. Col. William Fox's list with 14.1% of the regiment killed during its entire term of service. It was especially noted for its losses at the "Bloody Angle" at Spotsylvania Courthouse where it lost over 26% of its men. Only the 1st Minnesota's 28+% losses at Gettysburg exceed that figure.

Yet, it was said that, for every three men killed in combat, five died of disease. Clearly if your father, son, or husband failed to return from his term of service, you were affected, too. And many of the men who survived the War spent the remainder of their days living with the after-effects of the poor sanitation and diet which prevailed during their Army experience.

Finally, even those who were never mobilized to fight suffered from the effects of having to pay for the War. The result? Uncle Sam's personal income tax! Thus, the Civil War cast a "long shadow" that affected everyone in the Nation.

Records supporting these conclusions are publicly available and form much of the presentation.



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Question of the month:

Where did former Virginia Military Institute professor Stonewall Jackson claim victory despite major losses?

2021 • MEETING SCHEDULE • 2021

• May 12th (Zoom) •

John Allen

The Civil War's long Shadow in Southern Hunterdon County

• June 9th (Zoom) •

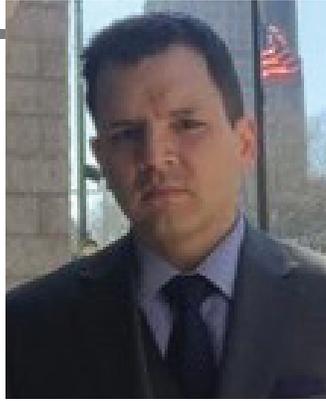
TBA

• July 14th (Zoom) •

N/A

President's Message

Welcome to May. I wanted to thank Dr. John F. Marszalek for speaking at our April meeting. His presentation about General William Tecumseh Sherman was both thoughtful and illuminating, and we hope to have him back to speak again to us once we return to our old format.



While it has been a difficult journey, we are beginning to overcome the pandemic and things are beginning to return normal. Vaccinations have now been made available to all adults over 18 and new infections rates are at an all-time low. Public schools are reopening for in-person classes across that state. Just recently, Governor Cuomo announced that indoor dining will now be able to increase from 50 percent to 75 percent starting on May 7th, which would be the highest capacity New York City restaurants have seen since the pandemic began. The new announcement comes just days after Mayor De Blasio announced that he's hoping the city will be completely reopened by July 1st. While it is still too early to know exact details, it looks like we may be able to return to our in-person dinner meetings sooner rather than later. It has been a long road, and I know we are all looking forward to returning to the gatherings we have missed these many months.

To that end, we are still trying to find different potential options for a venue in New York City once we return. If anyone has any ideas or connections to potential venue sites, please do not hesitate to contact me with your suggestions. Thanks again and I look forward to seeing everyone at our May zoom meeting.

KRIS J. KASNICKI



Answer:

At Cedar Mountain, Virginia, August 9, 1862

From Civil War Trivia and Fact Book by Webb Garrison

THE DISPATCH



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Civil War Events During the Month of May 1863

- May 1** Battle of Port Gibson, Mississippi
- May 2** During the Battle of Chancellorsville, Confederate General T.J. “Stonewall” Jackson is accidentally shot by his own men
- May 3** Second Battle of Fredericksburg, Virginia
- May 3/4** Chancellorsville Campaign continues with the Battle of Salem Church
- May 6** Battle of Chancellorsville ends with Confederate victory
- May 10** Death of Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson
- May 14** Engagement at Jackson, Mississippi
- May 16** Battle of Champion Hill (Baker’s Creek), Mississippi
- May 17** Battle of Big Black River Bridge, Mississippi
- May 19** First assault on Vicksburg, Mississippi
- May 21** Engagement at Plains Store, Louisiana
- May 22** Second assault on Vicksburg
- May 22** Siege of Port Hudson, Louisiana begins
- May 27** First assault on Port Hudson

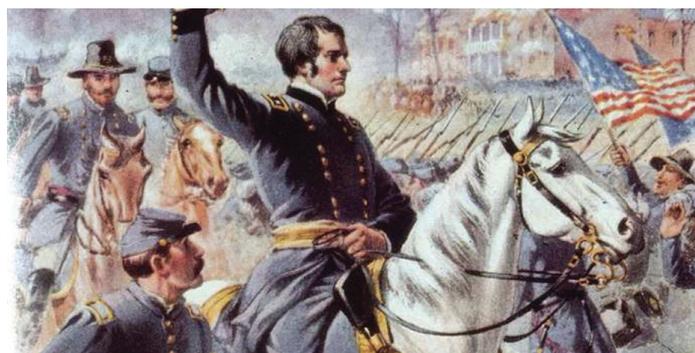
Battle of Chancellorsville

Following the “horror of Fredericksburg” (December 13, 1862), the Confederate army of Gen. Robert E. Lee and the Union force under Gen. Joseph Hooker had spent the winter facing each other across the Rappahannock River in Virginia. On April 27 Hooker dispatched his cavalry behind Lee’s army, intending to cut off a retreat. Two days later he sent a diversionary force consisting of two corps—roughly 30,000 men under the command of Gen. John Sedgwick—across the Rappahannock below Fredericksburg and crossed upriver with the main body of his army.

By May 1 his superior forces were massed near Chancellorsville, a crossroads in a densely forested lowland called the Wilderness. Deprived of his cavalry, however, Hooker was blind to Lee’s movements, and on May 2, when Lee ordered Gen. Stonewall Jackson’s “foot cavalry” to swing around and attack the Union right, Hooker’s surprised flank was routed. The audacious maneuver, which saw Lee violate basic military doctrine by dividing his forces in the face of a superior enemy, further cemented Lee’s reputation among both friend and foe. The Union general withdrew, and Lee’s pressure over the next three days forced a Union retreat north of the river. The South’s greatest casualty was the loss of Jackson, who was accidentally shot by his own men while returning from a reconnaissance of Union lines. He survived the amputation of his left arm in the field, but infection set in, and he died of pneumonia on May 10. Of 130,000 Union soldiers engaged at Chancellorsville, more than 17,000 were casualties (some 7,500 were killed or

reported missing); of 60,000 Confederates, more than 12,000 were casualties (more than 3,500 were killed or reported missing).

From the Encyclopedia Britannica



Joseph Hooker at the Battle of Chancellorsville

Union General Joseph Hooker commanding troops at the Battle of Chancellorsville, May 1863.

Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (LC-DIG-pga-11167)



Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee

Confederate Generals Stonewall Jackson (left) and Robert E. Lee meeting for the last time at the Battle of Chancellorsville, May 1863.

STONEWALL JACKSON'S WAY

by JOHN WILLIAMSON PALMER (1825-1906)

Come, stack arms, men! pile on the rails,
 Stir up the camp-fire bright;
 No growling if the canteen fails,
 We'll make a roaring night.
 Here Shenandoah brawls along,
 There burly Blue Ridge echoes strong,
 To swell the Brigade's rousing song
 Of "Stonewall Jackson's way."

We see him now-the queer slouched hat
 Cocked o'er his eye askew;
 The shrewd, dry smile; the speech so pat,
 So calm, so blunt, so true.
 The "Blue-light Elder" knows em well;
 Says he, "That's Banks-he's fond of shell;
 Lord save his soul! we'll give him-" well!
 That's "Stonewall Jackson's way."

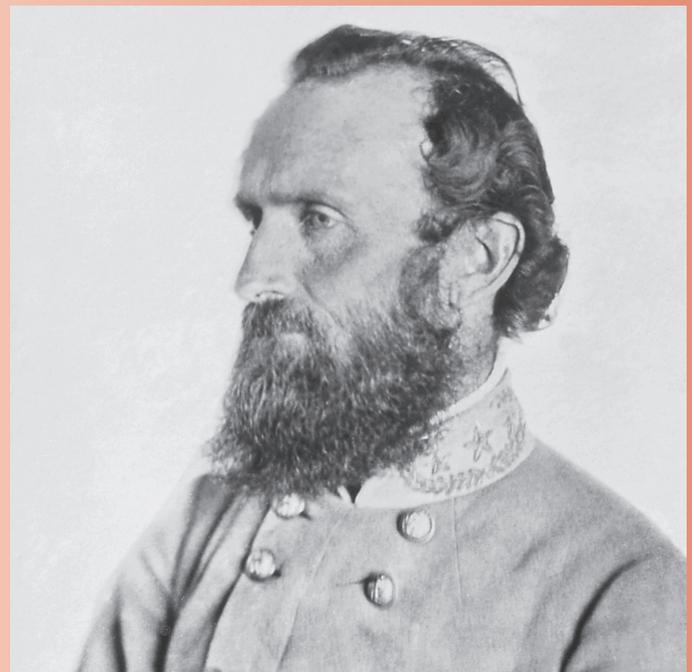
Silence! ground arms! kneel all! caps off
 Old Massa's goin' to pray.
 Strangle the fool that dares to scoff
 Attention! it's his way.
 Appealing from his native sod
 In forma pauperis to God:
 "Lay bare Thine arm; stretch forth Thy rod!
 Amen!"---That's "Stonewall's way."

He's in the saddle now. Fall in!
 Steady! the whole brigade!
 Hill's at the ford, cut off; we'll win
 His way out, ball and blade!
 What matter if our shoes are worn?
 What matter if our feet are torn?

"Quick step! we're with him before morn!"
 That's "Stonewall Jackson's way."

The sun's bright lances rout the mists
 Of morning, and, by George!
 Here's Longstreet, struggling in the lists,
 Hemmed in an ugly gorge.
 Pope and his Dutchmen, whipped before;
 "Bay'nets and grape!" hear Stonewall roar;
 "Charge, Stuart! Pay off Ashby's score"
 in "Stonewall Jackson's Way."

Ah, Maiden! wait and watch and yearn
 For news of Stonewall's band,
 Ah, widow! read, with eyes that burn,
 That ring upon thy hand,
 Ah, Wife! sew on, pray on, hope on;
 Thy life shall not be all forlorn;
 The foe had better ne'er been born
 That gets in "Stonewall's way."



Book Review

Meade & Lee at Bristoe Station

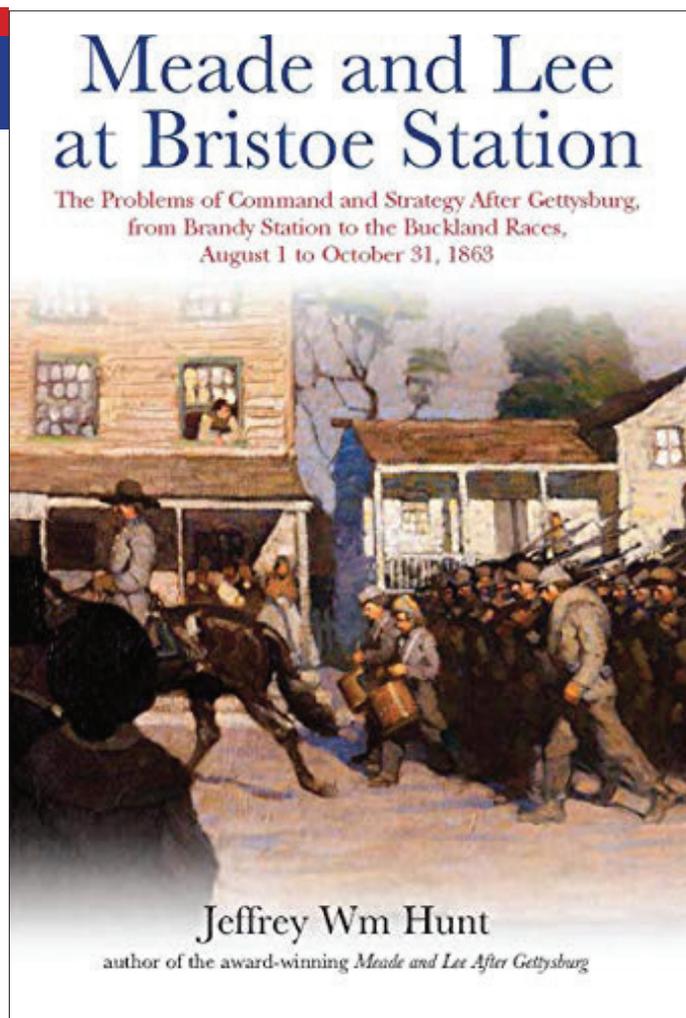
by Jeffrey Wm. Hunt

The second of Hunt's "Meade and Lee..." books picks up where the first volume left off. On August 1, the Army of the Potomac (AoP) was concentrated around Warrenton, Virginia awaiting the repair of their Orange & Alexandria Railroad supply line. The Army of Northern Virginia (ANV) was in Culpeper and Madison Courthouses, but were soon united on the south bank of the Rapidan River.

You had to feel sorry for Meade. He received no specific, implementable orders from either Lincoln or Halleck, and the AoP was being drained of its veterans. By the end of August over 9,000 men had been sent to New York City to enforce conscription. The weakening of Lee's principal enemy in Virginia resulted in Confederate President Jefferson Davis' order that Lee send Longstreet's First Corps to Georgia where, supporting Bragg's Army of Tennessee, they defeated Rosecrans' Army at Chickamauga (September 18-20). Following this Union disaster, the XI and XII Corps received orders from Washington on the 24th to aid the besieged Army of the Cumberland in Chattanooga, TN. Despite this manpower drain, by the end of September Meade's Army had rebounded to match early August personnel totals, and significantly outnumbered Lee (although, like McClellan, he didn't realize it).

The book is very well footnoted; a good thing since a quote like "the enemy skedaddled" was usually written - whether true or not - about an opponent rather than one's own force. The footnotes provide additional value to the text: biographical information, for example. The author has been a re-enactor for decades and clearly knows the "School of the Soldier" and small unit maneuvers, adding value to his research and benefitting the reader.

One criticism is the tendency to sometimes confuse directions: a problem easily overcome with a proper map. A Culpeper County area map from 1863 is available on the Library of Congress website. The constant maneuvering of both armies around the area - where many geographic names have changed - is best followed on it, so consider printing it. This is particularly important when following Lee's attempt to outflank Meade, forcing him to withdraw from Virginia. The battle of Bristoe Station is the most significant confrontation covered in this book, resulting in a significant Confederate defeat and the end of Lee's effort



to force Meade's retreat. Was A. P. Hill accountable? Make your own decision once you read about it.

The book also covers the cavalry clash called the "Bucktown Races". JEB Stuart's cavalry trounced Pleasanton's troopers, almost bagging Kilpatrick's entire 3rd Division of the Cavalry Corps. This action occurred during Lee's retreat to the Rappahannock destroying the O&A tracks to slow Meade's pursuit.

Meade seems to have employed his cavalry well during the post-Gettysburg period, casting doubt on Sheridan's accusation in May 1864 that he used the cavalry improperly (protecting baggage trains, etc.). To the contrary, throughout Summer and Fall 1863, Meade made extensive use of his cavalry for reconnaissance and escort. "Whoever saw a dead cavalryman?" was no longer an appropriate question at this point of the War in the Eastern Theater.

By the end of this book the ANV and AoP were pretty much in their pre-Battle of Chancellorsville positions... with no end to the War in sight.

Reviewed by John Allen

SPOTLIGHT: DAVE LICALZI



As the ‘Member at Large’ Dave LiCalzi is looking to you, our members for ideas and suggestions on how you think we can make our Round Table more interesting and vital. Any organization is only as good as its members, so we need you to speak up and talk to Dave.

Dispatch: When did you first become interested in the Civil War and what sparked that interest?

DL: I remember watching North & South: Book 1 on TV in 1985 with my parents. I’m sure it wasn’t appropriate for a 9-year-old, but I was instantly fascinated by the Civil War and the time period.

Dispatch: What is a ‘Member at Large’ ?

DL: Great question! I’ve been thinking a lot about how to better define this role. The Member at Large is neither an Officer nor a Board member. In my eyes, it is someone with a strong interest in the club but with somewhat of an independent perspective. My goal is to provide the Officers & Board with thoughts and suggestions to continue to improve and evolve the club. I welcome any feedback on the club and encourage members to reach out any time at davelicalzi@yahoo.com.

Dispatch: Do you have relatives that served in the Civil War?

DL: No, my relatives all came from Europe in the early 1900s. My grandfathers fought in WWII, one in Europe and one in the Pacific, so that war has always had personal meaning to me. I recently found pictures of my paternal grandfather at Eagle’s Nest with the Army Corps of Engineers. I cannot even begin to imagine being a soldier in WWII let alone a young soldier during the Civil War.

Dispatch: Which battle do you think is one of the most important of the CW?

DL: The popular answer is Gettysburg but after our unforgettable battlefield tour of Antietam (organized by

our fearless President, Kris Kasnicki), that is my answer. Not only was Antietam “the bloodiest day in American history” but even with the tenuous Union victory, it set the groundwork for the Emancipation Proclamation and discouraged European involvement. I learned all of this from the esteemed Dennis Frye, the absolute best in the business!

Dispatch: Which movie do you think portrays the Civil War best?

DL: As a feature film, Gettysburg seems to be historians’ choice for most accurate but to me nothing beats the Ken Burns documentary, even though it overly romanticizes the Confederacy.

Dispatch: Can you give us some information about your background?

DL: President Kasnicki and I met in 1st Grade and have been great friends ever since. I consider myself a very casual Civil War fan but when he told me about the Round Table, I had to check it out. In addition to meeting some really great people, it has been an incredible learning experience. I work in advertising/marketing for ViacomCBS, focused on digital & social media and strive to bring those skills to my position as Member at Large.

Dispatch: Any last thoughts you would like to share with our readers?

DL: As I learn more about the Civil War within our current climate, I often struggle with the ideas of preserving history and political correctness. My take is that it doesn’t have to be one or the other – both are critical. We shouldn’t glorify slavery via monuments erected well after the war, many of which lack context. But we also can’t forget or erase our past. I am hopeful that we can all come together to develop solutions that preserve our history while also acknowledging the failures of our past.



Letter from Captain Wilburn

Below is a letter from Captain Wilburn, Jackson's signal officer, to Col. C. J. Faulkner, assistant adjutant general on Jackson's staff. (From the archives of the Virginia Museum of History and Culture)

Col. C.J. Faulkner

A.A. Gen.

Sir,

At your request I will endeavor to give you a correct account of the manner in which Gen. [Thomas J.] Jackson was wounded. Gen. J. attacked the enemy in the rear near the Wilderness Church on the evening of the 2nd of May and drove the enemy before him till about 9 o'clock p.m. when the firing ceased. The road on which we were advancing ran nearly due east & west & our line extended across this road & at right angles to it, our front being towards Chancellorsville or facing east. The gallant [Brig. Gen. Robert E.] Rodes with his veterans drove the enemy at the rate of nearly two miles per hour, and cheer after cheer rent the air as our victorious columns drove the enemy from his chosen position. I have never seen Gen. J. seem so well pleased with his success as that evening—he was in unusually fine spirits and every time he heard the cheering of our men which is ever the signal of victory—he raised his right hand a few seconds as if in acknowledgement of the blessing and to return thanks to God for the victory. About 9 o'clock the firing ceased and all seemed quiet and Gen. J. ordered Maj. Gen. A. P. Hill to the front to relieve Gen. Rodes whose command had been engaged all the evening and who was consequently ordered back to the rear to rest his troops. Gen. J. now rode to the front and meeting Gen. R. said to him "Gen. I congratulate you and your command for your gallant conduct and I shall take pleasure in giving you a good name in my report," and rode on to the front passing Gen. Hill, who was in front getting his command in position & fortifying his line—Gen. J. ordered Capt. [James K.] Boswell, his Chief Engineer to report to Gen. Hill for orders and sent Capt. [James P.] Smith, his aide-de-camp off with orders. Maj. [Alexander S.] Pendleton, A. A. Gen. had previously been sent off with orders. I had just returned from carrying an order and had just reported that his order had been delivered, when he replied as is his custom "very good." So there was no one left with Gen. J. at this time, but myself and Messrs. Wm. E. Cunliffe & W. T. Wynn of the Signal Corps, and Capt. [William F.] Randolph in charge of the few couriers present. Gen. J

with this escort was now at about fifty or sixty yards more or less distance in advance of Gen. Hill who was in advance of his troops. Gen. [James H.] Lane's Brigade extended across the road just in the rear of Gen. Hill, and commended firing at us from the right for some cause I suppose taking us for the enemy and the firing extended unexpectedly along his whole line. When the firing commenced all our horses had been frightened and started off—some moving into the enemy's lines. At the first fire some of the horses were shot from under their riders and several persons killed or wounded. Mr. Cunliffe of the Signal Corps fell in a few feet of Gen. J., mortally wounded. Gen. J.'s horse dashed off in the opposite direction, that is to the left, at the first firing, as did all of the escort who escaped this fire & who could control their horses. I was at Gen. J.'s left side & kept there. When we had gotten about fifteen or twenty paces to the left of the road, we came up in a few yards of the troops of this same Brigade on the left of the road and received their fire, as the fire had by that time extended to the extreme left of the Brigade and it was by this last fire that Gen. J. was struck in three places, viz, in the left arm half way between the elbow & shoulder, in the left wrist, and in the palm of the right hand. The troops who fired at us did not appear to be more than thirty yards off, as I could see them though it was after 9 o'clock P.M. He held his reins in his left hand which immediately dropped by his side and his horse perfectly frantic dashed back into the road, passing under the limb of a tree which took off his cap, and ran down the road towards the enemy. I followed, losing my cap at the same bush—but before I could catch his horse & when about fifty yards from where he was wounded, he succeeded in getting his reins in his right hand—also disabled—and turned his head towards our lines and he then ran up the road. We were now so far in advance of our troops as to be out of their range. Just as his horse got within twenty paces of where we were first fired at—Mr. Wynn & myself succeeded in catching his horse and stopping him. The firing had now ceased and no one was in sight—save we three—Gen. J. looked up the road towards our troops apparently much surprised at being fired at from that direction, but said nothing. Just then Mr. Wynn saw a man on horseback near by and told him to "ride back & see what troops those are," pointing in the direction of our troops and he rode off at once—I then remarked,

“those certainly must be our troops” and looked at Gen. J. to see what he would say, but he said nothing, though seemed to nodded assent to my remark. He continued looking up the road, standing perfectly still and uttered not a word till Mr. Wynn asked him if he was hurt much, when he replied “severely.” I saw something must be done at once, and as I did not know whether he could ride back into our lines, I asked, “Gen. are you hurt very badly,” he replied, “I fear my arm is broken.” I then asked, “where are you struck,” said he, “about half way between the elbow and shoulder.” I asked, “Gen. are your hurt any where else,” he replied, “yes, a slight wound in the right hand.” I did not think from his looks that he could ride back into our lines for I saw he was growing very weak from loss of blood, nor did I know but what that same Brigade would fire at us again if we approached their line from that directions as we were then directly between our friends and the enemy, and if any difference nearest the enemy, and I was fearful the enemy might come up and demand our surrender as there was nothing to prevent it. I could not tolerate for one moment the idea of his falling into the enemy’s hands. I then asked the question, “Gen. what should I do for you” when he said, “I wish you would see if my arm is bleeding much.” I immediately dismounted, remarking, “try to work your fingers, if you can move your fingers at all the arm is not broken,” when he tried & commented, “yes it is broken, I can’t work my fingers.” I then caught hold of his wrist and could feel the blood on his sleeve and gauntlet, and saw he was growing weak rapidly. I said, “Gen. I will have to rip your sleeve to get at your wound”—he had on an india rubber overcoat—and he replied “well you had better take me down too,” at the same time leaning his body towards me—and I caught hold of him—he then said “take me off on the other side.” I was then on the side of the broken arm & Mr. Wynn on the other. I replied and started to straighten on his horse to take him off on the other side, when he said “no, go ahead” and fell into my arms prostrated. Mr. Wynn took the right foot out of his stirrup & came around to my side to assist in extricating the left foot while I held him in my arms and we carried him a little ways out of the road to prevent our troops or any one who might come along the road from seeing him, as I considered it necessary to conceal the fact of his being wounded from our own troops, if possible. We laid him down on his back under a little tree with his head resting on my right leg for a pillow, and proceeded to cut open his sleeve with my knife. I sent Mr. Wynn at once for Dr. [Hunter] McGuire & an ambulance as soon as I ripped up the india rubber, I said to him that I would have to cut off most of his sleeve, when

he said “that is right, cut away every thing.” I then took off his opera glass & haversack which were in my way—remarking, “that it was most remarkable that any of us had escaped alive” & he said “yes it is providential.” I was then under the impression that all the rest of the party accompanying him had been killed or wounded, which was not far from the truth. Gen. J. then said to me “Capt. I wish you would get me a skilful surgeon.” I said “I have sent for Dr. McGuire and also an ambulance, as I am anxious to get you away as soon as possible, but as Dr. McGuire may be some distance off, I will get the nearest Surgeon to be found, in case you should need immediate attention,” and seeing Gen. Hill approaching the spot where we were, I continued “there comes Gen. Hill, I will see if he can’t furnish a Surgeon,” and as Gen. H rode up, I said “Gen. H have you a surgeon with you, Gen. J. is wounded”—said Gen. H. “I can get you one” and turned to Capt. B[enjamin] W. Leigh who was acting aid de camp to him and told him to go to Gen. [Dorsey] Pender & bring his surgeon. Gen. H. dismounted and came to where Gen. J. was and said “Gen. I hope you are not badly hurt.” Gen. J. “my arm is broken.” Gen. H. “Do you suffer much.” Gen. J. “it is very painful.” Gen. Hill pulled off his gloves which were full of blood, and supported his elbow and hand, while I tied a handkerchief around the wound. The ball passed through the arm, which was very much swollen, but did not seem to be bleeding at all then, so I said, “Gen. it seems to have ceased bleeding, I will first tie a handkerchief tight around the arm” to which he said, “very good.” I then said, “I will make a sling to support your arm,” to which he replied, “if you please.” About this time the Surgeon of Pender’s Brigade, Dr. [Richard R.] Barr came up and Gen. Hill announced his presence to Gen. J. & Gen. H. offered a tourniquet to fold around the arm but as it was not bleeding at the time and seemed to be doing very well, it was not put on. The Surgeon went off a few minutes for some thing & Gen. J. then asked in a whisper “is that man a skillful surgeon.” Gen. H. said, “he stands high in his Brigade, but he does not propose doing any thing—he is only here in case you should require immediate aid of a surgeon or till Dr. McGuire reaches you” Gen. J. “very good.” At this time Capt. [Richard H. T.] Adams, signal officer offered Gen. Hill whiskey for Gen. J.—which Gen. H. asked him to drink. He hesitated and I also asked him to drink it, adding that it would help him very much. Gen. J. “had you not better put some water with it”—which was the cause of his hesitation. Gen. H.

and I both insisted on his drinking it so and taking water after it, which he did. I then said “Gen. let me pour this water over your wound,” to which he said “yes, if you please, pour it so as to wet the cloth,” which I did & asked “what can I do for your right hand” Gen. J. “don’t mind that it is not a matter of minor consequence—I can use my fingers & it is not very painful.” About this time Lts. Smith & [Joseph G.] Morrison came up and Lt. Smith unbuckled his sword & took it off. About this time Capt. Adams halted two Yankee skirmishers in a few yards of where Gen. J. lay and demanded their surrender. They remarked, “we were not aware that we were in your lines.” Gen. Hill seeing this immediately hurried off to take command, saying to Gen. Jackson that he would conceal the fact of his being wounded. Gen. J. said, “yes, if you please.” Lt. Morrison then reported that the enemy were in a hundred yards and advancing & said, “let us take the Gen. away as soon as possible.” Some one then proposed that we take him in our arms, which Gen. J. said, “no, if you will help me up, I can walk.” He was immediately raised and started off on foot with Capt. Leigh on his right side and some one, I am not sure who was on the left side to support him. When he walked a few paces he was placed on a litter borne by Capt. Leigh, Jno J. Johnson and two others whose names I am not certain of. Jno. J. Johnson of Co. “H” 22 Va. Battalion was wounded while performing this duty and his arm afterwards amputated at the socket. I could take no part in bearing the litter as I had not sufficient strength in my right arm to assist, in consequence of a wound received in a previous engagement, so I got on my horse and rode between Gen. J. and the troops who were moving down the road, to prevent if possible them seeing him and was leading a horse belonging to one of the litter bearers, which I also endeavored to keep between him & the troops in order to screen him more effectively. These troops seemed very anxious to see who it was that was wounded, they kept trying to see and asking me who it was, and seemed to think it was some Yankee officer as he was being brought from the front of our lines. To all of these questions I simply answered, “it is only a friend of mine.” Gen. J. said “Capt. when asked just say it is a Confederate officer.” One man was so determined to see who it was that he walked around me in spite of all I could do to prevent it & exclaimed in the most pitiful tone, “Great God that is old Gen. Jackson,” when I said to him, “you mistake it is only a Confederate officer—a friend of mine.” He looked at me in doubt & wanted to believe but passed on without saying any more. As soon as Gen. J. was place in the litter the enemy opened a terrific fire of musketry, shell, grape & C. which continued for about half an hour—to all of which

Gen. J. was exposed. One of the litter bearers had his arm broken but did not let the litter fall—then another man just after this, fell with the litter, in consequence of getting his foot tangled in a vine. It was entirely accidental & he expressed great regret at it. Gen. J. rolled out & fell on his broken arm, causing it to commence bleeding again and very much bruising his side. He gave several most pitiful groans—but previous to this he made no complaint and gave no evidence of suffering much. After this he asked several times for sprits, which it was very difficult to get. He was much in need of a stimulant at this time as he was losing blood very fast. I went to a Yankee hospital near by and tried to get some sprits for him from their surgeons, but they had none. At this time Dr. McGuire & Maj. Pendleton got up & Dr. McGuire found him in an ambulance very much exhausted from loss of blood & he gave him some sprits—which seemed to revive him somewhat. He was then carried in the ambulance a mile or two to the rear. Just here Maj. P said to me “Capt W., Gen. Hill is slightly wounded in the leg and Gen. Rodes is in command & requests me to send for Gen. Lee & ask him to come here. I wish you would go to Gen. [Robert E.] Lee with this intelligence and send for Gen. [J. E. B.] Stuart. There are a plenty here to take care of Gen. J & you have done all you could do.” I asked Capt. Randolph of the couriers to go for Gen. Stuart and he started for Gen. Stuart. I reached Gen. Lee about an hour before day and found him laying on the ground [a] sleep but as soon as I spoke to Maj. [Walter H.] Taylor, he asked who it was & when told, he told me to come & take a seat by him & give him all the news. After telling of the fight & victory, I told him Gen. J. was wounded—describing the wound—then he said, “thank God it is no worse, God be praised that he is yet alive.” He then asked me some questions about the fight & said “Capt. any victory is dearly bought that deprives us of the services of Jackson even temporarily.” When I returned to Gen J. his arm had been amputated & he was doing well.

Respectfully

R. E. Wilbourn

*Capt. & Chief Signal Officer
2nd Army Corps*

Nashville Faces Public Health Crisis

As the Union Army faced down a public health crisis in Nashville, it had no choice but to accept the city's sex workers.

In July 1863, a riverboat bearing important cargo sailed into Louisville on the Ohio River. It was a shipment from the Union Army—not unusual in the days of the army's occupation of the Kentucky city during the Civil War. But the Idaho's cargo was anything but ordinary, and the city refused to let the ship dock on its shores.

The ship wasn't carrying weaponry—its cargo was human. Inside were over 100 prostitutes from Nashville, women who had been forced onto the ship at the behest of Union Army officials trying to stem a public health crisis of sexually transmitted diseases. They blamed the prostitutes for causing and spreading the diseases, which were nearly impossible to treat in a time before modern contraceptives or medical treatments, so they banished them from Nashville.

The women's failed trip north on the Idaho, a chartered boat known forever after as the "floating whorehouse," was just the beginning of a strange period in the city's history. When nobody would allow the ship to stop at their shores, Nashville officials had to devise another solution to their city's crisis. In response, the city legalized prostitution in an attempt to prevent women with sexually transmitted infections from passing them along to large number of soldiers.

Modern research has shown that when sex work is legalized, sexually transmitted diseases fall—but over a century ago, the potential benefits of regulated sex work seemed clear even without those studies. The brief but successful experiment only lasted through the end of the Civil War. But it proved the benefits of allowing sex workers to practice their trade publicly.

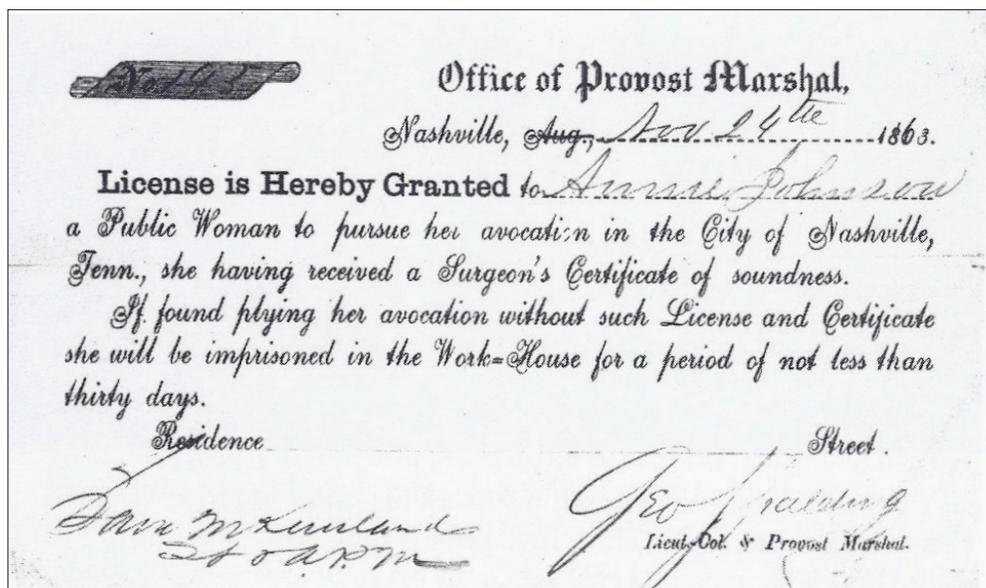
"In the realm of unmarried sex," writes historian Thomas Power Lowry, "Nashville remains America's first experiment with legalized, regulated prostitution. Even with the primitive medical treatment available then, it seems to have been a remarkable success."

Nashville had been occupied by Union soldiers since February 1862, and served as a large garrison for soldiers from the North. They didn't come alone. Though there were about 200 prostitutes in the city before the Civil War began, the profession flourished and grew along with the Union occupation.

Smokey Row, in what is now downtown Nashville, went from an uncomfortable city secret to a thriving red-light district with some 1,500 prostitutes. Many of the women were Southerners who became sex workers to earn a living after their male family

members went to war. With the increased numbers of both prostitutes and clients came diseases like gonorrhea and syphilis.

"There was an old saying that no man could [sic] be a soldier unless he had gone through Smokey Row," wrote Benton E. Dubbs, a Union private. "The street was about three-fourths of a mile long and every house or shanty on both sides was a house of ill fame. Women had no thought of dress



A license to protect sex workers, signed by George Spalding circa 1863.

or decency. They say Smokey Row killed more soldiers than the war.”

In a time before modern condoms and antibiotics, venereal disease was both seen as an inevitable consequence of war and the fault of prostitutes. One in 11 Union soldiers contracted a sexually transmitted disease during the war. But in Nashville, the problem was seen as particularly bad. A Union officer complained that he heard about venereal diseases “daily and almost hourly” from surgeons who begged him to rid the city of “diseased prostitutes.”

And so, in July 1863, the Union provost marshal, George Spalding, began rounding up prostitutes and forcing them onto the *Idaho*. But when the ship was denied safe harbor in Louisville, Cincinnati and every other port it attempted to enter, it returned to Nashville, trashed by the women who had been living there in abject conditions. The Union Army would have to try another tactic.

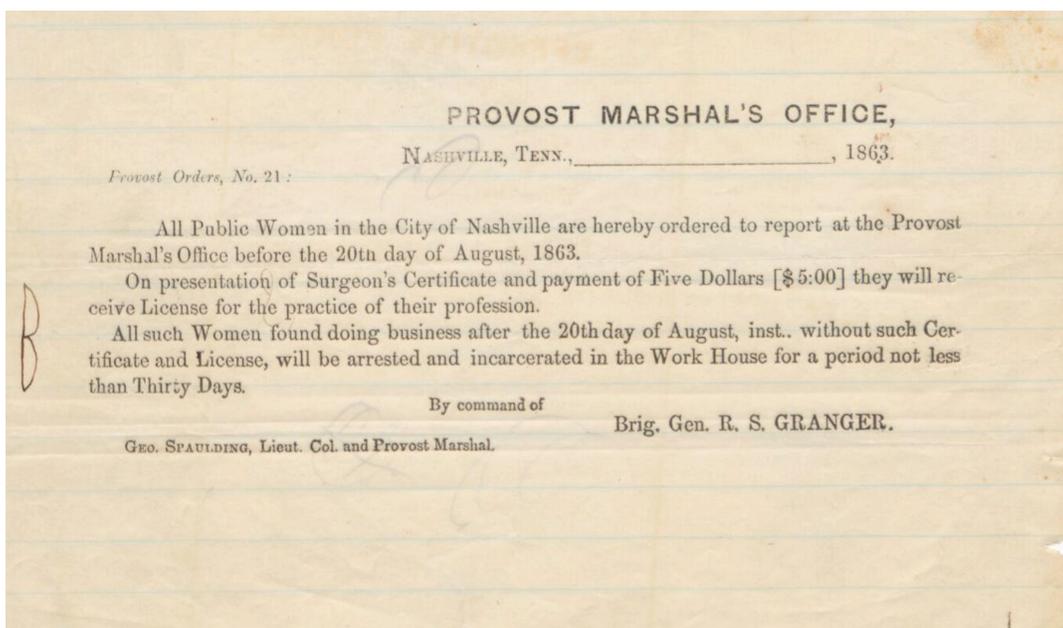
Starting in August 1863, Spalding launched a multi-pronged fight against sexually transmitted diseases. He ordered the creation of a hospital for prostitutes who had venereal diseases. To pay for it, prostitutes had to register for a license to practice their trade; some of the proceeds went to the hospital. The prostitutes were required to submit to regular health inspections and enter the hospital if they contracted a disease. A special hospital for soldiers with syphilis was also established in the city.

The program was a success: Not only did the numbers of Nashville-garrisoned soldiers with sexually transmitted diseases fall, but hundreds of prostitutes registered for licenses. Soon, the city’s reputation for obscene, coarsely dressed prostitutes “gave place to cleanliness and propriety,” according to a report on the program. Though medical treatments for sexually transmitted diseases were primitive at best at the time, oversight and prevention had proven to be a much more effective cure in Nashville.

The program was so successful that it spread to Memphis. But as historian Danielle Jeannine Cole notes, few outside of Tennessee knew about it at all, a fact she attributes to how quickly it was dismantled when the war ended.

The United States’ brief flirtation with legalized prostitution didn’t outlast the war, nor did it catch on afterward. Prostitution is still illegal in every state except Nevada, which has some counties that allow regulated brothels. Today, decriminalizing prostitution has been linked to lower rates of sexually transmitted infections. But in many ways, the stigma against sex work is as alive and well as it was in the days of Nashville’s floating brothel.

by
Erin Blakemore



A notice allowing sex workers to do their work legally in the city of Nashville.

The National Archives