

Garibaldi in Dunkirk  
By Douglas H. Shepard

The *Fredonia Censor* of 23 April 1850 had a long article about the Candle Manufactory of Messrs A.W. & H. **Camp** of Dunkirk. (It was built at the end of Elk Street, now Park Avenue, out over the water.) In the *Censor* of 7 June 1882 is a lengthy obituary for **Garibaldi** stating that "In 1850 . . . he came to New York and earned a living by making candles in a manufactory on Staten Island....While engaged in this business, he visited Dunkirk to see the extensive candle factory then successfully operated by Albert and Milo [sic] **Camp** . . . ."

As though in response to a question, the next issue of the *Censor* (14 June 1882) had an isolated paragraph "The *Dunkirk Journal* is authority for the following: '**Garibaldi** once made candles in Dunkirk, being employed in the old **Camp** factory years ago when poor and friendless he found a temporary asylum in this country.'" According to the Reed Library *Bibliography of Newspapers*, Dunkirk Free Library has the *Dunkirk Weekly Journal* (1863-1885) on microfilm. The *Censor* paragraph seems to mean "a recent issue of the *Dunkirk Journal*," which was probably an obituary notice.

The *Observer* of 28 June 1904 repeated the story that he visited Dunkirk, but without giving any sources. The article said that while he was here, he was the guest of Harmon **Camp**. "He slept there the night he remained in Dunkirk," which suggests this article did have a source that specified he was in Dunkirk only one day. The *Observer* of 5 August 1937 had a long article by Samuel C. **Cellino** headed "**Garibaldi** Once Visited Dunkirk." It said that he came "about 1850" and got the candle-maker's name wrong. A November 1960 article in the *Observer* had a story about the new stamp honoring **Garibaldi** and repeated the story about his visiting, but put the date in 1851 not 1850, and added that he stayed several weeks.

The Rev. Canon Leslie F. **Chard**, City Historian, wrote a piece about Dunkirk's founding fathers in the *Observer* of 18 January 1966, which included details about Mrs. Lemira **Camp** and her sons, [Albert] Wilson and Harmon, their candle factory, and **Garibaldi's** visit in 1850. "Thereafter he [**Garibaldi**] made a fortune in the soap and candle business." The account is repeated in modified form in **Chard's** *Out of the Wilderness* (1971), p.56. A Columbus Day article in the *Observer* of 8 October 1990 gave details of **Garibaldi's** life and that he visited here in 1851, but that "after his return to New York he gave up candle making."

Christopher **Hibbert's** *Garibaldi and his Enemies* (p.121) said he arrived in New York City on 29 July 1850. The *Fredonia Censor* of 13 August 1850 quoted the *Journal of Commerce* that **Garibaldi** had [recently?] arrived in the United States. John **Parris's** *Lion of Caprera* (p.116) said he left for South America on 28 April 1851. Therefore, if he visited Dunkirk, it had to be between 30 July 1850 and 27 April 1851. Although the *Censor* for one paid a lot of attention to **Garibaldi** throughout his career, it never mentioned such a visit. On the other hand, the **Camps** had invented an improved method of making candles around that time, which would have been an incentive for **Garibaldi** to visit. Denis Mack **Smith's** *Garibaldi* (1956), p.51, said he spent nine months in the U.S. and had filed his first papers to become a citizen. He also received a passport. The dates of those transactions might be useful to know. It is possible the *Journal of Commerce* or other newspapers in New York City or on Staten Island at the time ran items about **Garibaldi's** comings and goings.