

Historical Society of East Hartford

Newsletter, March 2014



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In our January Newsletter, I was very optimistic for a milder than average winter. Well, a local celebrity rodent saw his shadow on Groundhog Day and predicted six more weeks of winter. Who could have guessed that these six weeks would bring some of the coldest, most miserable winter conditions we have seen in Connecticut for many years.

Late in 2013 I was contacted by the East Hartford Department of Youth Services. They use a conference room located on the lower level of the Community Cultural Center at 50 Chapman Place where the walls are barren. The Historical Society was asked if we had pictures of their building or of any others that show East Hartford in past times that we could loan them. After receiving assurance the conference room is always secure when not in use, Jeff Cummings and I selected some items from our collections. On January 31, I met with the team and they took delivery of nine different pictures and paintings that will be mounted on their conference room walls.

I visit our museum buildings located at Martin Park every two to three weeks during the off season. Believe it or not, the inside temperature seems even colder than outside, but Park and Rec Maintenance takes good care of winterizing the Huguenot House so that the pipes do not freeze. I listen to messages in the answering machine and after deleting the usual stockpile of telemarketing calls, I was surprised to hear a voice asking if we might be interested in receiving a donation of nineteenth century documents originating from the Goodwin family of East Hartford. I quickly dialed the call back number and talked with Katherine Charette of Bristol who is a Goodwin family descendant.

Kathy and her husband Bruce met with me and Jeff at the Selden Brewer House on January 30. In an old leather pouch appeared a last will and testament, a quit claim, invoices and correspondence from the 1860s and 1870's. Many of the documents were tied to Abigail P. (Judd) Goodwin and her son George O. Goodwin. We were very pleased to receive this gift that has direct ties to East Hartford. The Historical Society wholeheartedly thanks Kathy and Bruce Charette for their kind generosity in thinking of us.

Our March program at the Selden Brewer House will feature someone who has entertained us in past. This is a program you will want to see. Just a reminder that in the event of a cancellation due to winter storm conditions, an announcement will be made on local television stations where a notice will appear on the bottom of the TV screen.

Stay warm and we'll see you all on March 19th.

Craig Johnson, President

KAYAKING ALONG THE UPPER CONNECTICUT RIVER

Join us for a relaxing evening traveling north through our beautiful New England states where we can promise you a glimpse of colorful flowers and green forests. Just in case you have forgotten what they look like! Jeff Feldman is returning with another of his visually stunning programs highlighting the Connecticut River and its many tributaries. This trip he explores the upper regions of the river through northern Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont and New Hampshire. Most of Jeff's photographs were taken while paddling in his kayak along the shorelines of New England; a pastime that affords him close-up images of nature and wildlife.

Jeff's work has been seen in photo exhibitions and juried shows. While not photographing views of flora and fauna, he enjoys capturing action shots of men's and women's college sporting events.

Jeff is a native of Connecticut growing up in Durham, and he now resides in West Hartford. Recently retired from the University of Hartford as a Grounds Foreman, he is a member of the Hartford Audubon Club, the Connecticut River Drifting Society and the Rivers Alliance of Connecticut

This program will be presented Wednesday evening March 19, 2014 at the Selden Brewer House, 167 Main St, East Hartford. The evening will start with a short business meeting at 7:00 pm followed by Jeff's presentation. The public is welcome. There is no charge. Light refreshments will be served. Parking is available in the lot in front of the Brewer House and on the street.

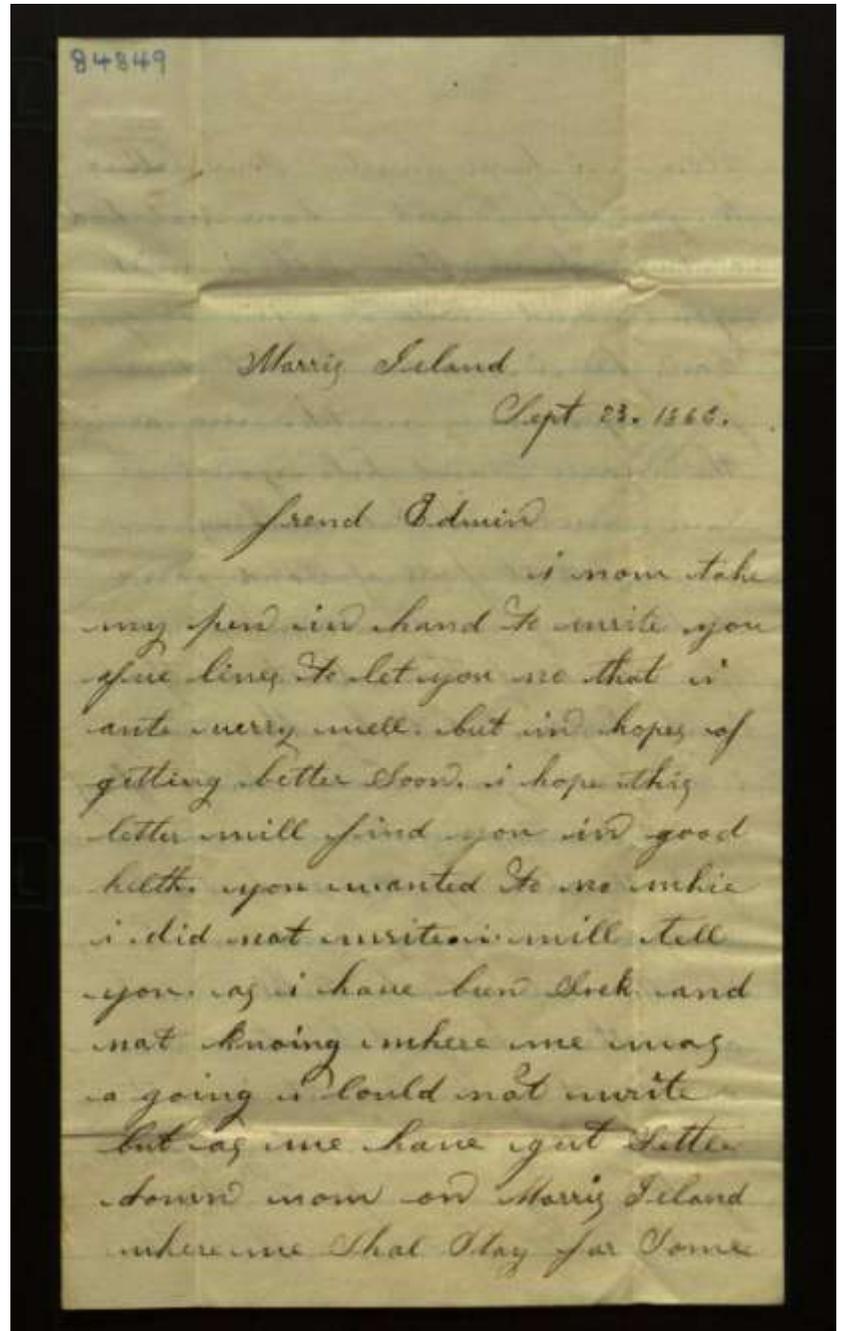
Bette Daraskevich

CIVIL WAR LETTER OF JOHN F ALLEN OF EAST HARTFORD

The 10th CVI had been mustered into US service in Hartford on Sept 30, 1861. In 1862 the regiment fought in the Burnside Expedition to North Carolina to control the landing and transporting of goods north to the Confederate army and to control the inland waterways. In 1863 the 10th CVI was sent to South Carolina to capture Charleston after taking its protecting Forts Wagner and Gregg on Morris Island and Fort Sumter. On July 18th Fort Wagner, near the tip of Morris Island, was assaulted. The black 54th MA led the first attack but was driven back by the brutal fighting. The 2nd assault was also driven back. The 10th CVI was to have been in the 3rd assault. But the order to attack had been canceled. The Union forces would settle into a siege of Fort Wagner.

John Allen, farm laborer from East Hartford, about 30 years old, had been with the 10th CVI since its beginning. He wrote this letter from Morris Island to his friend Edwin on Sept 23¹. By then Wagner's & Gregg's defenders had abandoned them (Sept 7). Fort Sumter had been pounded and was "Mass Ruins", as John wrote, but it had not surrendered. Charleston wouldn't surrender until early 1865. John would not see this. He was ill. He would die on October 3, 1863. Today he is remembered on the Civil War monument in East Hartford's Center Cemetery.

This page 1 of 4 page letter of John F Allen, MS84849, is printed with permission of THE CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT.



¹ See an earlier letter from John F Allen to Edwin Forbes in the May 2013 HSEH newsletter.

CIVIL WAR LETTER OF JOHN F ALLEN OF EAST HARTFORD (CONT)

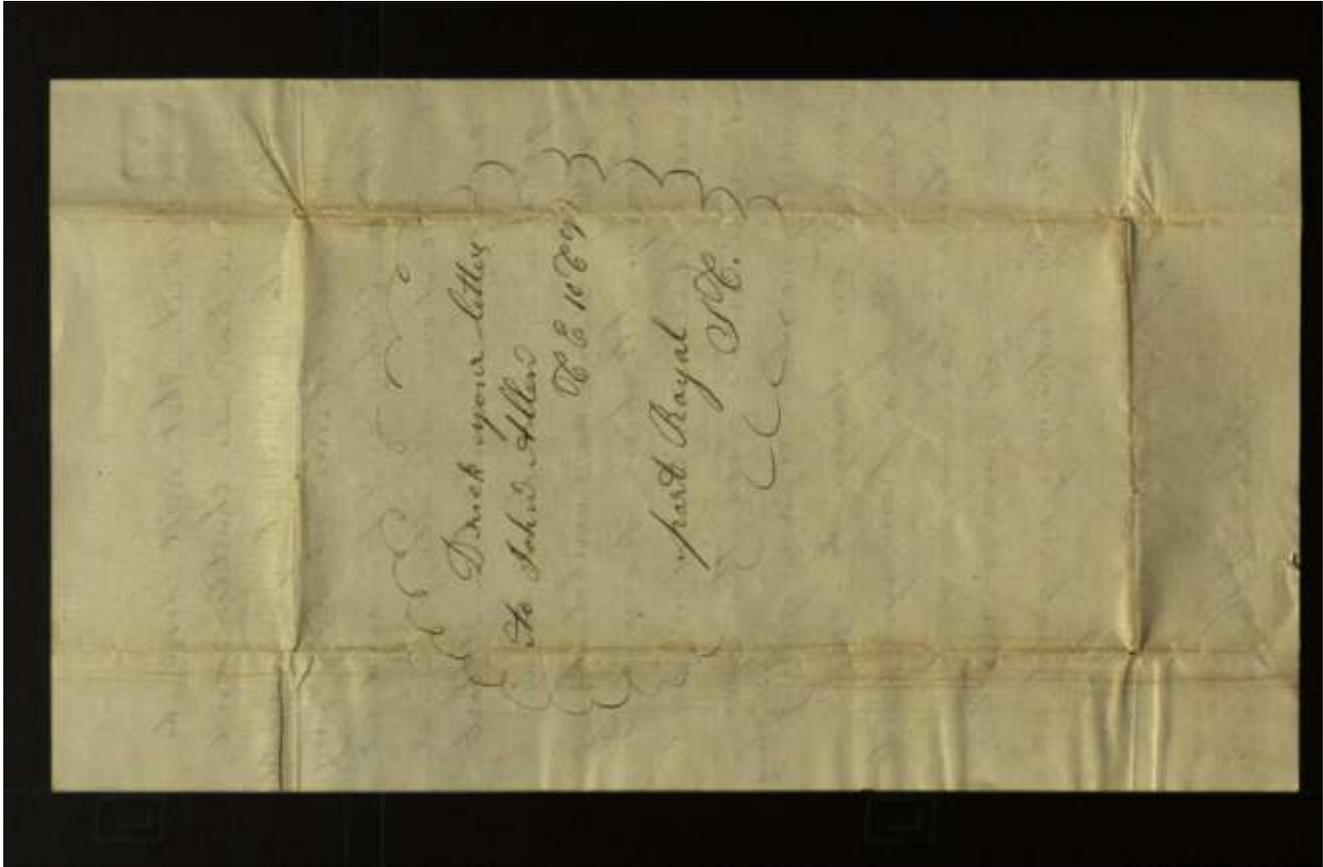
times. i have written four letters
to you before and i have not had
a answer from them yet. i wish
you would write of afford as you
said. for i would like to here
from you every week. we are in
the water Sand hole you ever
saw. we cant eat nothing nor
drink but its full of sand. and
hafter lay in sand. what do
you think of that. East Hartford
cant begin. but by the way
i suppose you have herd of
my taken merry Island. we have
got the hole of it. and fort
Wagner and greig and we cant
do the hole of the Reblly marks
and them so. fort Sumter we
aunt get yet. but its nothing
but a Mag Ruins. they aunt
get no gunz upon it.
only a few men there the

hold it. that will soon be
say. we cant do Charlton and
other place. i wish you would
write and let me no how my
tools ar. if they ar safe. and let
me no how all the folks ar
around there. and how Albert
gilman is and how he is
getting along. and what he is
a doing. tell him to write to
me. please write afford and
i will write back then you
will no how i am getting ^{along}
and i am doing. I say i
have not herd from you beut
i lams ~~only~~ ~~nothing~~
So now i will
close by bidding you good
by.
This from your friend
John Allen

Above are page 2 (left) and page 3 (right) of 4 page letter of John F Allen to Edwin Forbes. To the right is the letter's envelope. These items, MS84849, are printed with the permission of THE CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT.



CIVIL WAR LETTER OF JOHN F ALLEN OF EAST HARTFORD (CONT)



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CIVIL WAR SNAPSHOT, JULY 1, 1863 – OCT 3, 1863 ²

- July 1, 1863 Vicksburg C: Vicksburg's Gen Pemberton knows no help is coming; his commanders report their troops cannot physically endure the city's evacuation; he will ask Gen Grant for terms
- July 1, 1863 Gettysburg C: day 1 of battle; mid am Gen Buford delays Gen Heath west of town; forces grow, fighting intensifies; 30,000 Confeds push 20,000 Federals beyond town to Cemetery, Culp's Hills

² The NY Times, The Opinion Pages, Opinionator, Disunion: The Civil War
<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2010/10/29/opinion/20101029-civil-war.html>

The Library of Congress Illustrated Timeline of the Civil War, Wagner, Margaret E., Little and Brown & Co., NY, NY; 2011.

The Civil War Chart, Contributing Writers Martha Graham, George Skoch; Consultant William C. Davis, Publications International Limited, Lincolnwood, IL., 60646.

Foote, Shelby, The Civil War, a Narrative Fredericksburg to Meridian, Random House, NY, 1958.

Eyewitness to the Civil War, The Complete History from Secession to Reconstruction, Edited by Neil Kagan, Narrative by Stephen G. Hysop, Introduction by Harris J. Andrews, National Geographic

Some web sites of interest: <http://www.civilwar.org/battlefields/battery-wagner.html?tab=facts>,
http://www.stamfordhistory.org/cw_reghist.htm#110, Evacuation Day <http://www.kclibrary.org/blog/week-kansas-city-history/evacuation-day>, <http://www.nps.gov/chch/historyculture/index.htm> (Chickamauga, Chattanooga)

Movie *Glory* is story of black 54th MA Infantry from its inception to the July 18th attack on Fort Wagner, SC.

- July 2, 1863 KY, IN, OH: for 25 days Confed Gen Morgan, cavalry raise havoc – loot, destroy bridges, etc; divert forces from MS; bring war north to boost peace movement; caught; imprisoned in Ohio pen
- July 2, 1863 Gettysburg C: day 2 of battle; Lee fiercely attacks Union left (Wheatfield, Devil's Den, Little Round Top, etc) & Meade's right (East Cemetery, Culp's Hills); gains some land; Lee 70,000, Meade 90,000
- July 3, 1863 Richmond, VA: Knowing Confederacy still holds Vicksburg & Confed Gen Lee has invaded the north, Confed Vice President Stephens starts for Washington with peace proposals
- July 3, 1863 Vicksburg C: under flag of truce Pemberton and Grant (Mexican War friends) discuss surrender; Grant will only accept unconditional surrender; Pemberton is unwilling; negotiations continue
- July 3, 1863 Gettysburg C: day 3 of battle: fighting fiercely, Union regains lost ground; pm, 12,000 Confeds attack Union's center – Pickett's Charge; halted by withering Union fire; many Confed casualties
- July 4, 1863 Vicksburg C: Confeds march out of Vicksburg, surrender to Grant; Grant believes the fate of the Confederacy is now sealed; Lincoln sees Grant as the general he's been looking for; north is ecstatic
- July 4, 1863 Gettysburg C: Gen Meade brought 90,000 men to Gettysburg, Lee about 70,000; casualties total about 50,000; Union casualties cover the area; Lee, his army and wounded retreat to VA
- July 4, 1863 Washington, DC: with victory at Gettysburg Lincoln rejects Confed VP Stephens' peace visit
- July 4, 1863 NY City: NY's Democratic governor Seymour delivers a scorching speech at anti-draft rally; sentiment in city is against the draft and against abolition
- July 9, 1863 Port Hudson, LA: when Confeds learn Vicksburg has surrendered, they surrender Port Hudson, the last stronghold on the MS River; Lincoln: "The father of waters again goes unvexed to the sea"
- July 10, 1863 Charleston, SC: Gen Strong's Federal infantry land on Morris Island at mouth of Charleston Harbor; on 11th will try but fail to take Fort Wagner on the island, one of city's strong defenses
- July 11-17, 1863 NY City: manpower shortage brings military draft; \$300 fee frees wealthy from service; blacks not citizens, cannot be drafted; poor, mainly Irish, will be drafted; they fear losing jobs again to blacks
- July 11-17, 1863 NY City: at first draft goes well; but brutal riots erupt against blacks, wealthy, pro-war: killings, burning, property destruction; draft suspended; military take control; 100s injured; about 105 killed
- July 16, 1863 Japan: US ships patrol for Confed raiders; battle with Japanese warlord intent on driving foreigners from sea; win battle; Lincoln hopes damage to Japanese relations may be peacefully overcome
- July 18, 1863 Charleston, SC: at dusk Union Gen Seymour, 6,000 men assault Fort Wagner; black 54th MA³ which had arrived that day, leads; fighting is bloody; attackers driven back; Wagner will now be besieged
- July 30, 1863 To protect black troops and their white officers Lincoln states an 'eye for an eye' policy: for any US soldier killer or enslaved a Confed prisoner of the US shall be executed or put into hard labor
- Aug 10, 1863 Fred. Douglass strongly protests to Lincoln black soldiers' \$10/mo pay to whites' \$13/mo pay; originally promised same; Lincoln: necessary due to racial prejudice; will eventually become equal
- Aug 14, 1863 Kansas City, MO: fierce guerilla fighting in MO since mid 1850s; 5 female relatives of guerillas, held for aiding guerillas, killed when their 'jail' collapses; guerillas vow vengeance
- Aug 19, 1863 New York City: more than 6,000 Federal soldiers on hand to guarantee peace; draft resumes
- Aug 20, 1863 MA: Hospital Sketches is published; Louisa May Alcott writes of her 6 weeks work as a nurse in an army hospital until she became ill; receives acclaim for her observations and her humor
- Aug 21, 1863 VA: Confed Pres Davis proclaims this a fast day; observed as a Sabbath in camp; Mr Lacey preaches on their sins but says God is on their side, 'see our deeds', our enemies are cruel
- Aug 21-22, 1863 Lawrence, KS: Quantrill, 450 guerillas ride against anti-slavery Lawrence; avenge womens' deaths of 14th; houses, buildings looted, burned; 180 unarmed men murdered; guerillas escape to MO
- Aug 25, 1863 West MO: Union Gen Ewing's Order No 11 drives most people in 4 western MO counties out; take only items they can carry; troops burn houses, crops etc; leave no aid for guerillas
- Aug 29, 1863 Charleston: *H L Hunley*, Confederacy's 3rd experimental submarine, is swamped; of 8 in crew, 3 survive; *Hunley* will be recovered; Confeds will continue to develop it as a combat vessel
- Sept 2, 1863 Eastern TN: Union Gen Rosecrans moves toward Chattanooga, TN - the only rail crossroads left linking eastern & western parts of the Confedcy
- Sept 2, 1863 Eastern TN: Union Gen Burnside occupies Knoxville; its Confed defenders could not defend city, leave for Chattanooga; citizens delighted; Unionist, east TN is being freed from Confeds

³ In this fight for Fort Wagner Sgt Carney of the black 54th MA Infantry would win the Medal of Honor, the 1st black soldier to do so.

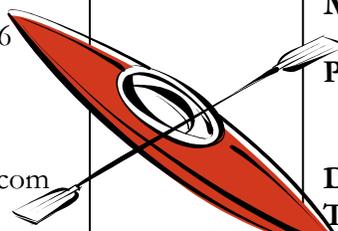
- Sept 5, 1863 Great Britain: Britain decides to seize 2 Laird Rams, rams built with subsurface iron extensions to pierce enemy hulls below their iron plating, built for Confedcy; will avoid diplomatic crisis with US
- Sept 6, 1863 Morris Island, SC: After severe naval bombardment Confeds leave Fort Wagner; 1st Union forces to enter the fort are 54th MA, black, lead regiment battered in July 18th failed attempt to take the fort
- Sept 8, 1863 Chattanooga, TN: Knoxville's Confed troops reach Chattanooga, join reinforcements from MS; fearing Union Gen Rosecrans will take surrounding hills and trap him, Confed Gen Bragg leaves city
- Sept 8, 1863 Sabine Pass, TX-LA border: Confeds' deadly artillery fire defeats Union attempt (4 gunboats protecting 7 troop ships) to overpower small fort; minor victory gives Confedcy needed boost
- Sept 9, 1863 Chattanooga, TN: Union Gen Rosecrans enters Chattanooga; Confed Pres Davis is despondent
- Sept 9, 1863 Raleigh, NC: Wm Holden, publisher of *North Carolina Standard*, believes South cannot win the war; organizes antiwar meetings, activist for negotiated peace; Confed soldiers loot this 'traitor's' offices
- Sept 9, 1863 Charleston, SC: US marines and sailors fail to take Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor in night attack; endure heavy casualties; Confeds use found US codebook to read flag signals, learn US plans
- Sept 9, 1863 Chattanooga, TN: Confed Pres Davis sends ANV Gen Longstreet, 12,000 men from VA to Bragg; Union holds Knoxville rails, 550 mi trip now runs 1000 mi; 7500 arrive in time to fight on 19th
- Sept 10, 1863 Little Rock, AR: Union captures AR's capital, Little Rock; Confeds control southern half of state; guerilla fighting in AR escalates
- Sept 10, 1863 Raleigh, NC: supporters of editor Wm Holden, whose newspaper offices were destroyed Sept 9, wreck the offices of local pro administration newspaper
- Sept 19, 1863 Chattanooga, TN: 1st day of battle starts at Chickamauga Creek, GA, south of Chattanooga; Union Gen Rosecrans & Confed Gen Bragg each have 60,000 men; Union line holds
- Sept 20, 1863 Chattanooga, TN: 2nd day of battle at Chickamauga; Rosecrans mistakenly makes gap in Union lines; Confeds take advantage of it; push Rosecrans, large part of his army back into Chattanooga
- Sept 20, 1863 Chattanooga, TN: 2nd day of battle at Chickamauga; Union Gen Thomas holds his position until nightfall; keeps Union retreat from total disaster; afterwards called "Rock of Chickamauga"
- Sept 20, 1863 Chattanooga, TN: battle has 34,000 casualties, highest number in west; Union army retreats into Chattanooga; Bragg on surrounding heights, including Lookout Mtn & Missionary Ridge, starts siege
- Sept 23, 1863 Washington: Rosecrans is trapped; Lincoln sends Gen Hooker by rail, 20,000 men, artillery, equipment, horses from AOP in northern VA; 1200 mi trip to Chattanooga takes 11 days
- Sept 24, 1863 Washington: Lincoln writes Mary Lincoln in NY her brother-in-law Confed Gen Helm killed; she has lost 2 sons to illness, 3 brothers in fighting and now a brother-in-law; they are heart-broken
- Oct 1, 1863 Richmond, VA: Writing from Libby Prison Col Carolton of the 89th Ohio asks his wife Sadie to send clothes, books and a chess game; there are 500 officers in 3 rooms with nothing to do
- Oct 3, 1863 Chattanooga, TN: Union Gen Beatty writes of looking at Confed tents, campfires around them; but, he observes, our campfires are also burning, we are bruised and torn but our flags are still up
- Oct 5, 1863 Chattanooga, TN: Union Gen Beatty: 2 soldiers in bombardment from Lookout Mtn stand at dog tent's door; shell enters, buries itself; 1 says 'you fool, see what you get if you leave your door open'

MEMBERSHIP For those people who requested membership cards, they will be mailed shortly. If anyone wants a membership card, please email me. We would be happy to help you keep track of renewal dates, etc.

Fern Strong, Membership, 860-290-1869, redbarnrugs2@yahoo.com

Historical Society of East Hartford

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 indiv \$15, 1 address \$20, student \$10,
 patron \$50
Deadline May Newsletter – Apr 30, 2014



March Program

Program: Kayaking Along the Upper Connecticut River
Date: Wed, Mar 19
Time: 7pm
Where: Brewer House