

THE STONEWALL

August, 2000

This Month's Event

Lee's Endangered Left

The 1864 Campaign in western Virginia

Presented by Dr. Richard R. Duncan

Where: Centreville Public Library

When: 7:30 pm, August 17th, 2000

Note: Alan Tischler's presentation on the Civil War Drawings of A.W. Waud will be rescheduled for a later date

NEW Lesser Known Heroes

This new feature will offer our readers short bios on lesser-known participants in the Civil War. I'll begin close to home with a Prince William County Confederate, Eppa Hunton.



Eppa Hunton: Virginia Citizen-Soldier (Part I)

By Scott Cason

Based on the article *Eppa Hunton-Teacher, Attorney, Military Leader, Congressman, Senator* and research compiled by David Purschwitz of The Manassas Museum)

Representing the fifth generation of Huntons in Virginia, Eppa was born the eighth of eleven children on September 23, 1823, on the family plantation in Fauquier County. His distinguished father served as an officer in the state militia and fought the British at the battle of Bladensburg in the War of 1812. He subsequently served two terms in the Virginia Legislature.

Eppa was both a student and later a teacher at the New Baltimore Academy, and went on to study law under Judge John Webb Tyler. He opened his own law office in the small hamlet of Brentsville (near the Bristoe Station battlefield), and went on to serve for 12 years as the Commonwealth's Attorney for Prince William County.

As a member of the Virginia Secession Convention in 1861, Eppa posed the rather unique theory that succession was the only means necessary to avoid war. He believed that this show of unity by southern states would force Lincoln and the Republicans to negotiate reconstruction on "favorable and lasting terms." In a move to bolster support for his position, Hunton composed a message to his fellow Prince William County residents in which he asserted:

"The early secession of all or nearly all of the Southern States will probably smother the idea of coercion in its birth, or if madness shall rule the hour, eight millions of freemen fighting in defense of their rights will be invincible to any force of hired minions that could be sent against them. But I trust that this unnatural contest will be averted, and a returning sense of justice at the North may allow a re-construction of the Union with self-protecting guarantees to the South..."

Secession was not automatic in the Virginia of 1861. Democrats came to the convention bent on secession, but Whigs (including of all people firebrand Jubal A. Early) pressed for preservation of the Union. On April 15, 1861 Lincoln's call for 75,000 troops to put down the rebellion led to the April 17th passage of the Virginia Ordinance of Secession. The 88-55 vote is reflective of the mixed sentiments that prevailed in the Old Dominion.

Soon after secession, Hunton resigned from the Virginia Militia expecting to enter Confederate service as a private. Virginia governor Letcher and the members of the Virginia Convention had other plans. At the urging of Convention members, Governor Letcher offered Eppa command of the newly forming 8th Virginia Infantry Regiment.

With the outbreak of war imminent, Colonel Hunton organized a regiment in Leesburg that he described as, "...as body of as brave men as ever fought for liberty." In the months and years to come, both Eppa and the 8th would live up to the billing.

(Next Month-Hunton the soldier and statesman and his dubious association with Yankee hero Elisha Hunt Rhodes)

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Antietam Staff Ride

As a follow-up to last spring's successful Gettysburg Staff Ride, Kevin Anastas is organizing this fall's trek to the battlefields of Sharpsburg. The event is tentatively planned for Saturday, September 23rd and will include stops and detailed discussion at such landmarks as:

- The Cornfield
- The North, East and West Woods
- The Bloody Lane
- Burnside's Bridge

As always, Kevin encourages volunteers to lead discussions at each site and can be reached at the following email address: kpai@erols.com

Preservation News

(From The Winchester Star)

After four years of fund-raisers and public awareness campaigns, it finally looks as though the Kernstown Battlefield Association will be able to close on the property in September. The organization plans to purchase the land from Tredegar Trust Co., the trustee for the Charles Hardy Grim Farm. The organization plans to take out a \$1 million loan to make up the \$4 million purchase price.

The key issue now is to raise \$300,000 in matching funds, a condition the KBA must meet to use public money given to the organization toward the purchase price. Once in the hands of the KBA, the site should be transformed into a historical park with walking trails and picnic areas.



Our own Scott Patchan leads a tour of the Kernstown battlefield (Photo courtesy of Scott Mason)

Lee's Boyhood Home

New Foundation Launched to Raise Money to Buy Boyhood Home

The Committee to Save the Lee Boyhood Home Museum announced has created a new foundation called, "The Friends of the Lee Boyhood Home," to raise funds for "the purchase, restoration and reopening of the Museum." This new Foundation will work in conjunction with the Society of the Lees of Virginia, which has agreed to act as financial agent for the receipt of tax-exempt contributions.

The Foundation only had until July 31 to demonstrate the necessary financial strength, through donations, pledges, loans, and loan guarantees. At press time, I was unable to confirm that the Committee had met the July 31st deadline. For the latest details, visit the following web page: www.leeshome.com

NEW The Book Corner

By Ralph G. Swanson

I read somewhere that more books have been published about the Civil War than any other aspect of our American history-- the equivalent of one per day since the war ended!! I believe it. And one visit to a good Civil War book sale would make you a believer too. There are books and magazines available about virtually every aspect of the war--far more than we can ever possibly read.

Reading Civil War history has been a passion of mine for over 10 years, but my approach has been haphazard and without guidance from someone who has crossed the wide literary terrain ahead of me. I feel frustrated that I will never be able to read all the civil war books that grab my attention and interest.

If you feel the same way, "The Book Corner" is here to help. This column is intended to focus attention on the best of the available Civil War literature, so that our valuable reading time is most enjoyably spent.

Periodically--not every month--this column will review a Civil War book that I have personally read and consider to be particularly worthy of your attention. I will cover the anthologies, the (cont)

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biographies, the battle treatises and more. These will be MY personal recommendations, but they are intended to increase YOUR enjoyment of Civil War history.

I invite your participation and assistance in making this column interesting and useful. You are invited and encouraged to prepare a review of a book you consider to be especially significant regarding any aspect of the late great conflict. Submit your reviews to me or to our Editor. If you are not inclined to prepare a written critique, send me the title and I will read the book. "The Book Corner" will help us learn from each other. Until next time, keep reading.

Ralph Swanson can be reached at 58 East 1820 South, Orem UT 84058, or through the Editor.

Mid Year Treasurer's Report

As of June 30, 2000, BRCWRT has 131 paid memberships.

Income received:	\$1693.57
Expenses:	\$868.55
Ending Bank Balance:	\$3550.21

Note: BRCWRT Expenses continue to run well below budget as a result of receiving the newsletter reproduction free of charge.

Calendar

Aug 26-27 138th Anniversary of the Second Battle of Manassas.

Cavalry demonstrations, interpretations of soldiers' lives, and special tours. The Stone House will be open for viewing by candlelight on Aug. 26, 8-9:30 p.m. Sponsored by Manassas National Battlefield Park.

For more information, contact: (703) 361-1339.

Sep 22-24 Battle of Chancellorsville

Reenactment event hosted by America's Civil War and Civil War Times. For more information visit: either www.thehistorynet.com, www.cwreenactors.com, or call (540) 933-6564.

NEW

The College of Trivial Knowledge

In this new feature, we will offer a series of theme-based questions designed to test your knowledge of Civil War events, issues, and personalities. Answers to this month's five questions will be announced at our monthly meeting, and appear on the web soon after. Beginning next month, those who email 5 correct answers to Dean Cason at cason6@hotmail.com (no later than one day prior to our monthly meeting) will be eligible for a prize drawing. We'll begin lesson one around the theme, "Under Foreign Flags." Here are the first five questions (remember to answer in the form of a question...):

1. This Union officer's pre-war military experience included combat with Napoleon III's Imperial Guard Cavalry at the Battles of Magenta and Solferino.
2. This Union officer's pre-war military experience included service in the Imperial Guard of the Tsar of Russia.
3. This former Prussian Army Officer fled the Fatherland after being court-martialed for his Marxist views.
4. This legendary Confederate officer once served as an enlisted man in the British 41st Regiment of Foot.
5. This thrill seeking Prussian once served as a lieutenant in the Brandenburg Dragoons.

New on the Web:

The 4th Virginia Cavalry

Learn how John Brown's raid in 1859 led to the formation of militia cavalry units with fearsome names like, "The Madison Invincibles, The Little Fork Rangers, The Black Horse Troop, and "The Governor's Mounted Guard."

www.geocities.com/bullruncwrt/