



STONE WALL

Bull Run Civil War Round Table

February 2001



ONE OF SIBLEY'S TEXAS RANGERS.
(UNION VIEW)

Gamble for the Far West: Personalities in the New Mexico Campaign of 1862

The New Mexico campaign is a little-known, but fascinating, campaign. The frustration of Confederate hopes in the Far West meant that the vast material and mineral wealth of the western states would remain an invaluable Federal asset. It is no surprise that silver-rich Nevada would become the 36th state of the Union on October 31, 1864.

In this campaign which had such major consequences, the issue was decided by three relatively small groups; General Henry H. Sibley's Texas Confederates, Colonel Edward R. S. Canby's Union Regulars (with some New Mexico troops under Colonel Kit Carson) and Colonel John Slough's Colorado Volunteers. The fate of the American West beyond the Great Plains was decided by these often ragtag forces, only 8,000 strong counting both sides, but always colorful, resourceful, courageous and hardy. The campaign, packed with interesting

incidents and personalities, make it a study of the Civil War in microcosm.

Noteworthy events in this contest include an early use of guided missiles, the use of the lance in cavalry attacks, desert soldiers with whiskey filled canteens, and more. Some of the personalities involved are Paddy Graydon and his "independent Spy company," Texas cavalryman Tom Green, Confederate commander at Glorieta Pass William "Dirty Shirt" Scurry, Confederate Governor of Arizona John R. Baylor, unsung Gettysburg hero Gabriel Paul, and others!

Our speaker, Keith Young, a BRCWRT member, had great-grandfathers on both sides in the war; the 14th Alabama Infantry with the Army of Northern Virginia in the East and the 5th Iowa Infantry/5th Iowa Cavalry in the West. As a westerner, born in Colorado and raised in Arizona, he has always been enamored with the New Mexico campaign. Keith is the Unit Histories Section Advisor for the Compuserve Civil War Forum, a graduate of the Naval Academy, a retired Navy Captain and a former submariner.

**General Membership Meeting
8 February 2001
7:15 PM**

*** Keith Young**

**Gamble for the Far West:
Personalities in the New Mexico
Campaign of 1862**

**Bull Run Civil War
Round Table**

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The STONE WALL is published monthly by the Bull Run Civil War Round Table. Meetings are held at 7:15 PM on the second Thursday of the month at:

The Centreville Regional Library
14200 St. Germain Drive
Centreville, VA 20121-2299
Tel. No. (703) 830-2223

Note: Meetings are now being held at 7:15 pm instead of 7:30 pm.

NEWSLETTER UPDATE

**ELECTRONIC
NEWSLETTER:**

In order to decrease mailing costs we are now sending the Stone Wall electronically. To date, 29 members are receiving the electronic version. If you would also like to receive the newsletter via e-mail (sent blind copy to protect privacy), or if you would like to offer comments please contact:

Mary R. Ahrens
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We encourage your support of this project! Thanks for your cooperation.

**SUBMISSION
DEADLINE**

The deadline for March 2001 articles is 27 February 2001. Please send input to Mary Ahrens at the above address or e-mail.

**BRCWRT ADDRESS
CHANGE**

The new BRCWRT Post Office Address is:

P.O. Box 2147
Centreville, VA
20122

INCLEMENT WEATHER SOP FOR MEETINGS AND TOURS

MONTHLY MEETINGS

If, on the date of a scheduled monthly meeting, adverse weather conditions exist or are impending, take one of the following actions to determine whether or not the meeting will be held as scheduled:

1. Call John McAnaw at (703) 978-3371. Either he or a recorded message will advise the caller, or,
2. Call the Centreville Regional Library at (703) 830-2223. A staff member will tell you if the meeting is on or not.

TOURS

1. Call the Chief Tour Guide. The name and telephone number for the Chief Tour Guide for each tour will be published in the monthly newsletter. In the event contact cannot be made, then,
2. Contact John McAnaw at (703) 978-3371. Either he or a recorded message will advise the caller.

PRESIDENT’S COLUMN

by: John McAnaw

There is great concern among Civil War preservationists in Fairfax County over the repeated delays in the allocation of Park Authority funds for the development and interpretation of historically important sites. These include the “Great Redoubt” (a.k.a. “Fort Early”) and the “Battery Forts” in Union Mills; Mount Gilead and a section of the Confederate Military Railroad in Centreville; and the Ox Hill Battlefield west of Fairfax City. These are examples of what are termed “passive recreation sites.”

The Park Authority’s priority appears to be - on the provision of funds - to construct costly recreation centers and numerous outdoor athletic fields. Reports indicate that at least one recreation center is experiencing major cost overruns. I ask everyone who is a Fairfax County resident to express your displeasure to your respective District Supervisor regarding the delays in allocating Park Authority monies for historic “passive recreation” sites such as those cited above. As an example, funds for the interpretation of what is left of the Ox Hill Battlefield have been delayed three times, causing a slippage of over two years.

February is here and many members have not yet paid their dues for CY2001. Therefore, I ask every one who is in the unpaid category to pay your dues as expeditiously as possible. Your cooperation will be sincerely appreciated.

Lastly, I urge you to join us at our 8 February General Membership Meeting at 7:15 PM for Keith Young’s stimulating presentation on the Civil War in New Mexico Territory. It will be an eye opener.

SPEAKERS’ SCHEDULE
MARCH/APRIL

8 March – Michael Duggan

**A Civil War History of
Arlington National Cemetery**

12 April – Frank O’Reilly

The Fredericksburg Campaign

PRESERVATION CORNER

FINAL UPDATE ON EFFORT TO SAVE LEE'S BOYHOOD HOME

by: John McAnaw

The effort to save the Robert E. Lee Boyhood Home Museum at 607 Oronoco St., Alexandria, has failed. It will be converted into a private residence by the Kington family. I want to personally thank all BRCWRT members and friends who, in one way or another, joined me in this worthy preservation effort. The following is the Closing Statement of the Board of the Friends of the Lee Boyhood Home Museum. This document was attached to a letter, sent me on 29 December 2000. Please read it. It is very informative and disturbing.

“The City of Alexandria has lost an historical gem, and a prime tourist attraction. The Robert E. Lee Boyhood Home Museum will be converted to a private residence. No longer will the public have access to the house museum where Lee grew to manhood. Fine period furnishings, specifically given for this museum by many donors over the years, have been removed and dispersed. The site of events involving George Washington, the Marquis de Lafayette, Revolutionary War hero Lighthorse Harry Lee, and many other important American historical figures is now closed.

How did the unthinkable happen? For those who made contributions and pledges and offered encouragement and hope, we feel an explanation is necessary to clarify events during the last six months.

The Lee-Jackson Foundation, which owned and managed the house as a museum for thirty-three years, secretly sold the home to an Alexandria resident. The foundation made little effort to find another non-profit organization to take over, and they did not publicize their fiscal problems. They

received \$2.5 million for this secret sale, well above the appraised value of the house.

In response to a spirited, worldwide, public outcry against closure of the museum and an inquiry by the Virginia Attorney general, the new owner agreed to consider resale of the house to a qualified non-profit organization. He required that such groups submit detailed proposals for purchase, renovation, and management of the house, demonstrating their ability to raise the necessary funds, and do so in a short time. He appointed a panel to review these proposals. If approved by the panel, an additional nine months would be allowed for fund raising.

The Friends of the Lee Boyhood Home Museum organized, began fund raising, obtained an architect, and with the help of other professionals submitted a detailed proposal. Within six weeks we had raised an impressive \$71,000 in cash and pledges. Corporate, foundation, and major individual donors, however, indicated that they would only pledge significant funds when the Friend's proposal was accepted. But the Friends could not acquire the house until the funds were raised. A classic Catch 22! Still, we felt confident that the necessary amounts could be raised, hired a professional fundraiser and, with the offer of pro bono help from a major direct mail organization, prepared to launch a campaign.

In September, the panel (whose members were selected by the new owner from preservation groups he supported) met to consider the Friends' proposal. The new owner stipulated that whatever the outcome, he retained the right to veto a final decision. He attended the panel's hearing and actively participated in that meeting.

Three days later we were informed the proposal was rejected. It was deemed worthy, but insufficient in its fund raising plan. With rejection, the owner's original

offer of an additional nine months to fund raise evaporated.

To many familiar with the facts, this exercise appears to have been a cruel charade, a public relations ploy to try to take the sting out of the loss of the Lee Boyhood Home Museum. In the rush to move the new owners into the house, the issue became one of who had the most money to restore the physical building. Larger issues have been obscured by purely monetary concerns.

We decry these major losses to Alexandria and the nation: loss of the most appropriate site for the interpretation for the formative years of Robert E. Lee's character, loss of daily access to this beautiful and historic home and garden; loss of the expertise of its 60 docents; loss of an outstanding furniture collection to the public view; loss of a national and international draw to Alexandria's tourism; and loss of another museum to a private residence.

Alexandrians and Virginians take note: three of the five homes of General Lee that were once open to the public have now been sold into private hands. If you care about the historic homes in your area, take care to support them! Donors be warned: the furniture you give for a specific site may later be sold and diverted to an entirely different purpose.

Without shame, the Lee-Jackson Foundation abandoned its responsibilities to the Museum and walked off with \$2.5 million. Alexandria's elected officials should scrutinize their own behavior in this sad episode. They were short-sighted, timid, and gave no support to the preservation of one of the city's premier attractions. There is no question that a revitalized Lee Boyhood Home Museum would be a focal point for history-related tourism. For the city, saving this museum should have been considered a strategic tourism promotion

investment. How tragic now to discuss how to keep such a thing from happening again!

It is our intention to refund money to contributors. The Friends of the Lee Boyhood Home Museum plan to remain active – to serve as “watchdogs” over the easements issue, a job which is the responsibility of Alexandria city government. We will work to ensure that a travesty of this nature does not occur again. We sincerely hope that the buyers, when they are ready to move on from the house, will donate it to the National Trust with an endowment.

We are grateful to the many individuals and organizations who helped when we needed it. It was a valiant effort and we are proud to have participated. Thank you all for your support.”

FINAL NOTE: Money was refunded to donors. I received back 93% of my contribution. – J.P.M.

ON THE CIVIL WAR TRAIL WITH ED BEARSS

by: John McAnaw

On 2, January 2001, I had the honor of touring numerous Civil War sites in Fairfax County with Ed Bearss, Chief Historian Emeritus, National Park Service. BRCWRT member Bev Regeimbal, Richard Sacchi of the Resource Management Division, Fairfax County Park Authority, and two Park Authority volunteers joined us for part of the tour. All told, the tour consisted of stops at nine Civil War sites in Vienna, near Fairfax City, Clifton, Union Mills and Centreville. Tour highlights were visits to the “Great Redoubt” or “Fort Early” and the “Battery Fort” in Union Mills plus the Grigsby Hill Battlefield and a section of the Confederate Military Railroad south of Centreville.

Approximately 35 acres of the Grigsby Hill Battlefield will soon be transformed

into five acre “equestrian estates”. The owner/developer is Mark Morgan from West Tennessee. He agreed to allow BRCWRT members to tour his property as long as we notify him beforehand. During our conversation with Mark Morgan it was soon obvious that Ed Bearss had an intimate knowledge of the area where Mark grew up. Ed knew many of Mark’s acquaintances back home. The rapport established by Ed Bearss with the owner/developer materially assisted us in gaining access to the Grigsby Hill property. Sad to state, but access to this 35 acre portion of the Grigsby Hill Battlefield will be very difficult once the “equestrian estates” are constructed. A tour of the Grigsby Hill Battlefield will be scheduled before spring.

Scott Harris Resigns

Scott Harris, the highly regarded Director of Historical Resources, Manassas Museum has resigned from his post effective 23 February 2001. He has been a reliable friend of the BRCWRT for many years. His new position will be at the New Market Battlefield State Historical Park. Scott will be greatly missed.

CIVIL WAR SITES INVENTORY

by: Mary Ahrens

On Saturday, 27 January, the first of four public meetings was held regarding the Fairfax County Civil War Sites Inventory. John Milner Associates, a consulting firm, will be conducting the survey for the county. The project’s genesis can be traced back to the Centreville Earthworks preservation efforts led by the BRCWRT. Our organization was well represented at Saturday’s meeting, comprising most of the concerned citizens present.

Three more meetings are scheduled for this month. (See Calendar of Events) For more information visit:

www.johnmilnerassociates.com/fairfaxcws
or contact Joe Balicki at (703) 354-9737
x226 or jblicki@johnmilnerassoicates.com

FLASHBACK 1861

Welcome to our monthly journey back to 1861 as Mike Duggan chronicles the key events of this month 140 years ago.

FEBRUARY 1861 **by: Mike Duggan**

By the beginning of February, six Southern states had seceded from the Union. While the non-slave states firmly supported the Union, eight other slave states on the “border” or in the “mid-south” had not declared their allegiance. During the month, Lincoln admits he has been avoiding public positions on pressing issues; he interviews and negotiates with prospective Cabinet members; and Major Robert Anderson is in almost daily telegraphic communication with Washington as the stalemate at Fort Sumter continues.

1 Feb – Texas becomes the seventh state to secede from the Union.

4 Feb – The initial meeting of the Provisional Congress of the Confederate States begins in Montgomery, Alabama.

5 Feb – The Buchanan administration announces that under no circumstances would Fort Sumter surrender.

8 Feb – A Provisional Constitution of the Confederate States is unanimously adopted. It is based mainly on the US Constitution, with a few significant differences – primary, the right to own slaves is spelled out more completely than in the US Constitution.

9 Feb – Jefferson Davis is unanimously elected Provisional President of the

Confederate States of America, for a term of six years. Along with Vice-President Alexander Stephens, the Confederacy now has leaders representing the old Democrats and the old Whigs rather than the more rabid secessionists.

-- The Provisional Congress also states that the laws of the United States of America will remain valid unless they interfere with stated laws of the Confederacy.

10 Feb – Davis (in Brierfield, Mississippi) is surprised by a telegram informing him of his election to the presidency. Davis is a West Point graduate; a veteran of the Mexican War, who had declined an appointment as Brigadier General in the US Army in 1847; and a former Secretary of War and US Senator. He would have preferred a high military command to a political office.

11 Feb – President-elect Lincoln begins his journey from Springfield, Ill. to Washington for his inauguration. He will make numerous stops along the way to greet and address crowds.

-- President-elect Davis departs on a long trip to his inauguration in Montgomery, Ala. Like Lincoln, he will make several speeches along the way.

12 Feb – Lincoln's 52nd birthday.

13 Feb – In Richmond, VA, the State Convention assembles to consider the question of secession.

16 Feb – Davis arrives in Montgomery.

18 Feb – Davis is inaugurated Provisional President of the Confederate States of America

-- In a speech to the joint New York legislature in Albany, Lincoln says, "It is true that while I hold myself without mock modesty, the humblest of all individuals that have ever been elevated to the Presidency, I have a more difficult task to perform than any one of them."

-- In San Antonio, TX, Bvt. Maj. Gen. David E. Twiggs surrenders US military posts in the Department of Texas to the state. He says he did it in the face of the threat of force, but in Washington his move is regarded as treason.

20 Feb – The Department of the Navy of the Confederacy is established.

21 Feb – In Philadelphia, Lincoln receives word of a plot to assassinate him as he passes through pro-Southern Baltimore.

22 Feb – To avoid any difficulty in Baltimore, Lincoln, his friend and unofficial bodyguard Ward Hill Lamon, and detective Alan Pickerton, depart Harrisburg, PA, via a revised route to Washington.

23 Feb – Lincoln arrives safely in Washington.

27 Feb – President Davis receives a message from Governor Pickens of South Carolina, "We feel that our honor and safety require that Fort Sumter should be in our possession at the very earliest moment."

THE VIEW FROM WAY BACK

Sergeant Davis's Tender Beef **by: Keith Young**

In March 1862, General Banks advanced upon Winchester in two columns -- one by way of Martinsburg, and the other by way of Harper's Ferry and Berryville. In the latter column, Brigadier General Abercrombie commanded the first brigade, and Cothran's Battery was with him. Abercrombie was very strict, not allowing his men to forage, or to burn rails to cook with, but compelling them to burn green lumber. One morning, after camping near Berryville, he rode around the different camps to ascertain who had burned rails. Abercrombie, upon approaching a tent in Cothran's Battery, discovered the quarters of a fine young beef

that the men had "foraged" the night previous, laying against a tree. The old General's brow contracted as he demanded of Sergeant Leander E. Davis, "Where the ---, did you get that beef? I gave the commissary no order to issue fresh beef here."

Davis, who was a very polite soldier, removed his cap and saluted the General, and said, in a tone, evincing perfect coolness and sincerity: "General, I was sergeant of the guard last night, and about ten o'clock I heard a terrible commotion in the camp of the Twelfth Massachusetts, (Colonel Webster's regiment) across the road. I rushed out to see what was going on, and just as I passed the Captain's tent I saw a fine steer running through the camp of the Twelfth Massachusetts, with about a hundred men after it. The animal appeared very much frightened, General, and true as you live, it jumped clear across the road, [about two rods,] over both stone fences, and as it alighted in this lot it struck its head against this tree, and, being so terribly scared, its head, hide and legs, kept right on running, while the quarters dropped down here, where they have remained ever since. It is very fine, tender beef, General, and I had just come here for the purpose of cutting off and sending you a fine sirloin roast for dinner. Will you be so obliging as to accept it?"

"How long have you been a soldier?" demanded the General.

"About six months, General."

"Well, Sir, I perceive that you thoroughly appreciate the Art of War, and have become a veteran in half a year. Were you a green soldier I should order you under arrest and have you court-martialed; but on account of your veteran proclivities I shall recommend you for promotion!" And putting his spurs to his horse he rode away, shaking his sides with laughter.

--- *Reminiscences of the Blue and Gray '61-'65*; by Frazar Kirkland, 1895, page 453.

Brig. Gen. John Joseph Abercrombie was a West Point graduate, class of 1822. He was a veteran of the Black Hawk War, the Seminole War and the Mexican War and was Colonel of the 7th U.S. Infantry at the start of the Civil War. He was appointed Brig. Gen. of US Volunteers 31 August 1861, mustered out in '64, retired in '65 and died in '77. He was 64 years of age at the time of this incident.

The Twelfth Massachusetts regiment was commanded by the son of Daniel Webster, Colonel Fletcher Webster who was killed at Second Bull Run, 30 August 1862.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Note: The following events are taken from various sources. If you plan to attend an event please verify the information given in this column by calling the telephone number provided.

Fairfax County Civil War Sites Inventory Public Meetings

1 Feb – 7:30 – 8:45 PM Lorton Community Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton (703) 339-7385

7 Feb – 7:30 – 8:45 PM George Mason Regional Library, 7001 Little River Turnpike, Annandale (703) 256-3800

15 Feb – 7:30 – 8:45 PM Herndon Fortnightly Community Library, 768 Center Street, Herndon (703) 437-8855

3 Mar – 11 AM - 3 PM. Living historians: Confederate Hospital Steward and Southern Caregiver. Demonstrations on medicine preparation included. National Museum of

Civil War Medicine, 48 E. Patrick St.,
Frederick, MD 21701. For info call (301)
695-1864

Through Sep 2002 – Arlington National
Cemetery Visitors Center. Exhibit: “TAPS –
The Military Bugle in History and
Ceremony.” Artifacts include the sword and
spurs of Gen. Daniel Butterfield, bugles,
photos, sheet music, manuals, uniforms, and
bugler insignias. Info: (410) 744-7708.

**The following events will be held at the
Museum of the Confederacy, 1201 E. Clay
St., Richmond, VA 23219. For info call
(804) 649-1861.**

3 Feb – 2 PM Virginia, Civil War Encounter
Emancipation Proclamation

10 Feb – 2 PM. “Libby Prison Escape”
presentation.

3 Mar – 3 PM. Dr. Craig L. Symonds will
discuss Gen. Patrick R. Cleburne and his
proposal to arm the slaves.

10 Mar – 2 PM Battle of the U.S.S. Monitor
and C.S.S. Virginia

14 Mar – 5:30 PM Dr. Robert F. Durden
will deliver a lecture on the Gray and the
Black: The Confederate Debate on
Emancipation.

MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

*The BRCWRT is sponsoring a membership
drive through March 2001. Please, feel free
to make copies of the following abbreviated
membership form and distribute them to
individuals who may be interested in joining
our organization. Your support is very
much appreciated!*

2001 BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE NEW MEMBERSHIP FORM

Annual dues are Individual - \$15, Family -
\$25, and Student (age 22 & under) - \$10.
Make checks payable to: BRCWRT (Bull
Run Civil War Round Table). This form
may be given to the President or Treasurer
or mailed to:

BRCWRT
c/o Mark Knowles, Treasurer
169 Applegate Drive
Sterling, VA 20164

NAME _____
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E-MAIL _____

How long have you been studying the War?

What are your specific areas of interest in
the War?

Are you able to address the Round Table on
a specific subject? If so, please list the
subject(s)?

Have you published any books or articles on
the War? What and Where?

Do you know of anyone who could address
the Round Table? Please list their name.

Do you have special skills or abilities that
you can donate to help out the Round Table?

How did you hear about BRCWRT? WEB
Site ___ Newspaper ___ Friend ___
Other ___

[Check all that apply]

