

# The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

April 2021



[www.firstdefenderscwrt.us](http://www.firstdefenderscwrt.us)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As a matter of course, the past months have usually provided a modern inspiration for a relationship to the Civil War era. While it would be naive to suggest McClellan-esque that "all is quiet along the Potomac," the coming seasonal rebirth suggests a more introspective, hopeful message to be in order.

April is upon us, and we know this month saw both the beginning of our national crisis at Fort Sumter and its symbolic end at Appomattox Courthouse four years later. (As we will learn during our upcoming program, there were still Confederate armies in the field, and the largest would not surrender for another two weeks, long after Lincoln's assassination.)

We know the cessation of hostilities did not end the animosities and issues that caused the conflict originally, and we also realize that we have become heirs to some of that angst. Much of the discord of today can be traced back to the 19th century (and earlier), and those who love the study of history are often saddened and conflicted by the way we see it interpreted (or misinterpreted!) today.

In keeping with Easter and the season of earthly renewal, a passage attributed to French-born Quaker missionary Stephen Grellet seems timely. Although he had died before armed conflict gripped the nation, perhaps things would have been different had more people taken heed of his advice...

*"I expect to pass through this world but once.*

*Any good, therefore, that I can do or any kindness I can show  
to any fellow creature, let me do it now.*

*Let me not defer or neglect it for I shall not pass this way again."*

Grellet's counsel could have saved an enormous amount of blood and treasure 160 years ago. Perhaps taking more heed now will allow us to avoid repeating the tragedy.

*Craig*

## Round Table Business

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table met on March 9, 2021, at Giannotti's Country Manor. Twenty-one members were present when President Craig Breneiser called the meeting to order at 6:19 p.m. (five additional members joined the program virtually). A prayer was offered by Ev Binns followed by President Breneiser leading the Pledge of Allegiance. Dinner was then served.

When the business portion of the meeting began at 7:30 p.m., Craig announced that former member Bob Troxell had passed away in February. He additionally informed the membership that Gary Hertzog's mother had passed away recently. Vice President Mark Quattroco stepped in for Gary selling raffle tickets and conducting the book raffle during which eight books were raffled off.

### Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report Tim Antosy presented his report for the March 2021 meeting. Our balance as of March 15, 2021, stood at \$4023.31 with \$386.00 ear-marked for preservation. The unencumbered balance as of March 15, 2021, is \$3637.31. There is a total of 56 paid members.

### Joe's Jaunts

Joe Schaeffer gave an update on the fall 2020 jaunt that was postponed because of the pandemic. Charlie Fennell is still scheduled to lead a tour of East Cemetery Hill when it becomes feasible for a group to travel to Gettysburg, hopefully this coming fall. Stay tuned for a date to be named.

Joe also reported that five speakers have been set for the next campaign to begin in September.

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## April Program:

### *The Confederate Surrender at Greensboro* featuring Robert Dunkerly



While Appomattox is seen as the ending of the Civil War, in fact that was just one of several surrenders. At Greensboro, NC, two weeks after Appomattox, another surrender took place. The North Carolina surrender had more twists and turns than that in Virginia, and was much more violent and disorganized. We will discuss the details of the surrender, how it unfolded, and how it fits into the larger ending of the war.

*Robert M. (Bert) Dunkerly is a historian, award-winning author, and speaker who is actively involved in historic preservation and research. He holds a degree in history from St. Vincent College and a Masters in Historic Preservation from Middle Tennessee State University. He has worked at fourteen historic sites, and has written twelve books and numerous scholarly articles. His research includes archaeology, colonial life, military history and historic commemoration. Bert is a past President of the Richmond Civil War Round Table, and serves on the Preservation Commission for the American Revolution Round Table-Richmond. He has taught courses at Central Virginia Community College, the University of Richmond, and the Virginia Historical Society. Dunkerly is currently a Park Ranger at Richmond National Battlefield Park. He has visited over 500 battlefields and over 1000 historic sites worldwide. Bert enjoys exploring local bookstores, battlefields and breweries (not necessarily in that order).*



**Dinner Reservations for the Tuesday, April 13, 2021 Meeting**

Please make your meal choices/reservations on the website. Our meal choices for April include: Steamed Shrimp; ½ Black Diamond Steak; or Linguini with mushroom sauce. Soup, starch, vegetables, dessert, bread, coffee, tea, soda, and water are included. The price is \$27.00 inclusive for meals.

If you make your reservation online and you do not receive a thank-you and/or confirmation email, your reservation did not go through. If you must call in reservations, please call your menu selection to Kathy Little at 610-367-8082 no later than noon, FRIDAY April 9, 2021, which is also the deadline for online reservations.

**\*IMPORTANT NOTE\*** Once you have made your reservation, there are no cancellations for any reasons after noon on the TUESDAY preceding the meeting. This is the policy of Giannotti's, and the Round Table will be billed for your meal whether you attend or not. Please understand that you will be asked to reimburse the RT should you not attend after having made a reservation and not cancelled prior to the aforementioned time period.

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE: IT IS MUCH APPRECIATED IF YOU PAY IN THE APPROPRIATE DOLLAR AMOUNT. WE DO NOT HAVE A CHANGE DRAWER. WE WILL NOT ACCEPT \$50 OR \$100 BILLS IN PAYMENT. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.**

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24th Campaign Upcoming Programs		
Date	Speaker	Program
11 MAY 2021	Tom Huntington	<i>Searching for George Gordon Meade</i>

# Upcoming Gregg Biography has a First Defenders Connection

Prolific Civil War author Edward Longacre's soon-to-be-released biography, *Unsung Hero of Gettysburg: the Story of Union General David McMurtie Gregg*, has some local Round Table "flavor" added as long-time Gregg student and First Defender Dave Fox has provided the author with the benefit of his wisdom on the subject.

Thanks to Dave, we already know that Gregg proved to be one of the most successful Civil War cavalry commanders. He eschewed the flash and glory-hunting of the Stuart and Custer stripe, focusing on quiet competence without seeking personal recognition.

Gregg's service record in the pre-war army and during the first two years of the Civil War show a solid officer and leader. The highlight of his service most likely occurred during the afternoon of July 3, 1863, in the fields a few miles east of Gettysburg as his command, aided by Custer's Michigan troopers, repulsed J.E.B Stuart's cavalry that was looking to cut its way into the rear of the Union position on Cemetery Hill and Ridge. While Longstreet's Assault had already been defeated, there is no telling what might have happened if Gregg had not thwarted Stuart's legions.

The Berks History Center is hoping to generate enough orders to have a supply of Longacre's book made available locally following its May 1st release date. The price is \$34.95 before any applicable tax or shipping/handling. If interested, reach out to First Defender Vicky Heffner ([education@berkshistory.org](mailto:education@berkshistory.org)) to order your copy today!

