

The Official Newsletter of

## The Waltham Historical Society

WALTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

November 2009



### Sanderson Lecture Series

7:00 p.m., Tuesday evening

**November 10, 2009**

RTN Federal Credit Union

Community Room

600 Main Street

Waltham, MA 02453

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Term: 2009-2011

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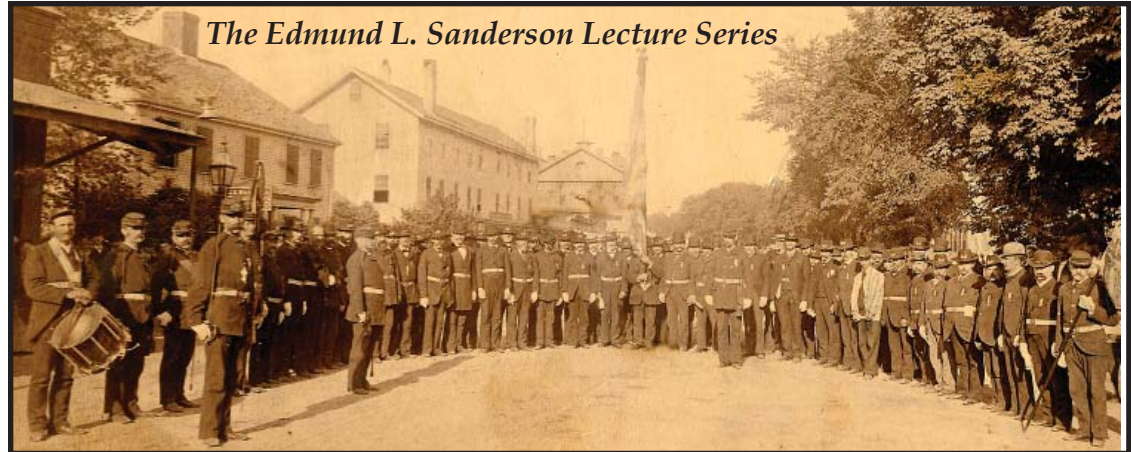
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*The Edmund L. Sanderson Lecture Series*

## Civil War Draft Records, 1863-1865

*Presented by Mr. Joseph Keefe  
Archives Staff, National Archives and Records Administration*

The National Archives Center in Waltham, MA, recently announced the receipt of over 1000 volumes of Civil War records previously held in Washington, D.C. These records document the activities of the Provost Marshal General's Bureau, which arrested deserters, enrolled men for the draft, enlisted volunteers, and compiled statistics on the physical condition of recruits and on army casualties.

"These amazing records offer a glimpse into every city and town of New England – the ethnic breakdown, the occupations – and reveal what New England was like in 1863 and 1864," explains Joseph Keefe, historian and Civil War expert on the Archives' staff. "They offer researchers the opportunity to find information on people who otherwise may be lost to history."

Referred to by the Archives as Record Group 110, the volumes provide insight into the Civil War for historians and for genealogists. The Provost Marshal General's Bureau, established on March 3, 1863, kept records covering all the New England states.

The Enrollment Act, enacted by the Thirty-seventh Congress in response to the need to swell the ranks of the Union army, subjected all males between the ages of twenty and forty-five to the draft. There were few who were exempt.

The act divided the United States into enrollment districts along the lines of congressional districts. Col. James Barnet Fry, the new provost marshal general, enforced the unpopular law until 1865, when the bureau went out of business.

Please join us for this interesting lecture beginning at 7:00 pm in the Community Room of the RTN Federal Credit Union, 600 Main Street in Waltham. Plan to arrive early in order to get a good seat. This lecture is free and open to the public. If you have any questions please call 617-448-6706.

*The Weathervane is an official publication of the Waltham Historical Society  
190 Moody Street  
Waltham, Massachusetts 02453  
781-891-5815  
www.walthamhistoricalsociety.org*

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### Dues are Now Past Due

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL WAS  
DUE OCTOBER 30, 2009**

**SEPTEMBER 2009 THROUGH  
AUGUST 2010**

If you have not yet renewed, please do so as soon as possible to help us continue our effort to preserve Waltham's history.

Please make checks payable to:  
The Waltham Historical Society  
And return to Carol DiFranco at  
29 Willow Street, Waltham, MA 02453.

# The Browne Brothers... In Their Own Words

By Maureen Gordon

*This is the third of a four-part series on the Browne Brothers and their Civil War Letters.*

On the Waltham Common behind City Hall stands a tall obelisk shaped monument with the inscription, "To The Nation's Defenders".

This memorial, known as the Soldiers' Monument, was dedicated in 1868 to the Waltham men who died in the Civil War.

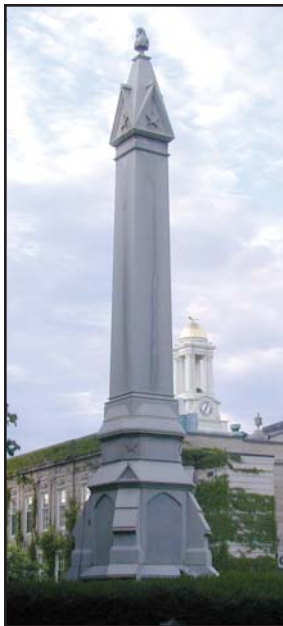
Among the 55 names engraved on the memorial, can be found the names of two brothers, George and Charles Browne. The Browne brothers fought with the 16th Regiment Mass for two years and were killed at Gettysburg.

The brothers wrote letters from the front to their widowed mother, Lydia, and to their younger brother, LaRoy. At least four of the brothers' letters have survived and recently came to the attention of the Historical Society through an Internet search. The letters are located at a library at Louisiana State University (LSU).<sup>1</sup>

The first two letters from the LSU collection were featured in the September, 2009 issue of this newsletter. The third letter from LSU is presented below, with the fourth in the next issue.

The letters were transcribed as written including any spelling, punctuation or grammatical errors. The only

changes made were to leave some space between run-on thoughts so that the letters are easier to read. Footnotes are used to help the reader understand meaning and context.



Third Letter:

December 10, 1862

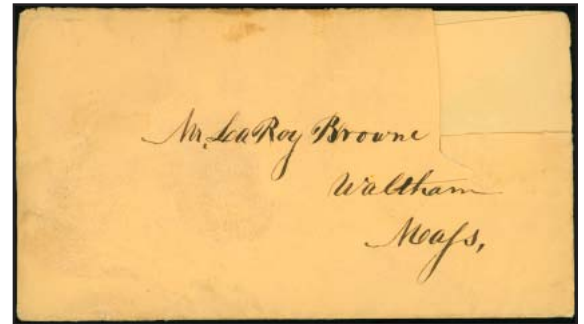
Camp Near Falmouth, VA

The third letter in the LSU collection was written by older brother George, now 30 years old, from Falmouth, VA on Dec. 10, 1862. George was just promoted to the rank of First Lieutenant and along with the promotion, he was transferred to Company B of the 16th Regiment.

As the year 1862 is coming to a close, the brothers are facing their second winter away from Waltham. George writes that they are about to embark on another long march to the Pamunkey River on the Virginia Peninsula.

George mentions his watch which was most likely a Waltham watch. We learn that George's mother has been sending items to the brothers. George refers to a "box" which was the term used at that time to mean a package sent to the soldiers from home.

We also learn that George has been corresponding with his older sister Mandana who lives in Waltham and is married to Leonard Greene. It is Leonard who in 7 months time will be travelling to Gettysburg to bring the brothers back home to Waltham for burial.



\*\*\*\*\*

Camp Near Falmouth Va  
Dec 10th 1862

*Good Morning Dear Mother*

*It is a splendid morning here but very frosty and cold. think it will be pretty warm when the sun gits up.*

*We are under marching orders once more.*

*We received the order last night about eight aclock to be ready to march at a moments notice after sun down to night with four days cooked rations two to be carried in haversack two in waggons. tents to be struck at three this afternoon. we have probably got to start on a night march. I suppose it is about as well for the men cannot sleep much unless we bivouac where wood is plenty. it will be tough any way for there is about two inches of snow on the ground. probably it will not last long.*

*The report is that we are to march to the Pamunkey River on the Panincular. it will take ten or twelve days at least.*

*I don't suppose I shall have a chance to send a letter before we git there if I can I will write. you must not worry about us if you do not git a letter for some time I don't think there is any chance of gitting our box now for some time. I am sorry on account of Charlies boots but I suppose he can gitalong with shoes as well as others. The sole has started off from one of my new boots had them one week paid eight dollars.*

<sup>1</sup> The LSU citation is: Charles L. Brown Letters, Mss. 2423, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.

## Upcoming Activities and Events of Note

### New England History Festival

Saturday, November 14th, 2009 5:00-10:00 pm

Hibernian Hall,  
151 Watertown St., Watertown, MA 02472

\$10.00 Trivia, Exhibits, Concessions, Prizes,  
Souvenirs, Reenactors, Living History

For More Information Call:

339-368-1971 (John) or write to: John Horrigan,  
P.O. Box 145, Watertown, MA 02471

### Images by H.F. Warren

Now through December

The Charles River  
Museum of Industry  
and Innovation,  
154 Moody Street,  
Waltham

View enlarge-  
ments of photos by  
Waltham photogra-  
pher H.F. Warren,  
including what is  
claimed to be the last  
photograph taken of Abraham Lincoln before  
his assassination. These are images from the  
collection of the Waltham Historical Society.  
Call for hours and information 781-893-5410.



### 760 Main Street

The Waltham Historical Society has a new  
exhibit at our satellite office that is designed to  
coordinate with the new exhibit opened at the  
former Waltham Watch Factory.

We have volunteers who open the site on  
weekends and occasional mornings. Please  
check our website calendar for days and times.

### Car #41 Trolley Restoration

The long awaited arrival of car 41 to the restora-  
tion shop will happen soon. The restoration  
fund stands at a little more than \$73,000 but  
more will be needed. Once restored it will be the  
only passenger turn of the 20th century single  
truck trolley running at the museum. Submitted  
by Douglas Carrier, Seashore Trolley Museum,  
Maine.

The Waltham Historical Society  
is sad to report the passing of two  
prominent and well-loved members  
of the Waltham Community.

Our Sincere Condolences to the  
families of :

Mrs. Betty Nocera  
Mrs. Jean Salvucci  
Richard Mullin

*I received those gloves monday.*

*Tell LaRoy my watch runs first rate it  
is a good one.*

*Tell Malvng I will write her as soon as  
I have a chance. I write to Mandana and  
Alvah yesterday.*

GFB

*Send us some stamps as we cannot git  
them hear.*

\*\*\*\*\*

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*The Waltham Historical Society is  
grateful for the generous support of The  
Louisiana State University (LSU) in  
providing us permission to publish these  
articles.*

*The University has made a request that  
citation be provided with any reprint  
related to these documents. In order to  
facilitate any future search related to this  
article by University librarians, inquiries  
directed to the University should provide  
the following citation: Charles L. Brown  
Letters, Mss. 2423, Louisiana and Lower  
Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU  
Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.*

*Please note that their in their reference  
the name Brown is spelled without the  
trailing "e."*

The Waltham Historical Society  
would like to congratulate Mr. Connor  
C. Fay on winning the *Waltham's His-  
tory, The Nation's History* Essay con-  
test sponsored by Historic Waltham,  
Inc. and the National Archive and  
Records Administration.

Mr. Fay's winning entry, *Waltham  
Farming: Past, Present and Future* was  
deemed the outstanding submission in  
the Grade 4 and 5 category.

We have received a request from former  
Waltham resident Patricia Bush living  
in St. Louis, MO. She enjoys keeping up  
with the activities in Waltham, and  
would love to correspond with someone  
on a regular basis. If you are interested  
you can write to her in care of the WHS,  
190 Moody Street, Waltham, MA 02453.

### Waltham Historical Commission Meeting of October 5, 2009

By Laura Bernstein

Re: Demolition Requests

Archie Bennett received 29 calls for  
technical assistance, had 2 site visits  
with 2 sign offs for demolition: 71  
Marivista Road and 385 Trapelo  
Road

### Wellington House

54 meetings held regarding Wel-  
lington House. End of October they  
are hoping to see results in continu-  
ing work done at that site.

Archie is currently working with  
the CPC on St. Mary's, St Charles, 25  
Lexington Street and the Wellington  
House.

### Brooks House 546 Moody Street

TD Bank will not proceed with the  
plan unless the bank has a drive-  
thru.

TD Bank intends to demolish 7  
buildings at 546-554 Moody Street.  
These lots will be merged to con-  
struct TD Bank. If TD Bank did  
decide to keep "Brooks House", they  
would want to move it to the middle  
of the lot. TD Bank projects the cost  
to move this building \$375,000. There  
would be no tax credit for saving  
the building, since it is not deemed  
"historically significant" by the Mass.  
Historic Commission.

Attorney Connors appeared before  
the Commission today to request a  
sign off on a "development prospec-  
tus". June plans are now obsolete  
because the building has changed.  
The Historical Commission mem-  
bers finally agreed to sign off on the  
"development prospectus" with the  
stipulation that:

It would be signed exactly as the  
previous request, and would include  
a note to the Law Department asking  
for clarification on whether this new  
plan design would re-start the clock  
on the demolition delay.

*Please patronize all our sponsors. Without their support, we would be unable to continue our efforts to preserve Waltham's history for future generations.*

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*Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Greene at home*

**The Waltham  
Historical  
Society's 2010  
House Tour  
plans are now  
underway**

The 2010 Tour is  
seeking homes  
interested in being  
featured on our

annual house tour. Please contact Wayne McCarthy at  
617-448-6706 or waltham.historical.society@gmail.com  
for more information.

**"Thank you" to the Waltham  
Historical Society for preserving  
the City's rich legacy!**



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we look forward to serving all members of the Society.*

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