

The Dispatch

General Meade Society of Philadelphia, Inc.
Newsletter – Spring 2019
“Forget Not His Deeds”

To Mrs. George G. Meade

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, MAY 19, 1864.

All goes well up to this time. We did not have the big battle which I expected yesterday, as on advancing, we found the enemy so strongly entrenched that even Grant thought it useless to knock our heads against a brick wall, and directed a suspension of the attack. We shall now try to manoeuvre again, so as to draw the enemy out of his stronghold, and hope to have a fight with him before he can dig himself into an impregnable position.

We have recent Richmond papers containing Lee’s congratulatory address to his army, so you see both sides claim having gained the advantage. Lee, however, seems to think they have gained their point when they check us.

Yesterday I had a visit from Senators Sherman of Ohio, and Sprague, of Rhode Island; both were very complimentary to me, and wished me to know that in Washington it was well understood these were many battles. I told them such was not the case; that at first I had manoeuvred the army, but that gradually, and from the very nature of things, Grant had taken the control; and that it would be injurious to the army to have two heads. I see one of the newspaper men is puzzled to know what share we each have in the work, and settles it by saying Grant does the grand strategy, and I the grand tactics. Coppee in his *Army Magazine* says, “the Army of Potomac, directed by Grant, commanded by Meade, and led by Hancock, Sedgwick and Warren,” which is a quite good distinction, and about hits the nail on the head.

(Battle of Spotsylvania Court House, May 8-21, 1864)

The General Meade Society of Philadelphia is an educational non-profit 501c3 organization chartered by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The mission of the Society is to promote and preserve the life and service of Major General George Gordon Meade (USA), Commander of the Army of the Potomac. The Society’s Board of Directors meets at the Cannstatter Volksfest-Verein, 9130 Academy Road, Philadelphia, PA 19114, quarterly (March, June, September and December). All Society members are welcome.

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<http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-General-Meade-Society-of-Philadelphia/175046292538630>

The Meade Society Endows the General George Meade School

1600 North 18th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19121

We are proud to announce for the second year, The Society has donated the full amount needed for the Meade School's Classroom Incentives for PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention) program. The PBIS ticket system, monitored by teachers, will award students for their positive behaviors (being respectful, responsible and safe). With the tickets the students can use the school store, spend time in the "Fun Friday" room and participate in monthly events. The program is well established and a great success.

Our donation was made through The Fund for the School District of Philadelphia's *Philly FUNDamentals*. The Fund serves as a fiscal intermediary between the private sector and the Philadelphia public education system. We encourage all that have an interest in preserving public education in the City of Philadelphia go to fundamentals.thefundsdp.org and consider donating. Thanks to all our Members for making this donation possible.

The Grand Army of the Republic Civil Museum and Library Annual Preservation Luncheon – Saturday, March 23, 2019 from 12:00 noon to 3:30 p.m. at the Cannstatter Volkfest Verein, 9130 Academy Road, Philadelphia, PA 19114.

Keynote speaker Todd Brewster, nationally recognized historian and author of Lincoln's Gamble. Presentation of the Samuel P. Town Grand Army Award; Old Baldy Award; fund raising raffle; door prizes; and book sale. \$35 per person (members and guests); \$40 (non-members). Three-course Chef's luncheon – your choice of beef, chicken or salmon. 11:00 a.m. bookstore opens; 2:00 p.m. presentations. Please make checks out to **GAR Museum, Attn: Herb Kaufman, 4278 Griscom Street, Philadelphia, PA 19124. To reserve by E-mail: garmuslib1866@gmail.com**. Reservations by March 16, 2019.

Grand Army of the Republic Museum and Library Open House Program – “Patriot Daughters of Lancaster: A Civil War Ladies’ Aid Society” by Jeanne Cassidy & other members. Present day reenactors of the Patriot Daughters will share stories of how the Lancaster group was formed and operated to support the troops, including volunteering as nurses in Gettysburg after the battle. The Gettysburg experience was published in August 1863 as Hospital Scenes after the Battle of Gettysburg, written by a member of the original group and used as a fundraiser. **Sunday, April 7, 2019 at 1:30 p.m. Free and open to the public.** 4278 Griscom Street, Philadelphia. 215-289-6484, garmuslib1866@gmail.com, Off street parking in the rear of the Museum.

General Meade 2019 Spring Trip – “Civil War Sites of South Central Pennsylvania. May 4, 2019 trip will be touring pre-Gettysburg sites covering Carlisle into Harrisburg. **\$70.00 per person** includes free parking deluxe motor coach, buffet lunch, snacks and beverages on board and all fees/admissions. Hagey Bus leaves and returns to the Whitman Square, 9700 – 9800 Roosevelt Blvd., Philadelphia at **7:00 a.m. and Harrisburg by 5:00 p.m.** The tour will be led by Jim Schmick of *Civil War and More* book store, 10 South Market Street, Mechanicsburg, PA (see www.civilwarandmore.com for Jim’s bio. For additional and complete information and itinerary consult generalmeadesociety.org/spring-trip-2019. For reservation and payment contact Jerry McCormick, 215-848-7753 or gedwinmc@msn.com

**The Civil War Institute of Manor College and the
Delaware Valley Civil War Round table present:
“Victory has no charms for men when purchased at such cost.”
Perspectives on the Battle of Gettysburg.**

SATURDAY, MAY 18, 2019

MANOR COLLEGE, 700 FOX CHASE RD. JENKINTOWN, PA

FREE ADMISSION:

FREE CAR PARKING DONATION REQUESTED

10:00 a.m.

“Little Round Top, A Reexamination of Its Importance at the Battle of Gettysburg”

Presented by Herb Kaufman, Faculty of the Civil War & History Institutes of Manor College.

For years, historians have made the assumption that had the Confederate troops managed to seize Little Round Top, the entire battle would have changed dramatically. Herb will take a contrarian view and reexamine these assumptions based on the comparison of Little Round Top on the Federal left, versus the Battle for Culp’s Hill on the Federal right flank.

11:00 a.m.

“Longstreet’s Famous Countermarch, July 2, 1863”

Presented by Matt Atkinson, Park Ranger and historian, Gettysburg National Military Park.

Join Matt as we explore one of the most controversial exploits of the Battle of Gettysburg – Longstreet’s movement to get into attack position. This presentation dispels the myths and takes an honest look at what actually happened on that fateful morning.

12:00 to 1:00 p.m.

Cafeteria: Lunch, book signings, discount book sales, and an opportunity to explore the displays and exhibits.

1:00 p.m.

“General Sickles at Gettysburg’s Peach Orchard”

Presented by Jim Hessler, author, historian & Gettysburg Licensed Battlefield Guide Jim will discuss the colorful life of Major General Daniel E. Sickles based on his classic and award winning biography. He will examine Sickles infamous forward movement, his command decisions, and the impact of his decision on both the Union defense and Confederate attack.

2:00 p.m.

“Maine Roads to Gettysburg: How Joshua Chamberlain, Oliver Howard, and 4,000 Men from the Pine Tree State Helped Win the Civil War’s Bloodiest Battle”

Presented by Tom Huntington, author and historian
Based on his new book, Tom will tell the heroic history of the soldiers from Maine during the Battle of Gettysburg: the famous 20th Maine; the furious stand of the 17th Maine; the exploits of Col. Freeman McGilvery as he cobbled together a defensive line of artillery; and the battle of the 19th Maine in Pickett’s Charge.

Gravesite placement of veterans' flags at Laurel Hill Cemetery Sunday, May 19, 2019

Meet at the gatehouse of Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, in Philadelphia (215-228-8200) at 10:00 AM. The group assembled will place US flags on the graves of veterans' of all wars. As time and manpower permit, the cemeteries to be covered include Laurel Hill, Mt. Peace & St. James the Less. Refreshments and lunch provided. All welcome! Laurel Hill Cemetery contains the graves of thousands of Civil War veterans. Many of those who engaged in battle, fighting on the sides of both the Union and Confederacy or on the home front now rest at Laurel Hill. The site also holds sacred the remains of many prominent Civil War-era Philadelphians, including volunteer nurses, surgeons, and supporters of the war effort.

Open to the Public

Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19132.

Free Parking is available

(215) 228-8200 or online at www.thelaurelhillcemetery.org

Annual Memorial Day Observed at Historic Laurel Hill Cemetery, Sunday, May 26.

Recreating the Original G.A.R. Decoration Day Service of 1868: The traditional Decoration Day service of the Grand Army Meade Post #1 will be recreated at Historic Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Ave. Philadelphia on Sunday, May 27, 2018 at 12 noon. All are welcome to attend and participate in the ceremony. Laurel Hill is the site of the first Memorial Day Observance in Philadelphia on this date in 1868. Special bronze veterans' markers will be dedicated at the graves of veterans. Speakers, ceremonies and pageant will highlight this special ceremony. Afterwards the entourage will gather at the grave of General Meade, victor of Gettysburg, to perform the traditional service to honor all veterans who fell defending the Nation. Wreath-laying, speeches, music and honor guards will enhance the ceremony. Historical groups, veterans, and citizens are urged to participate. Wreaths, military contingents, color guards, music and period civilians are encouraged to participate. Refreshments served after the ceremony. Tours of the historic cemetery available. Co-sponsored by the General Meade Society of Philadelphia; Friends of Laurel Hill; American Legion Post #405; MOLLUS, Union League; Sons of Union Veterans; Patriotic Order Sons of America. For information, call: 215-228-8200

Special Memorial Day Observance on Monday, May 27, 2019 at 1PM - the National Holiday at Christ Church Burial Ground at 5th & Arch St. The final resting place of five (5) Signers of the Declaration of Independence, including Benjamin Franklin and many military veterans of all eras! The Benjamin Franklin American Legion Post #405 of the Union League will place a wreath representing the American Legion Post, commemorating the services of all veterans at the grave of Major General George McCall, first commander of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps (PA National Guard) representing all veterans! ALL are welcome!

Meade at the Phillies - Society member Tom Kearney has again arranged a game for us at Citizens Bank Park to see our Phillies in National League action. Our Nine will take on the Pittsburgh Pirates on Monday evening, **August 26, 2019. Game time is 7:05 P.M.** Tom again has arranged for a BOGO ticket game - Buy One Get One - and for a \$38.00 ticket you get a free one! Basically \$19.00 per ticket. There are 100 tickets available in Sections 105 & 106 in the Right Field Lower Level. Come out and see our Phillies & newly acquired Bryce Harper on August 26th!! Tom can be reached at turkeytk@aol.com or 267-446-2935

General Meade's Birthday Celebrated – On December 31, 2018, on his 203rd birthday, The Meade Society and friends gathered at his grave in Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia, to honor the victor of Gettysburg. This was the 22nd time, since the founding of the Society, that we made are respects to the General. Reverend John Brown gave the invocation and benediction. Our keynote speaker was Colonel Mark Eshelman. Organized by Society President Andy Waskie, the celebration featured a march to the grave, wreath laying, speeches, and honor volley by the 28th Pennsylvania Volunteers commended by Captain John Green, 19th century band performance by Beck's Philadelphia Brigade Band and refreshments provide the Kearney Commissary. All who attended enjoyed a champagne toast to General Meade of champagne, his favorite drink.

General Meade Society's Annual Brunch and Awards Ceremony – On February 17, 2019, members and friends gathered at the Cannstatter Volksfest Verein to enjoy a champagne brunch, bid on silent auction fundraiser and witness our awards ceremony. Judy Kearney again managed the successful auction. Our "Legion of Honor" awards went to Peck's Philadelphia Brigade Band represented by Scott West and to the 28th Pennsylvania Volunteer Re-enactors represented by John Green. The "Award Merit went to Ken Garson. Certificates of Appreciation recipients: Louis Cavaliere, Nancy Goldberg, Francis Spencer, David Staaby, Nick McAllister and Rachel Wohlgemuth.

Major Octavius V. Catto Ceremony – On Sunday, February 24, 2019, an honor ceremony was held at the City Hall Catto Monument to remember our equal rights and military leader. Military units, civilians in period dress, veterans and heritage groups participated. Wreaths were laid and biographical presentations we given by those in attendance. The Pennsylvania National Guard Awards, "The Catto Medal" were given to Sergeant First Class Brian Reighard, Pa. Army National Guard and Major Luis Mendoza, Pa Army National Guard, at the Union League of Philadelphia after the ceremony.

A new Catto website is now available, hosted and managed by Independence Hall Association, owner of ushistory.org. It was undertaken with the erection of the City Hall Catto Memorial that was dedicated in September 2017. The memorial is the first public monument in Philadelphia on public lands honoring an African American. Visit the website at catto.ushistory.org to learn more.

Book review by Anthony (Andy) Waskie, Ph.D., Temple University

Farragut's Captain - Percival Drayton, 1861-1865 By Peter Barratt

English historian, Peter Barratt has produced a fine biography of Civil War Naval officer and hero of a number of famous naval actions, Commodore Percival Drayton. He was an accomplished and experienced naval officer who was born and raised in Charleston, South Carolina in 1812 to a distinguished colonial family. His father, William Drayton, Jr. was a noted soldier, jurist, politician, US Congressman and financier. William was a staunch Unionist who opposed John C. Calhoun in the infamous Nullification Crisis. As a consequence, William moved his residence and family to Philadelphia where he was named president of the U.S. 2nd Bank of the United States. During the War of 1812, William Drayton, Jr. served as a colonel in the US Army and was considered for the post of Secretary of the Army.

Commodore Percival Drayton had two brothers from William Drayton's first wife – Emma Gadsden: Thomas Fenwick Drayton, the older brother, who was a West Point graduate (1828) and classmate of Jefferson Davis. Thomas F. Drayton remained loyal to the South and became a General in Confederate service. The two brothers faced each other as opponents in one of the first decisive engagements of the Civil War, the Battle of Port Royal Sound, November 7, 1861, was one of the earliest amphibious operations of the Civil War, in which a United States Navy fleet and United States Army expeditionary force captured Port Royal Sound, South Carolina, between Savannah, Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina from the Confederate forces. General Thomas Drayton was in command at the two forts that guarded access to Port Royal Sound, Fort Walker positioned on Hilton Head Island and Fort Beauregard across the Sound on St. Phillip's Island. The Union Navy was under the command of Admiral Samuel F. DuPont, commander of the South Atlantic Blockading Squadron. Among the naval vessels engaged in the Battle was the U.S.S. Pocahontas, commanded by Capt. Percival Drayton who fired on Ft. Walker in which his own brother was commanding.

The Battle of Port Royal Sound was a resounding victory for the Union Navy and Army. The Federal forces battered both forts forcing their abandonment and surrender. The forts were captured by Union Army troops under the command of General Thomas Sherman and remained in Federal hands for the rest of the War.

Percival Drayton's younger brother was William Sidney Drayton who had served in the U.S. Navy, but who died before the Civil War in 1860.

Percival Drayton entered the U.S. Navy in 1828 as a midshipman and served the rest of his life in the Naval service. He served extensively on sea duty, but also served stints on shore at the Naval Observatory in Washington, D.C. and at the New York and Philadelphia Navy Yards as commandant. Drayton rose steadily in rank and by 1862 was promoted Captain in the Navy. Due to his expertise in ship design and armaments, and after assisting John Ericson with improvements to the design of the ironclad Monitor class, he was named Superintendent of Ordnance at the New York Navy Yard.

In 1863, Capt. Drayton was assigned as commander of the West Gulf Blockading Squadron and began a close and intimate friendship and cooperation with Admiral Farragut. In 1864, Drayton received command of Farragut's flagship, the U.S.S. Hartford. In August of 1864, Farragut planned an attack on the Confederate stronghold of Mobile Bay. He was aboard the 'Hartford' with Drayton, ship's captain at his side during the attack, uttering his immortal words presumably to Drayton 'Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead' which earned him immortal fame and Drayton, a great victory. In Farragut's official report of the action in Mobile Bay, he wrote of Capt. Drayton, "The Hartford, my flagship, was commanded by Capt. Drayton, who exhibited throughout that coolness and ability for which he has long been known to his brother officers... He is the fleet captain of my squadron, and one of more determined energy, untiring devotion to duty, and zeal for the service, tempered by calmness, I do not think adorn the Navy"!

At the conclusion of the War in April 1865, Capt. Drayton was appointed Chief of the Bureau of Navigation and stationed in Washington. He was now responsible for providing nautical charts and instruments for use in the Navy. He also supervised the Naval Observatory, the Hydrographic Office. He had to provide a Nautical Almanac, as well as oversight of the Naval Academy at Annapolis after its return from Newport, R.I. Drayton found himself accountable for the supply and control of the naval staff, including enlistments, personnel records, naval assignments, and training procedures.

Drayton threw himself energetically into his new responsible assignment. He seemed to have no time for rest or recuperation from his strenuous wartime service; after all, Drayton was feeling his 53 years and 37 years of naval service. He had also taken up contact with his brother Thomas, the first since the war. He learned of his brother's vexations, starvation and poverty. They began a correspondence and renewed friendship. Percival even sent his brother some funds to help him out of his dire straits.

In early August of 1865, Percival took ill with severe bowel problems, including constipation, and abdominal pain. His physician, Surgeon Francis Gunnell, treated him. Drayton was diagnosed with a bowel obstruction. It appeared that his bowel had twisted in on itself and was causing him severe pain. Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles hastened to his bedside, when the issued was deemed fatal. Welles found Drayton: "calm, resigned and firm."

Percival Drayton died of his affliction at midnight of August 4, 1865. Welles noted in his diary, that the nation would not be aware of the severe loss it had just sustained. Welles called Drayton, truthful, intelligent, discriminating, and that his services were invaluable.

On August 7, 1865, Capt. Drayton was given an elaborate funeral appropriate for one of the leading officers of the Navy and a heroic figure of combat in the Civil War.

His funeral took place at St John's Episcopal Church on Lafayette Square opposite the White House. Many famed figures of Civil War Naval service and distinguished members of Washington society attended to honor Captain Drayton. His Eulogist extolled Drayton as always having maintained a character of purity before his God in a most quiet and unostentatious manner.

Following the Episcopal service, Capt. Drayton was buried with full military honors, but temporarily in Oak Hill Cemetery, a quiet Victorian sepulcher of the prominent in Washington. In November, Drayton was moved to the beautiful confines of Laurel Hill Cemetery in his second home city of Philadelphia and interred next to his father, where he still rests today in quiet but honored glory.

An editorial after his death in the Army & Navy Journal, praised Drayton as "a man of elegant accomplishments and commanding presence...with an earnest love for his profession and a high ideal of its requirements. No man had a higher sense of patriotism and more nobly set aside the claims of kindred and friendships for those of duty."

Drayton died a confirmed bachelor who had a moderate income from property, investments and frugality. In his will, he bequeathed funds generously among his surviving family, and especially his errant brother Thomas, who received a bequest of \$30,000. Among his legacy and donations were souvenir items of his service to the Naval Academy at Annapolis.

There is evidence that Perceval Drayton was soon to be promoted to Rear Admiral, but his untimely death ended that award. After his death, he did receive the honorary title of 'commodore'. In September of 1865, friends of Drayton commissioned a memorial plaque to honor Drayton and his honorable career in service to his country. The memorial plaque was placed in Trinity Episcopal Church near Wall Street in New York City, Adorning the memorial and placed above the inscription are the words perhaps best summarize Drayton's character: Loyalty – Truth – Charity.

In Memory – Percival Drayton – Captain U.S. Navy

Born at Charleston August 26, 1812

Died at Washington August 4, 1865

Chief of the Bureau of Navigation – a Naval Officer for 38 years

Without a superior – above all sectional feeling

he distinguished himself in the service of the UNION in command of a frigate at Port Royal
and at Sumter in command of a Monitor – at MOBILE BAY as Fleet Captain and

Commander of the flagship HARTFORD

A just MAN – true PATRIOT – and good CHRISTIAN.

Peter Barratt has done a great deal of research in uncovering background information on a figure of Civil War history who contributed quietly and in an unassuming way to ultimate victory for the Union, despite the fact, that he was a scion of a prominent slave holding family of Charleston, although he never held a slave; and even faced his own brother in one of the earliest actions of the conflict. This was Percival Drayton, i.e. Navy captain and hero of a number of engagements that led to victory. Peter Barratt used resources and personal contacts at the Union League of Philadelphia, personal insight of US Navy retired Captain Jack Lieberman, a Drayton expert, and other troves of primary resource materials.

The book is concise, but well written, well sourced and informative, telling an exciting tale of devotion to duty by Captain Drayton, in spite of hardship, toil, family discord and danger.

In just 138 pages, Barratt was able to capture the essence of the character and determination of a remarkable patriot and to bring his life's story alive for the reader. Little has been written of Percival Drayton, and Barratt, using letters, correspondence, and other primary source material gathered over many long years of research to craft a very sympathetic, but realistic portrait of a model warrior of the sea.

I can recommend this quick read to all who wish to augment their knowledge of the Civil War at sea and of the Navy. They will come away with a much improved view of one of the unsung heroes in a true conflict of 'brother against brother', who, I hypothesize lost his life due to his strenuous service in war, though having obtained peace.



2019
GENERAL GEORGE MEADE SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP FORM

As a member of **General Meade Society of Philadelphia, Inc.** your annual membership dues and contributions support the nation's only organization devoted to "promoting and preserving" the memory of the life and service of Major General George Gordon Meade. Members receive *The Dispatch* via email or by the USPS (additional fee required) as they choose, and also an invitation to all Society events and monthly meetings, including the annual business meeting in April.

Mail to:

The General Meade Society of Philadelphia, Inc.

P.O. Box 45556

Philadelphia, PA 19149

Annual membership dues cover the calendar year – January 1st to December 31st, 2019.

- _____ **\$10.00 Student Membership (18 years & younger)**
- _____ **\$20.00 Individual Membership**
- _____ **\$30.00 Family Membership**
- _____ **\$10.00 Additional for USPS mailing of *The Meade Post - Dispatch***
- _____ **Additional Tax-deductible donation to the *General Meade Society of Philadelphia***
- _____ **Contribution to the *William H. Boehmer Preservation Fund***
- _____ **General Meade Society Foundation (The General G. Meade School, Philadelphia)**

Name(s): _____

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