

## **LOAN OF TWO CIVIL WAR BONE SPECIMENS IS EXTENDED TO THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE CIVIL WAR SOLDIER**

WASHINGTON – The National Museum of Health and Medicine has extended a loan of two bones from its Civil War Skeletal Collection for another two years to The National Museum of the Civil War Soldier in Petersburg, Va.

Taken from the Washington, D.C. museum's specimens collected between 1862 and 1865, the leg and arm bones will continue to be on display until February 2003 at the Virginia museum in an exhibit titled, "Duty Called Me Here: The Common Soldier's Experience in the American Civil War."

The National Museum of the Civil War Soldier, a 25,000-square-foot facility, is located on the 422-acre Pamplin Historical Park, which features an antebellum plantation home and an historic battlefield. Both military and civilian living history demonstrations are recreated by costumed staff. For information, call toll-free at 1-877-PAMPLIN (726-7546) or visit [www.pamplinpark.org/nmcws](http://www.pamplinpark.org/nmcws).

"We are delighted to be able to provide these specimens," said Lenore Barbian, Ph.D., assistant curator of the anatomical collection at the National Museum of Health and Medicine. "We are pleased that visitors to the Virginia exhibit will see the bones so close to battlefields where the soldiers were wounded."

A femur bone is from the left leg of Pvt. James E. Kelly, 28, of Co. B, 58<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteers, who was struck by a musket ball and wounded in a skirmish below Fredericksburg, Va. in April 1863. Following surgery and amputation, he was transferred to a hospital less than a month later where he progressed favorably. In June, however, Confederate forces captured Kelly and after a prisoner exchange in July

needed serious medical attention for the wound, which had become gangrenous. Following treatment, the wound healed entirely and Kelly received an honorable discharge and a pension in December. He received an artificial limb in 1868 in New York.

A humerus bone is from the right arm of Capt. W.G. Tracy, 20, aide-de-camp of General Slocum, who was wounded at the battle of Chancellorsville, Va. in May 1863 when he was struck by a musket ball. Following surgery three days later and a good recovery Tracy returned to the field in August where he continued to serve on the general's staff. He mustered out of service in 1865 and was pensioned, and in 1866 stated that while his arm had shortened by 3 inches the muscles never withered away and he retained perfect sensation. He also was able to continue to write and nearly 10 years later reported good health and use of the limb.

“What is unique about these specimens is that we have post-war photographs of these soldiers,” Barbian added, “and the exhibit in Virginia is displaying these specimens alongside reproductions of the archival photographs.”

The National Museum of Health and Medicine began as the national repository for Civil War injuries in 1862 when Surgeon General William Hammond directed medical officers in the field to collect "specimens of morbid anatomy . . . together with projectiles and foreign bodies removed" and to forward them to the newly founded museum for study. The museum's first curator visited battlefields and solicited contributions from doctors throughout the Union Army. During and after the war, museum staff took pictures of wounded soldiers showing effects of gunshot wounds as well as results of amputations and other surgical procedures. The information collected was compiled into

six volumes of “The Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion,” published between 1870 and 1883. The collection continues to support advances in clinical research.

In addition to the 2,000 specimens in the Civil War Skeletal Collection, the anatomical collection at The National Museum of Health and Medicine includes about a dozen other collections of anatomical and pathological skeletal specimens; medical research collections containing slides, tissue blocks, and related documentary materials; fluid-preserved gross organs, and other miscellaneous material. The collections are accessible to researchers in pathology, forensic pathology, forensic anthropology, physical anthropology, Civil War medical history, orthopedic injuries, and human biology.

**PHOTO CAPTION:**



The humerus from the right arm of Capt. W.G. Tracy, 20.

**PHOTO CAPTION:**



A femur amputated from the left leg of Pvt. James E. Kelly, 28, which was injured by a musket ball in a skirmish.

**PHOTO CAPTION:**



Pvt. James E. Kelly, shown in 1868 without his prosthetic leg.

**PHOTO CAPTION:**



Pvt. James E. Kelly, shown in 1868 with his prosthetic leg.