



STONE WALL

Bull Run Civil War Round Table

January, 2001

THE CIVIL WAR HERITAGE OF FAIRFAX AND PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTIES

Fairfax and Prince William Counties have an unbelievably rich Civil War heritage. Their proximity to Washington, D.C. made them battlegrounds by contending forces. Four major battles, innumerable engagements, and skirmishes occurred in the two county area from early June 1861 through 10 April 1865 – one day after the surrender of General Robert E. Lee’s valiant Army of the Northern Virginia at Appomattox Court House.

The world’s first railroad constructed expressly for military purposes began at Manassas Junction, Prince William County and terminated at the Murtaugh Farm, one mile south of Centreville in Fairfax County. This rail line was built to help supply the heavy concentration of Confederates that spent the winter of 1861 – 1862 in the vicinity of the five plus miles of fortifications that protected Centreville.

The Orange and Alexandria Railroad ran through both counties and was of great importance to Confederate and Union forces. During the periods of July – August 1862 and September 1863 – May 1864, this railroad was the supply lifeline for the Union Army of the Potomac. Numerous attempts by Confederate forces were made to disrupt this vital supply artery. Other railroads of importance were the Manassas Gap and the Alexandria, Loudon, & Hampshire. Even an “unfinished railroad” played an important part in two battles.

Several important all-weather roads coursed through the two counties. These land lines of communications facilitated troop movements. Three turnpikes were of particular importance. They were the Little River, Middle (Leesburg), and 2nd Warrenton Turnpikes. Other key roads included the Georgetown Pike, Columbia Pike, and Telegraph Road.

This will be a fast paced presentation replete with scores of slides of historic sites and relevant map transparencies. The talk is designed to give the audience an appreciation of:

1. Strategic importance of Fairfax and Prince William during the war,
2. Key events and associated locations,
3. Noteworthy military leaders and units,
4. Impact of the war upon the civilian population and the environment,
5. Status of preservation of unprotected Civil War sites, and
6. Recommended courses of action to preserve our vanishing Civil War heritage.

John McAnaw is a retired infantry Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army and a Past President of our Round Table. He has done extensive field and archival research on a variety of Civil War sites throughout Virginia, including many in Fairfax and Prince William Counties.

DON'T MISS THIS CHANCE TO LEARN
ABOUT OUR CIVIL WAR HERITAGE!

General Membership Meeting

11 January 2001

7:15 PM

- * **John McAnaw**
**Civil War Heritage of
Fairfax and Prince William
Counties**
- * **Gary Ecelbarger**
Book Signing
**“Frederick W. Lander: The
Great American Soldier”**



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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

Submission Deadline for February 2001 Issue of the Stone Wall

The deadline for the receipt of articles for the February 2001 newsletter is 27 January 2000. Send input to:

Mary R. Ahrens
12201 Fairfield House Drive 610A
Fairfax, VA 22033
e-mail: ahrn@starpower.net

E-MAIL ADDRESS UPDATE

Treasurer Mark Knowles is in the process of compiling e-mail addresses of BRCWRT members. Please provide him with the information at the monthly General Membership Meeting or call him, evenings, at (703) 787-9811 or mail him the information at:

169 Applegate Drive
Sterling, VA 20164

In order to reduce our mailing expenses, commencing January 2001, the monthly BRCWRT newsletter will be sent via e-mail to participating members who give their assent.

Your cooperation will be appreciated.

MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2001

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Civil War Round

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BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

If you have not done so already, please pay dues for CY2001 as soon as practicable. The dues rates are as follows:

Family - \$25.00

Individual - \$15.00

Student - \$10.00

Make checks payable to the "Bull Run Civil War Round Table." Either drop the check or cash at the Membership Table at the January monthly meeting or mail the check to:

Mark Knowles
169 Applegate Drive
Sterling, Virginia 20164

If you have any questions, contact Mark at (703) 787-9811

SPEAKERS' SCHEDULE **February – MARCH 2001**

8 February - Keith Young

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

8 March - Michael Duggan

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

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Welcome to the New Millennium and may 2001 be a very rewarding year for you!

Before continuing I want to thank outgoing President Scott Patchan and other outgoing BRCWRT officers for their commendable dedication to our organization for the past 16 months. Well done.

Beginning January 2001 our official Round Table year will coincide with the calendar year (January through December). The officers for this coming year, listed on page two, should be familiar to all members who have participated in Round Table activities. These officers are an impressive group. I am confident that they, like myself, will do their best for our organization. The BRCWRT is considered the most active Round Table in the region. Our intense involvement in preservation matters has been recognized by well-known historians and/or preservationists. Over the years, the number and quality of our tours have been worthy of emulation by other Civil War groups. And, lately the quality of our guest speakers has been consistently high. Due to contributions of loyal members we have been able to stay financially in the black.

With the above as background, permit me to lay out my objectives for CY2001:

1. Increased involvement in the preservation of area Civil War sites
2. Stimulating speakers and special events programs
3. Minimum of six field trips
4. Quality newsletter
5. Membership increase of 15%

With your help we will have a very successful year. Make yourself count!



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APPROVED BRCWRT BUDGET FOR 2001

Submitted by: Mark Knowles, Treasurer

INCOME

Membership	2,165.00
Book Raffle	<u>480.00</u>
 Total Income	 2,645.00

EXPENSES

Book Purchases	240.00
CWPT Membership	35.00
Incorporation Fee	25.00
Postage Stamps	600.00
Post Office Box Rental	16.00
Printing – Newsletter	840.00
Printing – general	78.00
Preservation Donations	0.00
Miscellaneous	275.00
Misc. Office Supplies	51.00
Speaker Meal	240.00
Speaker Mileage	125.00
Speaker Gifts	<u>120.00</u>
 Total Expenses	 2,645.00

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.

PRESERVATION CORNER

HISTORIC PRESERVATION – LIP SERVICE OR REALITY?

by: John McAnaw

During the past three months I have visited numerous known Civil War sites and also certain areas where Civil War sites may be located. All my time has been spent in Fairfax, Prince William, Loudon and Stafford County. Members of our Round Table accompanied me on several of these trips.

I am very concerned over what I observed. Ongoing, upscale development threatens to destroy one of the remnants of the Dranesville Battlefield (20 December 1861). A posted sign on Compton Road, south of Centreville, announced the impending destruction of the 35 acre section of the Grigsby Hill on Little Rocky Run Battlefield (21 July 1861). Thirdly, development continues to creep southward along the east side of Route 28, leaving



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undisturbed very little of the Blackburn's Ford Battlefield (18 July 1861), except for that portion within the boundaries of the Bull Run Regional Park.

A recent visit to a section of the Confederate Military Railroad north of Compton Road and west of Route 28 revealed that some residents are dumping their refuse on top of and along the slopes of the historic railroad bed. There is very little evidence of concern by these neighbors about the fact that this is a county cultural resource management area.

On 27 December I visited the 14.33 acre Deerfield Ridge townhouse development in Centreville, located just east of Old Centreville Road and north of Sunset Ridge Drive. The Sully District Supervisor's office is only a few hundred yards to the west. The cited tract contained earthworks over 100 yards in length that were part of the main Confederate defense line protecting Centreville and over 100 yards of what were believed to be Union breastworks! This was the only example of fortifications dug by Union soldiers in the area. To my regret I saw that the Union breastworks have been obliterated and a sizable section of Confederate earthworks has been scraped away, despite promises by the developers that very little of the Confederate earthworks would be disturbed. Even the terrain just immediately east of the crest of the earthworks was chewed up by trucks and equipment. Virtually all of the previously forested 14.33 acre tract has been denuded of vegetation.

In Prince William County John DePue and I visited a magnificently-preserved Confederate battery position covering one of the fords across the Occoquan River. Unfortunately the ridge on which the battery position is located is now being developed. The battery site and nearby cemetery are

located on a single home site lot. Hopefully the battery position and cemetery will be protected. However the historic setting of the battery position will be lost. It will be surrounded by a number of single-family dwellings. Such a site should be accessible to the interested public. In fact, this historic site should be located within a County Park and not a housing development.

Well, let me end this article with an answer to my "header" question by stating "Lip Service". Unfortunately, much of the Civil War heritage of both Fairfax and Prince William Counties has been destroyed. Other historic sites are presently threatened by unscrupulous land maulers with the prospect of either outright destruction or by "token preservation" of only a miniscule section of the site in question. Proper stewardship of the historic land and structural resources in both counties has been inadequate. It seems to many Fairfax County residents, myself included, that very little Park Bond money is going to the acquisition, preservation and protection of historic land and buildings within Fairfax County. The County emphasis appears to be on "active recreation", that is the construction of an infinite number of expensive soccer fields. Thus the equation is: Soccer fields = Parkland (historic and otherwise)

Developers don't make money by leaving the land alone.

OX HILL BATTLEFIELD UPDATE

by: Ed Wenzel

Planning and design work for improvements of the Ox Hill Battlefield Park have been delayed once again.

Barbara Naef, Manager of Resource Stewardship for the Fairfax County Park



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Authority has informed the Chantilly Battlefield Association (CBA) that the schedule has slipped due to use of funds for critical land acquisitions elsewhere in the park system. In a November 14th letter to me, Ms. Naef states that “The 1998 Park Board program now in progress has park projects identified in a priority order set out by our Park Authority Board. Ox Hill Battlefield Park master planning is expected to begin in January 2002. Scoping of the site development will begin in July 2002; design will begin in January 2003; construction is scheduled to begin in January 2004 with completion anticipated by July 2004. These time frames are approximations based on anticipated funding and staff scheduling; they could extend somewhat longer or, conversely, the work could be completed in less time.”

Because of this further delay, I will meet soon with Ms. Naef to discuss the placement of an interim exhibit board and public notice within the park proper to bring attention to the historical significance of the ground and to inform the public of the Park Authority’s timetable for improvements and interpretation. A public notice to this effect on CBA stationery was made available at the December meeting.

On a separate but related issue, approval has been sought and received from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources for two cast-aluminum Virginia Historic markers to be located at Ox Hill.

The first marker, (B-13), Battle of Ox Hill (Chantilly), is a better worded version of the existing state marker (B-11) presently located on the Fairfax County Parkway. The second marker, (B-29), Maryland (Antietam/Sharpsburg) Campaign, is a new version of the existing B-29 marker located at Rt. 50 and Jermantown Rd. The older B-29 marker and its less informative text

will be removed. Assistance in writing the texts was received from Dr. Joseph Harsh of George Mason University, particularly with the wording for the B-29 Maryland Campaign marker.

The state of Virginia will pay for the new B-29 marker as part of its marker refurbishing program. But the B-13 Ox Hill marker will be the responsibility of the Chantilly Battlefield Association which will shoulder the \$1250 cost. Any voluntary contributions to help the CBA pay for this marker would be greatly appreciated.

It is tentatively planned that both new markers will be erected and dedicated this coming Memorial Day, May 28, 2001, in conjunction with the annual ceremony sponsored by the Ancient Order of Hibernians. All BRCWRT members are encouraged to make plans to attend.

Further updates on Ox Hill will appear as information becomes available.



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FLASHBACK 1861

Lean back in your easy chair, close your eyes and imagine that you have traveled backward in time 140 years. To facilitate this flashback, each month during the upcoming year member Mike Duggan will be chronicling the key events that occurred during the corresponding months of 1861. It is no longer January 2001 - it is now January 1861...

January 1861

by Mike Duggan

(On December 20, 1860, South Carolina was the first state to secede from the Union. This event, along with the recent election of Republican Abraham Lincoln to the presidency, precipitated resignations in President Buchanan's Cabinet. On 8 December, Secretary of the Treasury Howell Cobb of Georgia resigned; on 12 December, Secretary of State Lewis Cass of Michigan resigned; and on 29 December, Secretary of War John B. Floyd, a former governor of Virginia, resigned.)

In January 1861, Buchanan was reorganizing his Cabinet; US Major Robert F. Anderson commanded the garrison at Fort Sumter in South Carolina's Charleston Harbor; many states in the deep South considering secession seized Federal forts and arsenals; and, in Springfield, Ill., president-elect Abraham Lincoln was busy with his own Cabinet choices and planning his administration.

Significant dates in January 1861:

3 Jan. – Georgia state troops seize Fort Pulaski near the mouth of the Savannah River.

5 Jan. – Alabama state troops seize Forts Morgan and Gaines at the entrance to Mobile Bay, to protect the city of Mobile.

9 Jan. – Mississippi becomes the second state to secede from the Union. A large blue silk banner with a single white star was carried through a crowd in Jackson, Miss. This flag was said to have inspired the patriotic southern song "Bonnie Blue Flag."

- The merchant ship *Star of The West* is fired upon as it approaches Charleston Harbor attempting to relieve Fort Sumter with supplies of 250 troops. The ship retreats to New York.

10 Jan. – Florida becomes the third state to secede.

- William H. Seward is appointed Secretary of State.

- To protect New Orleans and access to the Mississippi River, Louisiana state troops seize the US Arsenal and Barracks at Baton Rouge and Forts Jackson and St. Philip.

11 Jan. – Alabama becomes the fourth state to secede.

19 Jan. – Georgia becomes the fifth state to secede.

21 Jan. – Senator Jefferson Davis of Mississippi makes his farewell speech to the Senate.

26 Jan. – Louisiana becomes the sixth state to secede.

29 Jan. – Kansas is admitted the Union as the 34th state.



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THE VIEW FROM WAY BACK

Major Downing on the Merrymac

Contributed by: Keith Young

The press of the monster Merrimac, and the fate which she met at the hands of the brave and gallant Worden, has been the theme for many pens, both grave and satirical. A good specimen of the latter will be found below.

It was a good joke (according to Major Jack Downing) that the Kernel got off one day on Seward. You know (quoth the Major) what a solemn looking chap he is naterally. Wal, since he has got to be Chief Clerk to the President, he seems to look solemer than ever. He cum into Linkin's room, and the Kernel ses, "Have you heard the news, Boss?" "No," ses Seward, "what is it?" "Wal," ses Linkin, "the Giascutis is loose," "What's that?" ses Seward. "Why," ses Linkin, "ain't you never heard the story of the Giascutis?" Seward said he never had. "Wal," ses the Kernel, "I must tell you. Several years ago a couple of Yankees were travelein out West, an' they got out of money. So they konkluded to 'raise the wind' as follers: They were to go into a village an' announce a show, pretendin that they had a remarkabal animil, which they had jest captured on the Rocky Moundings. A bran new beast, such as was never seen before. The name was the 'Giascutis.' It was to be shown in a room, and one of the fellers was to play Giascutis. He was put behind a screen an' had some chains to shake, an' he also contrived to growl or howl as no critter ever did before. Wal, the people of the village all cum to see the Giascutis, an' after the room was filled, his companion began to explain to the audience what a terrible beast he had, how he killed ten men, two boys, an' five hosses in ketchin him, an' now how he had got him, at 'enormous expense,' to show

him. Jest as everybody was a gapin an' starin, thar was, all at once, a most terrific growlin and howlin, an' rattlin of chains, an' in the excitement the showman almost breathless, yelled out at the top of his voice, "the Giascutis is loose! Run! run! run!" An' away went the, people down stairs, heels over head, losin all they had paid, an' seein nothin." "Now," ses Linkin, "the Merrymac is out, an' wen I read about the vessels an' tug boats an' steamers all scamperin off as soon as she was seen, I thought she was the Giascutis sure, only I'm afraid she is a real Giascutis an' no mistake." Since then, Linkin calls the Merrymac the Giascutis all the time.

--- *Reminiscences of the Blue and Gray '61-'65; by Frazar Kirkland, 1895, page 355.* ---

BOOK SIGNING BY GARY ECELBARGER AT THE BRCWRT JANUARY MEETING

Gary Ecelbarger's book, *Frederick W. Lander: The Great Natural American Soldier*, has just been released! This promises to be an interesting account of Frederick W. Lander, the subject of Gary's talk at the December General Membership Meeting. Here are two excellent reviews about the book.

"This is an absolutely splendid work! Indeed it is riveting! Lander has long deserved a biography, and because of Ecelbarger's extensive and impressive research, this should be the definitive work..." - William H. Goetzmann, author of *New Lands, New Men: America and the Second Great Age of Discovery*

The life of Brigadier General Frederick W. Lander would provide the story line for a great adventure movie. Even presented in a scholarly fashion by Ecelbarger, Lander's



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escapades defy belief despite ample evidence from bona fide sources . . . Ecelbarger establishes the character of his subject through accounts of western exploits, duels in Washington, his marriage to actress Jean Davenport, and his acquaintance with the movers and shakers of both Buchanan and Lincoln administrations, including the presidents themselves, as prologue to Lander's brief but exciting career in the Union army...
- Archie P. McDonald's excerpted review published in North & South Magazine.

Gary will be autographing copies of the book at the January 11 meeting. The book retails for \$40, but will be available to BRCWRT members for only \$32 – a savings of 20%. Don't miss the opportunity to receive an autographed copy of this highly acclaimed book.

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.

11 Jan. – 7:15 PM BRCWRT General Membership Meeting. John McAnaw will speak on the Civil War heritage of Fairfax and Prince William Counties.

13 Jan. – 11:00 AM Annual General Lee/General Jackson Birthday Ceremony at Lee/Jackson double equestrian monument at Museum and Wyman Park Drive, Baltimore.

**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**

20 Jan. – 2:00 PM “Wedding of John Pegram and Hetty Cary” A living history program.

21 Jan. – 2-4 PM Genealogy workshop. Excellent opportunity to learn how to locate your Confederate ancestors.

Ongoing Exhibit As part of the *Confederate Years Exhibit*, “African Americans in Confederate Service”

**HOW TO GET A NEW HAT IN 1863
(Things You Learn By Surfing The Web.)**
contributed by: Robert W. Ford

The following was gleaned from the web-site of the Academic Affairs Library at the University of North Carolina, Collection of Electronic Text which has many first person accounts of Southern life before, during and after the Civil War.

<http://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/texts.html>

After the Battle of Gettysburg, Richmond, Virginia saw a lot Confederate soldiers in and around the city needing to be re-supplied and re-outfitted. But, just as soldiers of every age and everywhere find ways to meet their needs, some found a fun and unique method to get a new hat.

The soldiers would place percussion caps on railroad tracks leading into and out of the city. When the caps exploded, passengers, investigating the source of the noise, would lean out of the windows giving the soldiers a sporting chance to knock the passenger's hats off their heads. Eventually, word got around that it was wise to remove one's hat prior to leaning out of a train window!