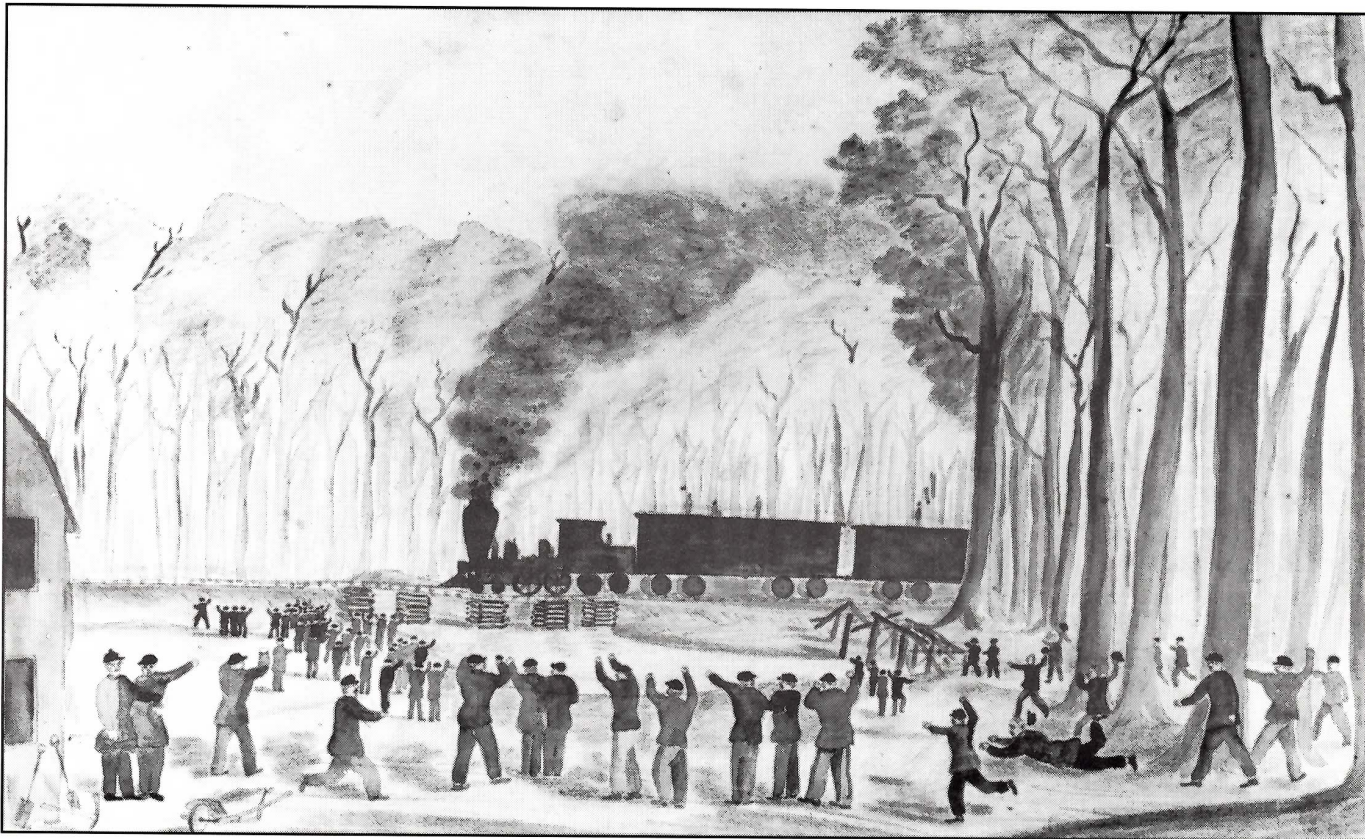


# ★★ **THE BUGGLE** ★★

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Newsletter of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Foundation

September 1996



*The first train crossing the Obion River, TN on a bridge built by the 12th Regiment Wisconsin Volunteers. June 1862*

## John Gaddis Civil War Watercolors on Display

The Civil War watercolors by John Gaddis are on display at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum from September 1996 through March 1997.

John Gaddis enlisted as a private from Dellona, Wisconsin in 1861, serving in Company E, Twelfth Wisconsin Infantry Regiment.

The Twelfth Wisconsin trained at Madison's Camp Randall, and in January 1862 was sent to Kansas to prepare for an invasion of Texas. The campaign did

not materialize, however, allowing Gaddis the opportunity to paint the watercolors now held in the museum's collection. The paintings capture the daily life of the Union army soldier during the 1860s.

After departing from Kansas, the Twelfth Wisconsin participated in such famous campaigns as Vicksburg, Atlanta, and Sherman's March to the Sea. The artist received a disability discharge in November 1864. John Gaddis died in Bloomer, Wisconsin in 1896.

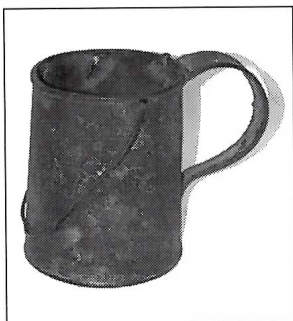


# Curator's Chronicles

by William Brewster

Full is coming upon us and it is time to visit the *Curator's Chronicles*. In the June installment, we began to look at the types of historical information derived from artifacts, particularly from an object's production history. In this issue, we will look at how the personal history of an object adds to its historical value. For examination we have a tin cup, a toothbrush, and a broken watch.

The tin cup was used during the Civil War by E. P. Bridgman who was a member of Company G, 37th Massachusetts Infantry. The cup has a large conical body that holds approximately one quart. There is a loop handle for holding and a wire bail for hanging over the fire. The cup was manufactured using standard 19th century techniques. Carbon deposits over the entire piece suggest heavy use. Without specific manufacturing data, this basic description would constitute the extent of information that we can obtain from it. There would be no way to determine when, where, or to what extent the cup had been used.



However, the family of Private Bridgman donated his Civil War letters. These letters reveal the importance of the tin cup to Bridgman and provide a history of its use. The letters include a list that describes, "the articles I carried while in three year (sic) campaign of Army of the Potomac from summer of 1862 to July 1865." Article nine on the list is an "old quart coffee cup carried through the whole campaign." One of Bridgman's letters describes the charge at Marye's Heights during the Chancellorsville Campaign after which Bridgman sank to his knees with exhaustion, his haversacks, tin cup, and tea pot hanging on his chest. Since there is also a "smaller

drinking cup" in the list of articles it is safe to assume that the tea pot described in the letter and the quart coffee cup on the list are one in the same. Thus a Civil War era cup becomes the cup that Private Bridgman carried through three years of hard service.

What other articles did soldiers view as important enough to bring home? Private Henry White who served with the 32nd Division in World War I retained his toothbrush as a keepsake. The toothbrush differs little from those available today. What makes this toothbrush unique is the personal inscription added by Private White. The front handle reads "127 INF 64 BRIG 32 DIV," and on the back, "H.W. 1B.N. INT. SEC. APR.17.'18." White's diary

reveals that he was attached to the "intelligent department" on April 15, 1918, and began working as an observer on April 17. For White, this meant leading advance patrols into no-man's land. The thought of becoming an unidentified casualty may

have led him to carve the detailed inscription as a back up to his dog tags. The toothbrush becomes interesting not only as an example of personal hygiene equipment used by soldiers but also because the time frame in which it was used can be exactly determined.

Sometimes objects provide little in the way of clues as to why they were saved. A handful of stones, an old pen, or a broken wristwatch may only be explainable by first hand account. Such is the case of the old Boulevard watch that the museum received from Wilbur Diefenthaler. The watch has half of the leather band left, it is missing the crystal, and the dial is chipped and worn. In most cases this object would not be retained because of its poor con-

dition. But this watch was kept for a reason. In December 1944, Mr. Diefenthaler was a member of the 422nd Regiment 106th Division. The 106th Division was so fresh that they



had not received full field uniforms when they were placed in the "quiet" Ardennes sector. The German attack on December 16 was overwhelming. In the initial stages of what came to be known as the Battle of the Bulge, many American positions were overrun after valiant defensive efforts. Diefenthaler's unit was taken

in this fashion. After capture, the Americans were forced to turn over all of their personal belongings. In an act of defiance, many of the soldiers smashed or broke their belongings. Diefenthaler threw his watch to the ground and crushed it under the heel of his boot. After the German guards had moved on, Diefenthaler recovered his watch from the mud and kept it until returning to the United States. Once again an object that has little visual appeal proves to hold importance as an historical symbol and reminder of past events. I hope that this article has provided a greater appreciation for objects in all of their various forms and conditions and a better understanding of what we look for when collecting for the museum. Until next time....



*The Bugle* is published quarterly by the Wisconsin Veterans Museum Foundation.

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# Stephen Ambrose Lecture Packs Auditorium

by Richard H. Zeitlin

On Saturday evening, June 15, Professor Steve Ambrose presented a lecture entitled "Eisenhower: Berlin to NATO" to a crowd of more than 300 people. Ambrose discussed the role of General Dwight D. Eisenhower during the closing days of World War II and his participation in the creation of the NATO alliance. A frequent guest on TV talk shows, Professor Ambrose was interviewed during his visit to Madison by WHA-TV as well as by the local news media.

Ambrose, a Whitewater native and a University of Wisconsin graduate,

has written over 50 books and articles and was involved in the Colin Powell presidential movement. Among his books is the two volume study of Dwight Eisenhower with whom Professor Ambrose was friendly and carried out a lengthy series of interactions.

The Ambrose lecture concluded the 1996 lecture series *The United States and the End of World War II*. The series of four lectures was well attended and provided a unique opportunity for those interested in military history to hear some of the nation's best scholars describe their work first hand.

The Wisconsin Veterans Museum Foundation, the Other Other Club, and the Wisconsin Humanities Council funded the program in part. The program evaluator from the Wisconsin Humanities Council reported that "this series, as with the previous series offered by the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, was very successful. It attracted sizable audiences, it informed on important issues, and through the question format at the end it stimulated further thought....My view is that this was a most successful investment for the Wisconsin Humanities Council."

# Charlie Howe Retires Again

by Richard H. Zeitlin

On June 6, Charles Howe retired from his position as part-time security officer at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. Security Officer Howe had already retired from a security position at the Dane County Regional Airport some years ago, and, before that, as Green County Sheriff making his departure from the Veterans Museum retirement number three. Howe had served in the security field during World War II, guarding the transportation route running through northern Iran which carried supplies and equipment to Soviet Russia.

Charlie Howe established an enviable reputation for friendliness and helpfulness during his three years at the Veterans Museum. Greeting the tens of thousands of school children arriving to tour the museum, Howe explained the rules of behavior expected of visitors—dispensing humor along with his presentation. High regard for the subject of Wisconsin veterans' history characterized his approach to the museum.

Always willing to lend a hand, Howe

volunteered to assist tour groups through the exhibits. He studied the exhibit information and became familiar with the historical themes. As a



**Charlie Howe on his last day in the Persian Gulf during World War II.**

result, Howe, like other museum staff members, often did more than one job. He enjoyed making a contribution to the program. His generosity

of spirit was evidenced frequently and whenever throngs of school children were circled around in a knot, Charlie Howe would likely be in the center. Unsolicited letters of thanks from school teachers and from students testified to his popularity.

Although the Great Charlie Howe has retired once again, he will not be absent for long. For he has agreed to become a volunteer tour guide. Curator of Programs Karen Gulbrandsen signed him up for a long tour of duty before he left.

During a staff party held in his honor, Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Ray Boland delivered the key note address. Boland reviewed Howe's services to the museum and his kind attention to visitors. But the most important contribution, Boland noted, was his willingness to share from his heart. Howe brought members of his family to participate in the event. It was very moving and it illustrated the strong commitment that the Wisconsin Veterans Museum evokes from its staff and volunteer workers.



# ARCHIVIST'S CORNER *by Mark D. Van Ells*

Most veterans' associations publish a magazine or newsletter, as do many local branches of these organizations. These items reveal much about the activities and concerns of the veterans' community. The Wisconsin Veterans Museum library attempts to maintain a comprehensive collection of veteran-related periodicals from national, state, and local veterans' organizations for research purposes. Many groups have been kind enough to add us to their mailing lists, and their legacies will be preserved in our files for future generations. If your organization or local post publishes a newsletter, the WVM library would appreciate receiving a copy. **If you have back issues in your attics or basements, please contact the museum before you throw them away.** News of your organization might seem insignificant to you now, but in the future it might be a tre-

mendously valuable window into veterans' affairs at the end of the twentieth century.

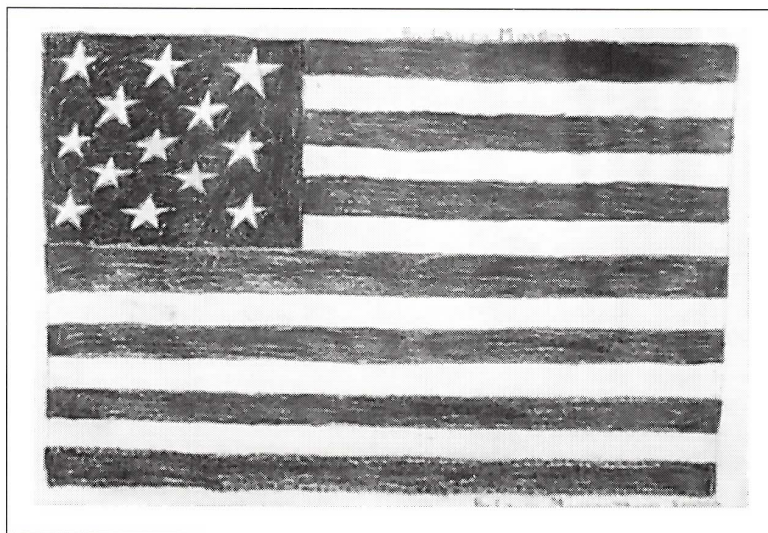
This past summer the Wisconsin Veterans Oral History Project entered its third year, and on July 2, 1996 the project reached the 150 mark with interview of Dr. Dorin S. Daniels. Daniels enlisted in the United States Navy from Madison in 1945 at the age of 17 and became a pharmacy technician. He attended Oberlin College and the University of Wisconsin on the GI Bill, and then took a job studying atomic radiation with the Oak Ridge National Laboratories, where his duties included witnessing and studying four atomic blasts in the South Pacific. Daniels went on to become a physician and presently resides in Ontario, Oregon. His father, Farrington Daniels, was a noted physicist (the chemistry building at the University of Wis-

consin is named in his honor) and his brother, Farrington, Jr., was a physician during World War II and participated in the oral history project last year.

Finally, the library and archives, like other areas of the WVM, depend on an army of interns and work-study students. Given the nature of the academic calendar, summer is often a time of transition for student help. I want to acknowledge the help of those who have helped me keep my head above water (albeit barely) over the past year: Rich Bailey, James Dittberner, Maggie Franta, Richard Furrer, George Habrigha, Steve Harley, Matt Holochwost, Ben Lipp, Brent Ostrowski, Kari Paulson, Matt Piersma, Melanie Ray, and Jeremy Teigen. Additionally, I must extend special thanks to Dr. Jim Angevine and Mr. Art Schmidt for *volunteering* their time in the library and archives.



*Madison physician, Dr. Steve Oreck, transformed into a Union Army surgeon on Saturday, July 13, at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum for a living history program. About 200 people watched as he demonstrated Civil War medical equipment and techniques. Oreck reenacts with Company K, Second Wisconsin Infantry Regiment.*



*The museum enlisted the help of local schoolchildren to celebrate Flag Day. About forty children participated by submitting drawings of flags for display in the museum lobby.*



by *Lynnette Wolfe*

Between 1993 and 1995, WVM staff increased from two to seven full-time employees to meet the increased demands of the new museum and its expanded operations. In addition, thirty part-time LTEs, volunteers, and interns assist us in running museum programs. The museum receives numerous requests daily for historical information; photographic duplications; tour and exhibit information; schedules of public events; mail orders from the store; making donations to collections or to the museum's foundation.



Inquiries relating to specific areas of responsibility should be directed to the following staff members:

**Director:** Official inquiries relating to WVM and its statutory mission, foundation support, budgetary affairs, museum administration, marketing, and public relations. Contact Richard H. Zeitlin, Director, (608) 266-1009.

**Operations:** Those seeking information relating to fiscal matters, personnel, facility, security, museum relations, disaster recovery, and flag conservation project. Contact Lynnette Wolfe, Museum Operations Manager, (608) 266-1680.

**Artifact Collections:** Anyone wishing to donate objects to the museum or seeking information on identification of artifacts. Contact William Brewster, Curator of Collections, (608) 264-6099.

**Artifact Collection Records:** Individuals with questions relating to objects previously loaned to or by WVM; donor information; and placing photographic orders. Contact Jason Josvai, Registrar, (608) 261-6802.

**Library and Archives:** Individuals seeking to donate books, photos, letters, and other documents to WVM or to use research library. Contact Mark Van Ells, Archivist, (608) 267-1790.

**Programs and Tours:** Information on WVM tours, volunteers, educational programs, foundation, and other public programs. Contact Karen Gulbrandsen, Curator of Programs, (608) 266-1854.

**Gift Store:** Orders of museum store merchandise, Civil War certificates, or potential store product vendors. Contact Erin Landa, Museum Store Manager, (608) 267-1799. Address: Wisconsin Veterans Museum, 30 West Mifflin Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53703 FAX (608) 267-0403.

## Book Review

by *Mark D. Van Ells*

*Aleutian Echoes* by Charles C. Bradley. The University of Alaska Press, 1994. 275 pages. \$25.00 (paper).

On the eve of America's entry into World War II, Charles C. Bradley sold his Madison photography business and enlisted in the United States Army. *Aleutian Echoes* is Bradley's recounting of his wartime service, focusing on his duties in Alaska's Aleutian Islands.

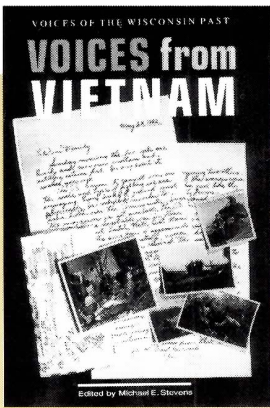
A devoted skier and mountaineer, Bradley found himself an officer in the army's newly-organized ski trooper unit, the 10th Mountain Division. While Bradley was training in the Western United States the

Japanese invaded the two westernmost islands in the Aleutian chain. Anticipating further operations in the region the army organized a combat school in the archipelago, and Bradley and several other 10th Mountain troopers went to Alaska under secret orders to staff the school. Bradley and his colleagues developed survival and combat techniques for the harsh sub-arctic environment and trained several classes in them before Japan surrendered in September 1945.

*Aleutian Echoes* is an extraordinary work in several respects. While Bradley did not see combat, his stories of military life will undoubtedly ring

true for veterans of all eras. But the work is more than just a collection of "war stories." Bradley became a close observer of the islands' natural wonders, and the work is also a kind of natural travelogue of the Aleutian chain. But what makes *Aleutian Echoes* truly exceptional is the inclusion of the author's photography. Bradley's are not typical GI snapshots, but rather are beautifully composed landscapes and insightful portraits in crisp focus and rich color. The book is fascinating to look at as well as to read. The combination of word and image produces a remarkably vivid account of one Wisconsin man's experiences in the Second World War.





## *In the Gift Shop*

*Voices from Vietnam* is available at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum in paperbound (\$12.95) or in clothbound (\$24.95). Edited by State Historian Michael Stevens, *Voices from Vietnam* contains 174 letters and diary entries from 92 Wisconsin Vietnam veterans. It is illustrated with 44 photographs.

To order, write to us at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, 30 West Mifflin Street, Madison, WI 53703, or call 608-267-1799.



*The museum had a record school tour season. During the spring months alone, nearly 20,000 schoolchildren toured the museum, a 40 percent increase over last year's spring season. Here, a fourth grade group receives instructions before their tour from visitor services assistant Laura Patock.*



*Dr. Richard H. Zeitlin, Executive Director  
30 West Mifflin Street, Madison, WI 53703*