

OCTOBER 2014

DAUGHTERS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR, 1861- 1865

VOLUME #3 ISSUE #10

MARY CHESEBRO LEE DETACHED TENT #23

www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~wimclduv/

<https://www.facebook.com/duvcwmarylee>

LEARN MORE ABOUT SARAH EMMA EDMONDS ON PAGE 2



(above) Guest speaker Jenna Theissen with her first edition copy of Nurse and Spy in the Union Army. (below) Sarah Emma Edmonds as herself on left and as Frank Thompson on right.



CIVIL WAR QUILT DONATED TO TENT #23

Ann Day was offered a beautiful quilt with Civil War images and craftsmanship by Sharon Wozicki. Our Tent decided to raffle it off as a fundraiser. A quilt committee consisting of Ann Day, Shirley Peterson, and Charlene Staples was formed to organize and promote the raffle. It was decided that tickets would be sold for \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Hopefully we will be able to sell tickets at different events and ask area Historical Societies to hang it at some of their events. Pat is going to look into getting a non-profit license to sell raffle tickets.



Ann Day and Pat Blackmer holding the Civil War quilt

FRATERNITY, CHARITY, LOYALTY

The next meeting of Tent #23 will be held at
6:30pm on Tuesday, October 28, 2014
at the Delavan Community Centre

Refreshments provided by Nancy Braatz and Susan Fischbach



SARAH EMMA EDMONDS, UNION NURSE AND SPY

Jenna Theissen is a member of the Historical Timekeepers, a group based around the homefront during the Civil War. She loves the people of the Civil War era and learning about what life was like then, especially for the 400+ women who disguised themselves as soldiers during the war. She spoke to our Tent at our September meeting about Sarah Emma Edmonds, who impersonated a man to enlist in the Union army.

As the youngest of five, Sarah grew up in Canada doing everything a boy would do. At the age of 16, her father arranged a marriage for her to a man three times her age. With the help of her mother, she was secretly sent to live with friends. In 1856, she learned that her father was looking for her, and she decided to disguise herself as Frank Thompson. Frank became a successful Bible salesman there and in Flint, Michigan where he later moved. In April 1861 he tried to enlist in the Union army but was passed over. (At 5'6" she was tall for a woman but short for a man.) The second time he attempted to enlist he was successful.

Frank Thompson served as nurse in the first Battle of Manassas and most of the battles that the Army of the Potomac engaged in between 1862-mid 1863. Ironically, though the soldiers he nursed didn't know his true identity, his nickname was "Little Mother". In August 1862 after a dear friend was shot by a Confederate sharpshooter, Frank walked into General McClellan's office and announced that he wanted to be a spy. His first assignment was to go to Yorkville, VA and check out the enforcements there. He shaved his head, ordered a curly black wig, colored his skin with silver nitrate (a nasty chemical used in photography), and met up with a group of slaves on their way to Yorkville. They were captured by the Confederates and brought into the fortifications, where Frank made notes of the cannons, both real and the fake ones made of oak. Assigned to hard labor, the next day Frank pays another slave \$20 Union money to trade places with him, and takes his place in the kitchen. There he hears the Confederates discussing their plans (they talked freely in front of slaves, thinking them animals). As it is getting dark, he is sent to the picket line with food. There a white soldier hands him a rifle and tells him to do picket duty while he eats, which gives Frank the perfect opportunity to escape. In all, Frank went on about 30 spying missions. While on a Chickahominy mission, he contracted malaria. In April 1863 it came back, and Frank requested that he be allowed to recuperate under the care of a private physician. When his request was denied, he deserted rather than let it be discovered a woman. He went to Ohio to recover under the care of a private doctor, and then went to Pittsburg to assume the role of a woman again.

In 1864, Sarah attended and graduated from Oberlin Ladies College and started writing a book. She took it to the same publisher that she had worked for as a Bible salesman and without revealing that the book was about her, published Nurse and Spy in the Union Army. An instant bestseller, Sarah donated all the proceeds to the Sanitary Funds for the benefit of her fellow soldiers. (Jenna is the proud owner of an original first printing of the book. She also recommends the book They Fought Like Demons about other women in the Civil War.)

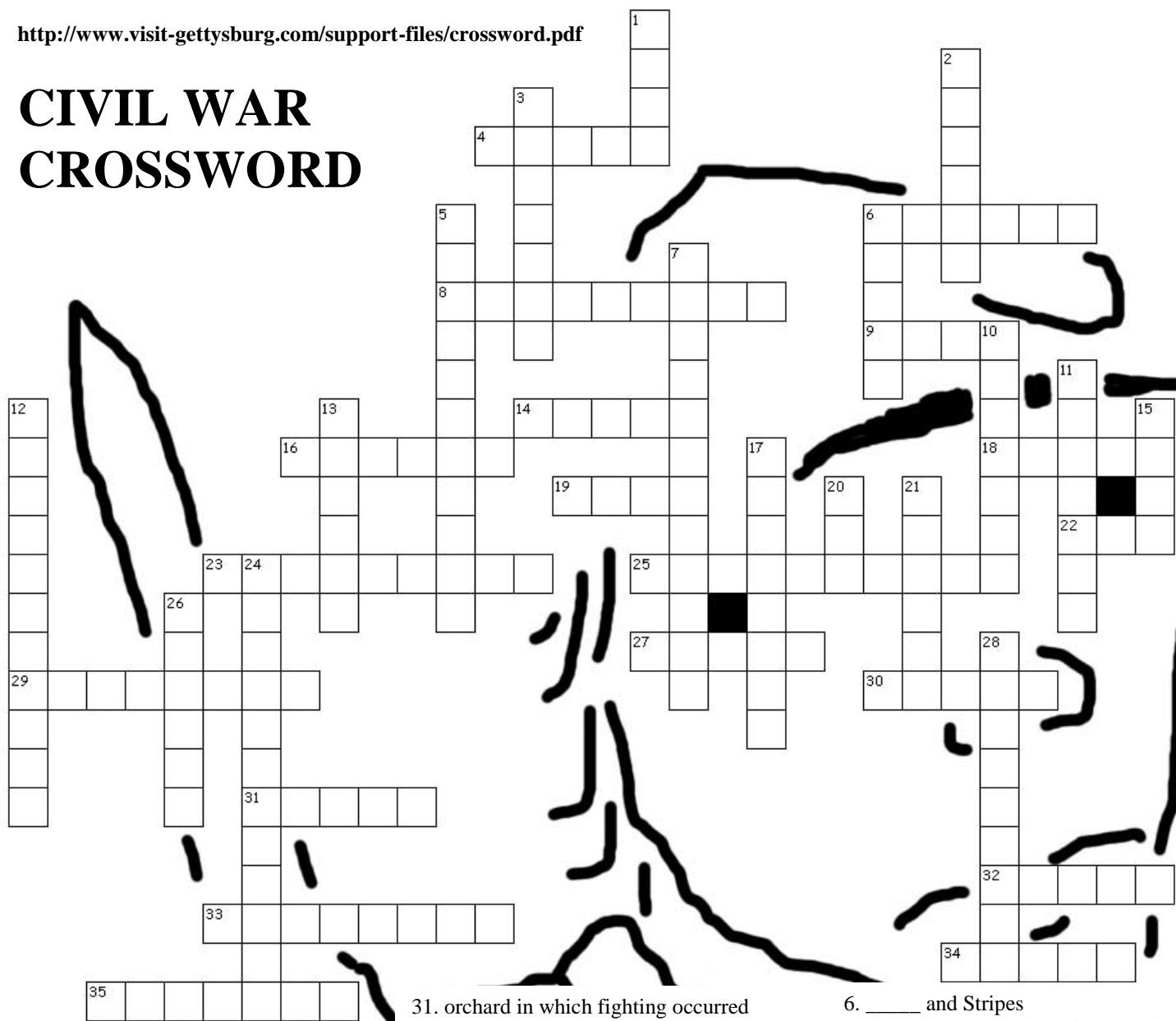
After the war, Sarah married and had three children of her own and adopted two more. Because she had deserted, Sarah was never able to receive a pension. In order to clear her name, she had to prove that she was Frank Thompson. By 1887, she was able to have her name cleared and she was able to collect her pension. She is one of the only women to ever be inducted into the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

Her malaria became so bad that she and her husband moved to Texas to be near her son Fred. There she joined the George McClellan GAR camp in Houston. In 1890 when she died at age 56, she was buried with full military and GAR honors, and was later reinterred at a GAR cemetery with "her boys".

Another female spy in the Civil War was Confederate Belle Boyd, who as a teenager charmed Union soldiers and officers, gathering information for General Stonewall Jackson. Arrested and imprisoned several times, she was captured on a ship escaping to England. After being banished to Canada, she promptly caught another ship to England, where she stayed until after the war and became an actress. She died of a heart attack while performing in Kilbourne, WI, where she is buried. (info from Outrageous Women of Civil War Times by Mary Rodd Furbee.)

<http://www.visit-gettysburg.com/support-files/crossword.pdf>

CIVIL WAR CROSSWORD



Across

4. Seminary _____
 6. Spangler's _____
 8. cannons
 9. post-and-_____ fences
 14. President of the Confederacy
 16. Confederate cavalry officer
 18. _____ War
 19. Culp's _____
 22. Robert E.
 23. withdraw from the United States
 25. capitol of the United States
 27. Mason-_____ line
 29. capitol of the Confederacy
 30. soldier in blue

31. orchard in which fighting occurred
 32. Little _____ Top
 33. Army of Northern _____
 34. commander of the *Army of the Potomac* at Gettysburg
 35. blade mounted on the end of a musket or rifle
Down
 1. Jenny killed while baking biscuits on July 3, 1863
 2. Union cavalry officer who decided to hold the ridges at Gettysburg
 3. _____'s Charge
 5. awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his defense of an important hill

6. _____ and Stripes
 7. state where Gettysburg is located
 10. U.S. President during the Civil War
 11. soldiers on horses
 12. soldier in grey
 13. war between the _____
 15. Bonnie _____ Flag
 17. shape of the Union lines on July 2, 1863
 20. Devils' _____
 21. important crop in the South
 24. _____ Proclamation
 26. fort where the first shots of the war were fired
 28. Lee's senior corps commander at Gettysburg