



# THE GILMOR BLADE

Those who allow the surrender of their history,  
also surrender their future!



Official Newsletter of

THE COL. H.W.GILMOR CAMP, No. 1388, SONS OF CONFEDERATE VETERANS

February, 2017

## February Camp Meeting:

### Sue Boardman speaks on the history and restoration of the Gettysburg Cyclorama

The Col. Harry W. Gilmor Camp #1388 will hold its next meeting February 8<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 PM at the Baltimore County Historical Society, 9811 Van Buren Lane, Cockeysville, MD 21030.

Our guest speaker this month, Sue Boardman, is the chief curator for the Gettysburg cyclorama restoration. Sue is a licensed Gettysburg battlefield guide and is the preferred guide for many dignitaries. Sue comes to us with a wealth of knowledge on the

Gettysburg battlefield, its monuments and of course, the Cyclorama.

Sue's presentation is on the restoration and history of the Gettysburg Cyclorama. The Gettysburg Cyclorama is one of only two remaining in the United States and is both a history instruction tool and a piece of artwork depicting Pickett's Charge. The other Cyclorama is now in limbo, having been purchased recently by a North Carolina group. Please join us for this very informative talk!

*The Charge*

*"To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we submit the vindication of the Cause for which we fought; to your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier's good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles he loved and which made him glorious and which you also cherish. Remember, it is your duty to see that the true history of the South is presented to future generations."*

## Minutes: Camp meeting, January 11 2017

The meeting was opened at 7:30 p.m. by Commander Dan Pyle. Commander Pyle offered the Invocation and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and the Salute to the Confederate Flag. Commander Pyle read The Charge of General Stephen Dill Lee.



Col. Harry W. Gilmor Camp Cmdr. Dan Pyle swears in Camp officers for 2017. L to R: Elliott Cummings, Bruce Null, Bob Wagster, Gene Leasure, and Jeremy Cook.

Commander Dan Pyle swore in the following Camp officers for 2017:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Cmdr. Gene Leasure
- Treasurer Bruce Null
- Adjutant Elliott Cummings
- Historian Jeremy Cook
- Chaplain Bob Wagster
- Color Sgt. Jim Jones

Adjutant Cummings administered the oath of office to Commander Dan Pyle. Adjutant Elliott Cummings summarized the Minutes of the December 14, 2016 Camp meeting.

MOTION: To approve the Minutes as summarized. PASSED

There was a discussion on the Mayor of Baltimore's action in placing so called "interpretive" signage on See "January minutes," p. 3

## Inside this issue:

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## Stored in attic, rare Rebel canteen belonged to S.C. soldier

By Richard E. Clem  
Posted Saturday, January 14 at the  
John Banks blogspot

Designed to carry water, the old wood canteen also carried a hand-carved inscription that one day would be read worldwide. With the original owner's name and regiment cut into its face, the heirloom traveled from the coastal region of South Carolina to the farm of Daniel Wolf in western Maryland. Although once carried by a Confederate cavalryman, it remained well preserved for years in a dusty, dark attic.



Face of inscribed canteen that belonged to Confederate cavalryman Richard Sims.  
(Photo: Richard E. Clem)

The canteen was recently discovered while its owner was preparing to move to a retirement home. It seems she had lived with her mother, who stored the vintage canteen in their attic about 1936. Not knowing exactly what it was, she handed it to the author, explaining, "I think it was an old toy the kids once played with." Another member of the fam-

ily suggested, "I was thinking of using it as a flower vase."

Apparently the owner's mother inherited the mysterious relic from her father, and no one knew what it was. After a closer examination and noticing letters pertaining to "South Carolina," an idea surfaced it could be connected to the Civil War. Then the owner mentioned, "It has been handed down through the family and belonged to my great-grandfather, Daniel Wolf. He preached in the Manor Church and the Dunker Church on the Antietam battlefield."

Those words got my full attention,

With this clue, it was decided to return to the "Days of Cavaliers and Cotton Fields" to try to discover who the Rebel was who once drank from this rustic canteen.

Research locally revealed Daniel Wolf was born Aug. 11, 1825, at his father's homestead in southern Washington County, Md. Daniel spent his entire life farming the old home place along Manor Church Road, just two miles east of the little town of Tilghmanton. In 1850, he married Ann Maria Rowland from Washington County. To this union came a blessing of eight daughters and three sons. One of Wolf's daughters was the grandmother of the owner of the wood canteen.

Possessing great knowledge of the Scriptures, Daniel Wolf became a beloved and respected minister of the German Baptist Brethren Church, known today as the Church of the Brethren. Reverend Wolf's

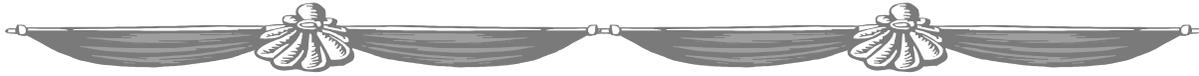


Reverend Daniel Wolf and his wife, Ann Maria. (Courtesy Wolf family)

strong stand on slavery and the evils of war served as fodder for many sermons delivered in the nearby Manor Church and in the famous Dunker Church, just south of his home on the Antietam battlefield. The Dunker Church was a branch of the Manor Church built simply to establish a church near Sharpsburg.

On Aug. 16, 1899, the earthly journey of the 74-year-old preacher ended. The body was buried in Manor Church Cemetery within view of his farm. At an unknown time, this farmer-preacher had acquired the rare Confederate canteen. What makes the 154-year-old artifact remarkable besides being made of wood is the hand-carved legend on its face: "**R. Sims, Co. I, 1st R. So. Ca., V (c) C.**"

With reverence I held this piece of Southern history. The letter "R" represents the first letter of the cavalryman's first name, His last name is "Sims." Beneath the name is cut "Co. I," standing for "Company I." Perpendicular to the right of the name and company is etched "1st R. So. Ca. V (c) C." It took a few See "*SC canteen*," p. 4



**January minutes** *Continued from p. 1*

three Confederate monuments and the Chief Justice Roger Brooke Taney monument in Baltimore. This action, in our opinion, is in contravention of the related easements on three of these monuments overseen by the Maryland Historic Trust.

1<sup>st</sup> Lt Commander Gene Leasure announced number upcoming speakers:

- February Sue Boardman  
*The Gettysburg Cyclorama*
- March Frank Armingier  
*1<sup>st</sup> Day Gettysburg*
- May Frank Armingier  
*Battle of Sharpsburg Part I*
- June Frank Armingier  
*Battle of Sharpsburg Part II*
- October Lee Hodges  
*Desertion in the Confederate and Federal Armies*

- Announcements:
- January 21, 2017: General Isaac R. Trimble Camp social gathering at Confederate Hill, Loudon Park, noon.
  - January 24, 2017: Col. Harry Gilmor's Birthday, social gathering at his grave, Confederate Hill, Loudon Park, noon.
  - January 28, 2017: Semi Annual Maryland Division Meeting, Riviera Beach Library, 9:00 a. m.

Commander Pyle reported that the Maryland Museum of Military History has invited the SCV to tour the facility at the 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment Armory in Baltimore. The tour will be scheduled for a Saturday.

Compatriot Bruce Null suggested that a work day for clean up should be scheduled at Confed-

Motion: Compatriot Null offered a motion for the Gilmor Camp to contribute \$100 to the fund for the construction of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, Confederate Museum at Elm Springs, Tennessee. PASSED

Commander Pyle reported that it was agreed at the Maryland SCV Division Convention of April 16, 2017 that the Captain John Taylor Woods Confederate Medal of Honor will be placed on loan at the Maryland Museum of Military History at the 5th Regiment Armory until such time as it can be displayed at the Confederate Museum

at Elm Springs. Unfortunately, the medal was refused by several appropriate entities in Canada.

Compatriot James Keenan asked a question about a possible new design for Maryland Division, SCV automobile license plates. It was reported that the Maryland Division SCV has approved a red and white Bottony Cross design for this purpose.

The meeting was adjourned with a prayer at 8:22 p. m.  
*Respectfully submitted,*  
*G. Elliott Cummings*  
*Adjutant*

**From mystery to history: the story of Gen. Patrick R. Cleburne's once-lost pistol**

*From The Battle of Franklin Blog, hosted by Kraig McNutt*  
<https://battleoffranklin.wordpress.com/2008/06/17/from-mystery-to-history-the-story-of-gen-patrick-r-cleburne%E2%80%99s-once-lost-pistol/>

Unless you're a real Civil War buff, meaning, you're fairly knowledgeable about Civil War-era small arms, you're not likely to have much interest in the news that Confederate General Patrick R. Cleburne's .36 caliber Colt revolver is coming to Franklin, Tennessee. The revolver will be displayed with his Kepi, or hat, that he was wearing on the evening he was killed in the Battle of Franklin on 30 November 1864. But you don't have to be a Civil War *afficionado* to appreciate a great story, and the story

of how Cleburne's pistol is making its way back to Franklin, after more than 143 years, is quite amazing.

The story behind how the Cleburne pistol ended up in the worthy possession of the Layland Museum in Cleburne, Texas, has all the intrigue of a mystery-novel and the hoopla, at times, of a story right out of Ripley's Believe-It-Or-Not.

**The last time the Kepi and pistol were together: early December 1864**

The story starts 30 November 1864, when CSA General Patrick R. Cleburne, himself an Irish-born immigrant, was killed by a single-shot to the chest. Gen. Cleburne was carrying a .36 caliber Colt revolver during the Confederate *See "Cleburne pistol," p.6*



**SC canteen** *Continued from p. 2*

seconds to figure these letters stood for “1st Regiment, South Carolina, Volunteer Cavalry.” With closer study, a letter “C” can be found beneath the letter “V.” In the author’s opinion, this Confederate trooper intended to cut “Cav.,” an abbreviation for “Cavalry.” Nearing the edge of the canteen, however, and running out of space, the letters “V. C.” (Volunteer Cavalry) were substituted. A large “R” was cut on one side of the rare relic. It is believed Sims originally started to carve his name, etc. on this side, but for an unknown reason finished the inscription on the reverse side.

When the Civil War began, the South was far from being prepared in the way of raw material. By the end of the conflict, the Confederate States were melting bronze church bells and anything else they could get their hands on to produce implements of war. To preserve metal, especially iron and tin, some Southern canteens were manufactured from wood.

Known as the “cedar drum” style, these hardwood vessels (7 ½ inches in diameter x 2 ½ inches in width or depth) were also made of maple and cherry. Each consisted of two, round face plates. Around the circumference were 10 to 12 small slates grooved to receive the face plates -- all held together with two thin metal bands. A wooden maple spout to drink through was then “popped” into the top. Each canteen held about one quart of water or other liquid refreshment a Rebel chose to consume. Once the canteen was filled with liquid, the wood swelled, making it watertight. A cork or wood stopper was then pressed into the spout, and

leather straps were attached so it could be carried over the shoulder or, in the case of cavalry, hung from a saddle horn.

In some respects, the wood canteen had an advantage over their metal counterparts. Some Confederate soldiers noted water stayed cooler and tasted sweeter in these wood containers. The wood canteen had another practical purpose. With a sharp pocket knife, the owner’s name, regiment, etc. could be carved into the surface, making identification of a soldier easier in case of death. (Soldier ID tags were extremely rare during the Civil War.)

Who was “R Sims,” the Rebel cavalryman? How did his personal identified canteen get from South Carolina into the hands of Reverend Daniel Wolf in Maryland? Again, research started locally.



*PRESENT DAY: Greatly in need of exterior repair, the former home of Daniel Wolf. (Photo Richard E. Clem)*

The native limestone, two-story home once owned by Reverend Wolf still stands on 188 acres just north of Antietam battlefield. With the location of Wolf’s farmstead being near the battlefield, it was naturally assumed the old canteen came out of the bloody struggle of Antietam. Wrong! The boys in the 1st South Carolina Cavalry were guarding defenses around Charles-

when the battle was fought on Sept. 17, 1862. However, Confederate soldiers were in the area of Wolf’s homestead in July 1863, following the battle at Gettysburg. So the next step was to determine if “R. Sims” was at Gettysburg. According to Federal archives, Private Richard Sims, Company I, 1st South Carolina Cavalry, was “present” with Hampton’s Brigade that clashed with Union cavalry at Gettysburg, attempting to disrupt the Union rear on what is now known as East Cavalry Battlefield. The 1st South Carolina Cavalry also served with honor at Fredericksburg and Brandy Station in Virginia.

Following Gettysburg, every family in the path of Union and Confederate armies was gripped in fear while their crops and livestock were destroyed. Land records in the Washington County Court House list farmers in the county who were forced to declare bankruptcy following the war. The Wolf farm felt the effects of civil war in 1862 and the next year during the Confederates’ retreat in July from Gettysburg. A Wolf descendant noted, “Several times Civil War soldiers came to the farm, and my great-grandmother (Ann Maria Wolf) would always give them something to eat no matter what side they were on.”

The old homestead also had an abundance of another source alluring and essential to a cavalry unit: water. Horses needed an average of five gallons of water daily. Could it be while on a scouting mission, Private Sims left his canteen at the spring right See “SC canteen.” p. 5

**SC canteen** *Continued from p. 4*

beside Reverend Wolf's home? Or perhaps Private Sims simply took a metal canteen from a dead Yankee and discarded his own.

Speculation will always surround how Daniel Wolf acquired Sims' canteen, but there are several possibilities. After defeat at Gettysburg, Robert E. Lee depended on his cavalry to scout a safe passage for the Army of Northern Virginia back to Southern soil. On July 8, 1863, the 1st South Carolina (Wade Hampton's Brigade) engaged Federal cavalry at Boonsboro, just east of Wolf's farm. These same mounted troops were also present at Williamsport, Md., where the Rebel army crossed the swollen Potomac River, ending the Gettysburg campaign. Wolf's land is situated between Boonsboro and Williamsport. So Reverend Wolf could have found the canteen at one of these locations or anywhere in between, if not at, the natural spring right beside his home.



*Natural spring beside Reverend Wolf's home where Sims' canteen may have possibly been found. Daniel and Ann Maria Wolf are buried in the Manor Church Cemetery in the background. (Photo: Richard E. Clem)*

Based on his military file, Richard Sims was employed as a clerk in his hometown of St. Paul's Parish, Col-

leton Co. SC, just prior to the War Between the States. The small village is just southwest of Charleston, where the Civil War began April 12, 1861, with the Rebel shelling of Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. An 1860 census for St. Paul's Parish lists Richard Sims living with his parents, Edward L. and Sara Sims, along with an older sister, Elizabeth, and three younger brothers, John, James and Edward.

When war looked as if it was going to last longer than expected, 23-year-old Richard Sims enlisted (April 3, 1862) at Parker's Ferry, near St. Paul's Parish. In June 1863, the 1st South Carolina Cavalry was transferred to Virginia, where it was assigned to General Wade Hampton's Brigade, General J.E.B. Stuart's Cavalry, Army of Northern Virginia. In all probability, Sims' canteen was left behind in Washington Country during the Rebels' retreat from the blood-stained fields of Gettysburg.

During his military career, Private Sims was listed as "company blacksmith," according to Federal archives. For this back-breaking service, he was paid a dollar extra per month for shoeing horses. A muster roll states he received "pay for use of horse from Oct. 31, 1863 to Nov. 28, 1863, at 40 cents per day." Yes, the Confederacy paid their cavalrymen for service of their personal horses, but remember, the South had an abundance of "worthless" Confederate money.

The year 1864 was one of trials and testing for Richard Sims. On Jan. 8, he was admitted to Jackson Hospital in Richmond because of a chronic ulcer of left leg. This open, painful sore, perhaps caused by the shoeing

of horses and days riding in the saddle, forced Sims to leave the cavalry. In the fall of 1864, the 1st South Carolina Cavalry was ordered south to defend its native state and surrounding area. Physically unfit for duty for almost a year, Sims was discharged from army headquarters on Dec. 10, 1864, at Pocotaligo, Ga. After the war, no record shows Richard Sims or his family living in St. Paul's Parish. Perhaps he moved west like so many other Civil War veterans. Did he have a wife or children? Where is he buried? What did he look like? These questions will always be associated with the letters carved in the old canteen -- a name without a face.

It's not impossible Daniel Wolf may have personally met the Rebel horseman. Stated earlier, as company blacksmith, Sims could have stopped at Wolf's spring to water his horse or to repair a damaged shoe of a comrade's mount. He could have been one of those "Civil War soldiers" who was fed by Ann Maria Wolf. As of December 2016, the Confederate canteen was still well preserved in Washington County at the home of a great-great-grandson of Daniel Wolf.

The name "Richard Sims" will never grace a battlefield monument. But after more than 150 years, his well-preserved canteen of Confederate hardwood remains a silent symbol of a lost cause.

*For a list of sources and acknowledgements, as well as those who helped make the story of this canteen possible, go to the blogspot: <http://john-banks.blogspot.com/2017/01/stored-in-attic-rare-rebel-canteen.html>*

## Cleburne pistol *Continued from p.3*

assault upon the Yankee breast-works near the Carter farm in Franklin, Tennessee.

The next morning, Cleburne's body was removed to the local field hospital, the McGavock residence, also known as Carnton. What is clear is what was *missing* on his person when his body arrived that morning: his boots, diary and sword belt. Later in the day, Cleburne's aide, Lt. Leonard Mangum, found the sword belt with another soldier. What is unclear is just what immediately happened to the pistol. There is no record of it being stated as missing, but then there is also no record stating positively what had happened to it. Carnton historian Eric Jacobson believes that the McGavock's never had the pistol. The pistol finally shows up in Texas much later. How it got there may likely always be a mystery.



The bodies of four Confederate Generals were placed on the back porch at Carnton on Thursday morning, December 1st, 1864. Besides Patrick Cleburne, it is believed that Generals Strahl, Granbury and Adams's bodies were placed on the porch, beneath the windows on the right.

### **What happened with the pistol between 1864 and 1900 is a real mystery.**

The next 30 years roughly—1870s



to 1900 – were murky history at best. We're really not sure what exactly happened with the pistol during that period of time.

The story can be fairly confidently picked up in the mid 1890s, though with some reliance upon the veracity of oral tradition. It seems that a Texas man, perhaps a veteran Confederate soldier or descendant, had found himself as owner of the 'precious'. However, in the mid 1890s he found himself down on his luck and decided to sell the pistol to improve his lot. So the pistol transferred into the hands about this time to a man named **Seakrats**.

Seakrats, circa 1900, apparently recognized the inscription on the weapon enough to decide that a local Confederate Veterans Camp – Pat Cleburne Camp #88 – might be the right home for the revolver. So Seakrats turned the precious relic over to the Pat Cleburne Camp #88 around the turn of the twentieth century. Does the story end there? Not even close.

### **What happened to the pistol from 1900 to roughly 1913?**

The Captain of Camp #88 was O.T. Plummer. In an effort to verify the pistol as having originally been owned by Cleburne, he had the Camp Adjutant, Matthew

Kahle, take the gun to Helena, Arkansas. Cleburne lived in Helena prior to the outbreak of the Civil War. Post-war veterans and colleagues of Cleburne still lived there and were able to attest to its authenticity. The Helena group verified it as unequivocally having belonged to Patrick Cleburne. However they thought the best home for it would be Helena. But, not feeling he was authorized to give it to them, Kahle returned to Cleburne, Texas – named after the General – with *said*-treasure in stow.

So, from 1900 – 1913, the much-coveted relic was in the possession of a man named James Voluntine Hampton in Cleburne, Texas. The story continues and the twists and turns got even wilder.

### **What happened between 1913 and 1944? Possibly stolen.**

Mr. Hampton walked into the new Cleburne county courthouse in 1913 and revealed he had the pistol. Apparently, he handed over the revolver where it promptly was placed into a desk-drawer where it was kept for years; how many we're not sure. There is some belief that the pistol may have even been stolen during the Great Depression era and was possibly missing for at least a decade, leading up to 1944.

The next chapter is incredible. A couple boys found the gun on the banks of the Nolan River in 1944. They sold it to a scrap dealer for the princely sum of \$5 dollars. By now, it was in fairly poor condition. The dealer noticed an inscription, and after confirming *See "Cleburn pistol," p.7*



## Cleburn pistol

*Continued from p. 6*

with the town Sheriff that it appeared to be Cleburne’s name on it, they contacted the President of the local United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) chapter, who just happened to be the daughter of . . . O.T. Plummer. She agreed it was authentic and bought it for \$5 bucks. Thus the proud owner of the ‘precious’ in 1944 is now the UDC. End of story? Nope.

### Mystery again between 1955 to 1970.

From 1944 until 1955, it’s not altogether clear where exactly the gun was stored. But in 1955, it resurfaced again when a gun-restorer offered to restore it, which he did. He apparently was not the best restorer of small-arms weapons – at least not this one. The attempt to restore it saw the degradation of some of the engravings on the barrel, frame and cylinder. However, the inscription of “P. R. Cleburne” on the back-strap largely avoided any damage and remained intact and clearly legible.

In 1960, the gun was moved to the National Guard Armory – a former WWII United States Government-leased property for utilization as a German prisoner of war camp. After the armory was closed in the late 1960s, the pistol wound up in Austin, Texas. Around 1970, it was put on display in the State Capitol in their Civil War room.

### What happened to the pistol from 1971 to 1978?

Still looking for a permanent resting place, the revolver was returned back to Cleburne, Texas, in 1971, where it was superintended by the Chamber of Commerce,

who ended up giving it back to the UDC. The UDC allowed the pistol to become part of the Layland Museum in Cleburne, Texas, in 1978, where it has been ever since.

### Where is the pistol now?

And finally, in March, 2007, the UDC chapter that owned it, donated it to the Layland Museum. End of story? Sort of . . .

The story will turn full circle on June 20th, 2008, at Carnton Plantation in Franklin, Tennessee, when for the first time since December 1st, 1864, the *original* Cleburne pistol is reunited with the *original* Cleburne Kepi, or hat, that the General – *Stonewall of the West* – wore into battle the fateful Indian summer evening on Wednesday, 30 November 1864.



As Cleburne strode into battle that evening, a fellow General had commented to the Irish commander that the prospect of the forthcoming assault of John Bell Hood’s *Army of Tennessee* did not look promising at all, to which Patrick Cleburne replied, “Well Govan, if we are going to die, let us die like men.”  
*General Cleburne, sir.*  
*To you, we tip your hat this day, as we celebrate the reunion of*

*your Kepi and pistol, on the very ground you shed your blood upon, for a cause you deemed worthy, paying the last full measure of devotion. Rest in peace, General. Your Humble, Obedient Servants .*

. . .  
*The Franklin, Tennessee, community*

**Note:** The above article was written by Kraig McNutt, Director of The Center for the Study of the American Civil War, and fellow member of The Franklin Civil War Roundtable. Assistance with research was provided by Carnton historian Eric A. Jacobson; Carnton Curator Manager, Joanna Stephens; and Curator of The Layland Museum, Ben Hammons.

### Want to see the pistol and Kepi in-person?

The Cleburne pistol and Kepi will be on display at Carnton in Franklin, Tennessee from the 15th through the 21st of June at Carnton. On Friday, the 20th, there is a 7:30 p.m. reception that is FREE to the public. Historian Thomas Cartwright will speak about Cleburne’s upbringing and life; and Carnton historian, Eric A. Jacobson, will speak about Cleburne’s military service. Afterwards, tours led to see the relics on display are available (for a fee).





February, 2017

**Lee Jackson Day & Harry's Birthday: remembering our heroes**

*Photos courtesy of Elliott Cummings*



*Gilmor Camp 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Commander Mike Williams with other friends enjoying the Trimble Camp General Lee and General Jackson gathering at Confederate Hill January 21, 2017*

*L to R Doug Polaski, Mike Williams, Walt Mathers, Mike Merling*

*Gilmor Camp members Joshua Emory and Bob Wagster enjoying the Generals Lee and Jackson gathering at Confederate Hill January 21, 2017*



*Floral tribute at the Lee Jackson Monument, January 21, 2017*



*January 24, 2017 - Celebration of the birthday of Col. Harry Gilmor at his gravesite on Confederate Hill, Loudon Park Cemetery, Baltimore.*

*L to R Mike Williams, Ralph Vincent, Elliott Cummings, Bob Lyons*

**THE GILMOR BLADE**

Bruce and Nancy Null  
2600 Masseth Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21219

*The Gilmor Blade is the monthly publication of the Col. Harry W. Gilmor Camp #1388, Sons of Confederate Veterans.*



**SAVE THE DATE:**

**February Camp Meeting: 2/8/2017**

**Speaker: Sue Boardman—The Gettysburg Cyclorama**