



December 2006
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The Battlefield

Newsletter of the Onondaga County Civil War Round Table

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Meeting Site
The Warehouse
Syracuse University
School of Architecture

350 West Fayette St
Syracuse, NY

Room 3 Ground Floor

Meet Congressman Alfred Ely
with living historian, Dick Crozier
plus pass a dessert night

Thursday
December 14, 2006
7 PM

Meetings are held at 7 PM on the third Thursday of the month from September through June and are free and open to the public.

December 14th Meeting

Check your calendars. We're meeting one week early to give you a little breathing room as we approach Christmas. Sweet treats will abound at this meeting. We ask that you bring a favorite dessert to add to our sampler table of desserts. Fine desserts, lots of hot coffee, and a talented historian add up to a first-rate evening.

This month we will focus on what occurred on the sidelines of the July 21, 1861 Battle of First Bull Run (Manassas), some two dozen miles west of Washington, D.C. Speculation was at a feverish pitch in our nation's capital on this Sunday morning. Talk of the battle was everywhere and many curious Washingtonians hired wagons to witness what would surely be a Union victory. Senators, Congressmen, curious newspaper reporters, ladies with well-stocked picnic baskets, and other luminaries flocked to Centreville, VA, five miles from the battlefield. Only the roar of the artillery and the smoke of battle could be seen at that distance. The spectators could only speculate on the progress of the unseen battle.

Congressman Alfred Ely (1815-1892) of Rochester, NY, fired with optimism, ventured closer to the sights and sounds. Soon he had to seek refuge behind a tree as bullets swirled around him and a line of Confederate infantry emerged from a nearby wood. Two officers from the 8th South Carolina declared him their prisoner. Quite a catch! Ely was soon on his way to a Richmond prison as the routed Union army quickly retreated back to Washington surprising the civilians who had expected victory and now feared capture. History books usually end the civilian story at this point of capture or retreat.

Congressman Ely emerged from Libby prison six months later, exchanged for Charles Faulker, a Buchanan appointee as US Minister to France who was jailed on charges of negotiating arms sales for the Confederacy while in Paris. Ely did the all-American 'thing' and promptly wrote a best seller in 1862: *The Prison Life of Alfred Ely*. And this is where our speaker, member Dick Crozier, picks up the story of Congressman Ely, the political prize of the Confederacy. Dick will appear as Ely to fill in the details of Ely's imprisonment. We can expect an entertaining study of Ely's experiences told by a perceptive historian.

General Sumner Presentation Schedule

These programs will be presented by members Darothy DeAngelo, the Researcher, and Sue Greenhagen, the Power-Point Guru. To schedule a presentation of "General Sumner: Who was He and Why is he Here?" for your organization, call 682-6312.

Dec. 20, 2006, 6:30 p.m. Sons of Union Veterans. Bridgewater Town Hall, Rt 8, just north of Rt. 20.

Jan. 6, 2007, 1:00 p.m. Fabius Historical Society, Fabius Community Center, Main St. (Rt.80).

Apr. 14, 2007, 1:00 p.m. Clay Historical Society, Grange/Schoolhouse, Grange Rd, south off Rt.31.

Apr.18, 2007 7:00 p.m. Town of Onondaga Historical Society, New Town Hall, corner Ball and McDonald Roads.

May T.B.A. Town of Verona Bicentennial event

Member's Link to the Mayflower

Member Nancy Graham has completed the genealogical documentation to prove she is a descendent of Pilgrims John Alden and Priscilla Mullins. As a result, her name has been added to the Mayflower Society. Nancy was told of her illustrious ancestors by her mother when she was in the first grade and that sparked her lifelong interest in history. Though Nancy feels having Pilgrim ancestors is not that unusual and there could be millions with similar ancestry, we congratulate her for her successful genealogical research which takes time, skill, and persistence. Good work, Nancy!

Onondaga County Civil War Round Table
New Membership/Renewal Form

Membership dues of the OCCWRT are:

Please Check one of the Following

- \$20.00 a year
 O.H.A. members \$10.00
 Seniors and Students \$15.00
 Family rate (2 or more) \$30.00

Dues may be paid at meetings or sent to:

Onondaga County Civil War Round Table
ATTN: Dave Osborn, Treasurer
2 Thistlewood Lane
Fayetteville, NY 13066

Please find \$ _____ enclosed in form of
Circle One:

Check M.O. Cash

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Please check if you prefer an emailed newsletter
and can receive an Acrobat (pdf) file.

E-Mail _____

The Onondaga County Civil War Round Table was organized in 1994 and is now an incorporated non-profit educational organization. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month from September through June. The purpose of the OCCWRT is to stimulate and encourage interest in the American Civil War, to assist in community service in order to enhance the study and understanding of the Civil War, to provide educational and historical research of the period, and to promote historic preservation.

Onondaga County
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