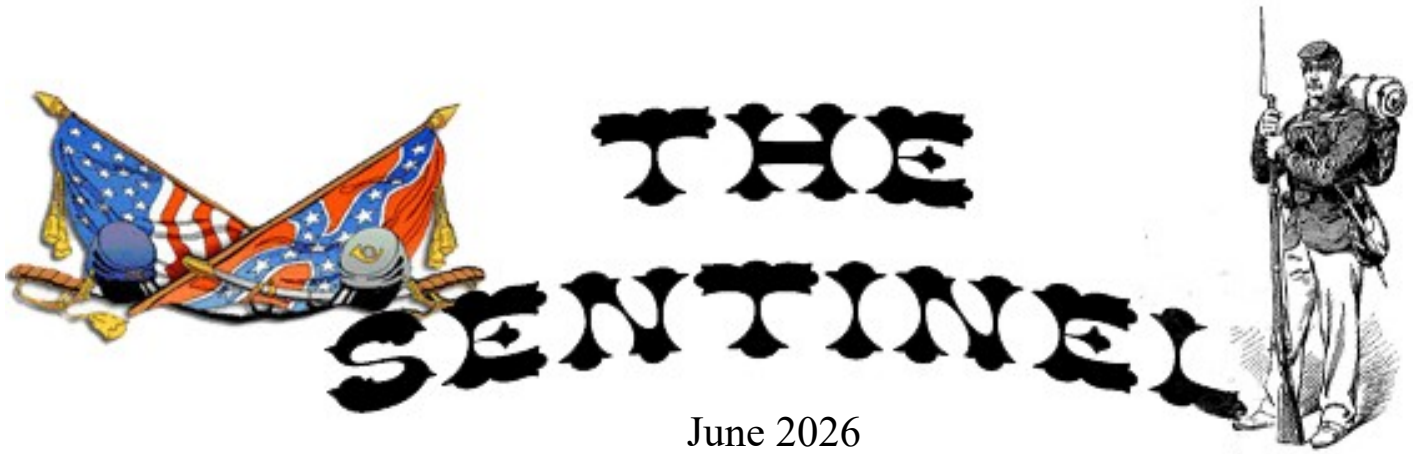




THE NEWSLETTER OF THE NEVADA CIVIL WAR VOLUNTEERS

BEFORE HE WAS PRESIDENT

In an 1858 murder trial, a star eyewitness seemed absolutely flawless—until defense attorney Abraham Lincoln pulled out a Farmer's Almanac to ask one devastating question.



In an 1858 murder trial, a star eyewitness seemed absolutely flawless—until defense attorney Abraham Lincoln pulled out a Farmer's Almanac to ask one devastating question.

Lincoln was defending William "Duff" Armstrong, who was accused of murdering a man named James Preston Metzker during a late-night brawl. The prosecution had a devastating star witness: Charles Allen. During direct examination, Allen testified with absolute certainty that he saw Armstrong strike the fatal blow to the victim's head with a heavy weapon.

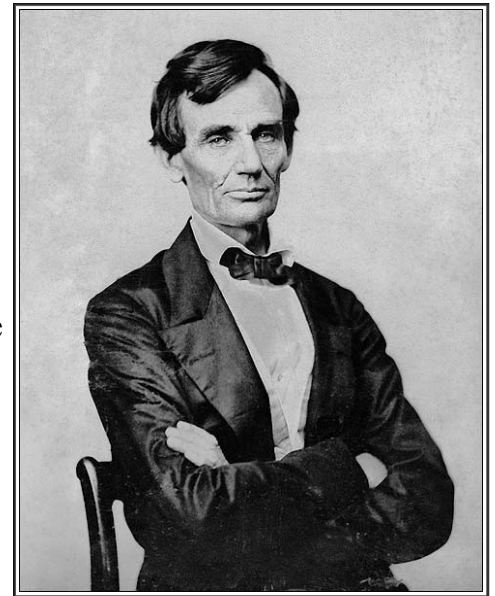
The altercation had occurred late at night, around 11:00 PM. To preempt any doubts about visibility, the prosecution established

that Allen could see the strike clearly from roughly 150 feet away because of the bright, high illumination of the moon. The jury appeared entirely convinced by this eyewitness testimony, and Armstrong's conviction seemed guaranteed.

When Lincoln took over the cross-examination, he did not immediately attack the witness's character. Instead, he calmly asked Allen to confirm the exact details of the lighting. Allen confidently reiterated that the moon was shining brightly, nearly overhead.

Handing the 1857 almanac to the witness, Lincoln asked his defining question: how could the moon have illuminated the fight from directly overhead when the almanac proved that the moon was actually setting and low on the horizon at that exact time?

The astronomical data in the almanac showed that at 11:00 PM on the night of the murder, the moon was barely above the horizon, meaning the scene would have been cast in deep shadows and nearly complete darkness. The witness's credibility evaporated in seconds. By using a single question backed by undeniable, objective evidence, Lincoln dismantled the foundation of the prosecution's case. The jury acquitted Armstrong after just one round of deliberation.



What did the last US Civil War veterans think of **"Gone with the Wind"?**

Five aging former Confederate soldiers were present as guests of honor at the 1939 premiere screening of this iconic film about the Old South in Atlanta. When the scene was shown with their former battle flag, tattered but still defiantly waving over the wounded man, some of



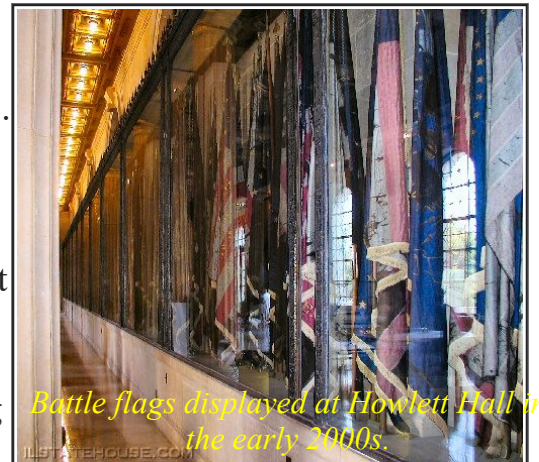
them reportedly said, "If we'd had that many of us back then, we would have beaten the Yankees!"

The 7th Illinois Volunteer Infantry Battle flag for the CCWS. Update.

During the war, each regiment on both sides was required to bear flags that represented them, one a national flag that would represent the country they fought for, the second called the Regimental flag: a waving embodiment of the regiment's history and travails as it bore the tears and bullet holes of hard campaigning just as much as the soldiers that bore it.

For the boys of Illinois, when they came home after a hard war, their flags went to two possible places. Some flags were given back to the state to be first stored by the state's Adjutant General at the old State Arsenal Building's basement. Others were displayed at a multitude of GAR Veterans' Halls throughout the state. As time went by, the veteran halls closed as soldiers passed on to their final rest, and the flags displayed there were given to local courthouses, left in private collections, or even destroyed.

In 1878, the flags in the hands of the state were eventually moved and put on display on the first floor of the State Capitol building, witnessed by a crowd of 20,000. They were then moved to the third floor in 1884 with the famed General William Tecumseh Sherman in attendance. Finally, in the early 1920s, they were moved to the recently completed Centennial Hall, later renamed Howlett Hall, and continued to be displayed there into the 21st century, though passers by could see the result of what gravity and sunlight could do to old silken flags still flying on their original staffs



In 1982, a cleaning of the cases was deemed necessary as thick layers of dust coated the bottom. This was not ordinary dust, but the flags themselves deteriorating. An attempt during the '20s



*The 7th Illinois' remaining battle flags, including the late-war National.
Pictures provided by the Illinois State Military Museum staff.*

to sew them to black silk backings did little to prevent the passage of time from doing its grisly work

With careful research and preparation, we of the Cascade Civil War Society will soon be able to feature a rare showcase of our nation's history with a flag that has not seen the light of day, whole and in the hands of the soldiers that called it their own, in over 160 years. Below are two pictures showing the recreated regimental flag of the 7th that will be in our hands after the end of June.

This long-awaited project is almost done, and I hope that you can share in my trepidatious excitement and pride at being able to carry this incredible work of martial artistry and to fight under its glorious folds once more.

*2nd Lt. Clark Kaneholani-Morningstar
Commander, 7th Illinois Volunteer Infantry. Co. A "Elgin Continentals"*



*(Photographers of both
sides of the flag that is
being made for the Cascade
Civil War Society.)*



A LOOK AT SOME OF THE CIVIL WAR GUNS AND CANTEENS IN THE ATLANTA HISTORY CENTER

Most of us have an interest in Civil War gear know about the common riffles that were used by both sides of the conflict. But this video of behind the scenes of the Atlanta History Center will get your attention with some VERY rare rifles that were used during the war. In the video, they show a one of kind rifle that survived the war that was a breech loading rifle like you've probably never seen before, as the whole barrel rotates to insert the bullet into the rifle. Plus they take a look at a part of their collection of canteens that were used by both sides. Gordon Jones the Centers Senior Military Historian explains what he show us all very well.

https://youtu.be/fnUmlhdLi_c?si=G1eG5ZzV8RpJJXZN

A DOGS TAIL

A touching tail of a Civil War dog that is remembered to this day.

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1635683504318825>

The Civil War Film Vault



THE CAROL BURNETT SHOW



In this installment of the Civil War Film Vault, we are looking at the little screen that bought entertainment into your home on CBS for eleven years ((1967 to 1978). During that time the Carol Burnett Show won more then twenty Emmy and 8 Golden Globe awards. An impressive record of outstanding wit and comedy. We turn our camera to one specific skit that graced television screens on November 13th, 1976 that had audiences howling with laughter and to this day still tickles the funny bone as Carol Burnett plays “Starlett O”Hare” and Harvey Korman played the dashing “Ratt Butler”.

Here is their take on a classic Civil War film that they called “*Went With the Wind*”.

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/2098478504080953>

THE ANGEL OF THE BATTLEFIELD

On May 21, 1881, Clara Barton signed the documents establishing the American Red Cross in Washington, D.C., capping a campaign she had been waging for nearly a



decade against the reluctance of American politicians who believed the Geneva Convention — which the Red Cross treaty was built around — would commit the United States to foreign entanglements. Barton, who had earned the nickname "Angel of the Battlefield" for her personal delivery of medical supplies to Union soldiers during the Civil War, had encountered the International Red Cross while living in Europe in the early 1870s and had been present during the Franco-Prussian War to witness its operations firsthand. She returned to the United States determined to establish an American chapter and spent years lobbying successive administrations before President James Garfield's election in 1880 provided the political opening she needed. She was fifty-nine years old when the American Red Cross was officially constituted.

Barton's particular contribution to the American Red Cross went beyond its founding: she insisted that the organization's mandate extend beyond wartime relief to include domestic disasters — floods, fires, epidemics, famines. This "American Amendment" to the Red Cross framework was initially resisted by the International Committee but eventually adopted, establishing the model of the peacetime humanitarian organization that the American Red Cross still operates under today. Barton led the organization through its response to the Johnstown Flood of 1889, the Galveston hurricane of 1900, and numerous other disasters, directing relief operations well into her seventies. She was eventually forced out of the organization she had founded in 1904, amid disputes over governance and administration that do not diminish the scale of what she built. The American Red Cross has since responded to virtually every major American disaster and continues to provide blood, shelter, and relief to millions of people annually. The document Barton signed on May 21, 1881 is still, in its essential purposes, the organization's operating charter.



Know Your Civil War Persona

A Lesson Well Learned

A goodly number of years ago, I was at a Civil War event in up state Utah. I was a member of the 9th Virginia Cavalry, (dismounted). After a battle my unit was in camp, which was open to the public. I was helping a friend put his horse tack away when a modern person and his family came into camp and started visiting with the reenactors.

The man had a mild southern tone to his voice. He came up to me and my friend and we began to talk.

“So, what unit are you?” asked the Man.

My friend replied boldly, with a smooth southern drool, “Sir, I’m with the 9th Virginia Calvary. I hale from just south of Manassas.”

The visiting man suddenly beamed, “Well, it’s a small world. So do I. Where you from? Bristow? Noleville? Maybe Independent Hill or Catlett.”

My friend was dumb struck. He turned a little red from embarrassment and replied, with out the southern drool, “I’m sorry sir, I’ve never really been to Virginia.”

The visitor looked a little sadden and dismayed. He turned to me, “I see you have the 9th Virginia insignia on your cap, are you from Virginia Sir?”

Thinking fast, I replied, “No Sir. I’m from up state New York, Wayne County. I came south to fight with Virginia when the War broke out. I believe in States Rights Sir. What the North is doing, is wrong.”

This seemed to please the man, and save my bacon. The moral: Work on your persona and be ready for questions. I lived in up state New York at one time, and my story sounded creditable. You never know what you’ll be asked.

By Tom Cooley, editor of the CCWS Growler



Why do Confederate headstones have a peaked top, and what’s the story behind this design choice?

Legend claims Confederate headstones have sharply pointed tops to stop Yankee soldiers from sitting on them. The real reason isn't lingering Southern defiance—it's federal bureaucracy.

Following the American Civil War, the United States government established national cemeteries and standardized a rounded-top marble headstone to mark the graves of Union soldiers. Confederate dead were initially excluded from these federal provisions. Many were buried in mass trenches, while others were later marked by private monuments erected by local memorial societies across the South.



This federal policy shifted by the early 20th century. In 1906, Congress passed legislation authorizing the War Department to provide official headstones for

Confederate soldiers who had died in federal prisons and hospitals, bringing them into the national cemetery system.

When the War Department was tasked with producing these new markers, officials needed a visual way to clearly differentiate Confederate graves from Union graves, especially since they would now share space in the same federal facilities. To achieve this, the government slightly altered its standard template. Instead of the familiar rounded arch, the Confederate headstone was given a peaked top. The stones were cut to standard dimensions of 39 inches tall, 12 inches wide, and 4 inches thick. Decades later, the design was updated to include the Southern Cross of Honor engraved above the soldier's name.

The sharp point that characterizes these graves is not an architectural act of spite engineered by the defeated South. It was simply a practical visual sorting system implemented by the federal government more than forty years after the war ended to keep the burial grounds organized.



FORT CHURCHILL MAY 2026

Looks like we may have a band again! Chaplain Rex Reed, seated right, is also our Union chief of staff. He's playing a period correct guitar he built, left of him is Charles playing the recorder and standing is Austin playing rex's homemade period banjo! Looking on is 1st sgt Jim Wilbanks of the 1st Nevada Cavalry.





This group of Adventure Club Scouts were very enthusiastic! They were literally marching around the circle and stayed for over half an hour so the soldiers could shoot a three volley salute and then we fired Sweetpea the cannon twice!

There were three times that many children but this

is all I got in the photo

Although it was much warmer than Genoa last month, the wind whipped through Camp so hard all Saturday night we had to break Camp early Sunday morning. Thankfully it didn't take anything down!



Up Coming Even

~~June 11-13--State Fair of Nevada--Reno--setup time Canceled~~

June 26-28--Fallon--DeGoyler Buckin' Horse and Bull Bash--Fri (load-in) thru Sun (break camp)

July 4th Weekend--Mike Creager is recruiting various military for the Fallon Parade--

Sept/Oct (TBD)--Ft Churchill again

Other nearby club events:

RACW---Graeagle July 4th weekend (3-5 TBD)

CCWR--Labor Day weekend (Sept 4-6 TBD) Labor Day is late this year!

IF you have an article or something you'd like posted in The Sentinel send it to the editor, Tom Cooley no later than the 3rd Sunday of the month to make the next months publication.

tcooley1313@gmail.com.



BIGGEST MAN...

(Was it real, or a Civil War Joke?)

The biggest man in the Union Army was Capt. David Van Buskirk of the 27th Indiana Regiment who stood 6 feet 11 inches and weighed 380 pounds. He was captured in 1862 and was sent to a Richmond Prison where a Confederate entrepreneur put him on exhibit. Even Confederate President Jeff Davis came to see him and was astounded when the impish Van Buskirk claimed that back home in Bloomington Indiana, "when I was at the train station with my company, my six sisters came to say goodbye. As I was standing there, with my company, they all came up to me, leaned down and kissed me on top of the head."

UP DATE

The Blacksmith Shop Project Fort Klamath

(As printed in the Cascade Civil War Society
newsletter, *The Growler*.)



The Blacksmith Project has gotten a Green light to go ahead. This is an exciting step forward. Now The Cascade Civil War Society (CCWS) which is a 501c-3 nonprofit educational group can start collecting money for the project. On Friday, May 22nd the Blacksmith shop got the go ahead to move forward and raise the funds for the building and all the material that will be needed to start construction on the dedicated shop location at Fort Klamath Military Post Museum, just south of the small town of Fort Klamath in Oregon.



The photo to the right shows (left to right) Richard Rambo, Gina Janelli, and Tom Cooley on the site where the shop will be built on the fort grounds. If you look behind them in the photograph you can see a line that has been set showing part of the size of the building.



The rendering to the left is an AI concept of what the



shop will look like. Keep in mind that it is an AI concept, but it's fairly close to the planed project outlines.

Meanwhile, Gina Janelli has moved a period correct 19th Century Blacksmith bellows into the Museum at the fort for display over the summer. It will eventually end up as a permanent display in the blacksmith shop.



Now here is something from the past you don't see everyday.

