



# The Stone Wall

**Bull Run Civil War Round Table**



**October 1993 Newsletter**

**THE FIGHT FOR LOUDON VALLEY  
THE BATTLES OF ALDIE, MIDDLEBURG AND UPPERVILLE  
OPENING BATTLES OF THE GETTYSBURG CAMPAIGN**

Robert F. O'Neill, Jr. will speak to us on Thursday, October 14, 1993 (7:30) at the Manassas National Battlefield Visitors Center on these crucial cavalry actions of the Gettysburg Campaign. Mr. O'Neill is a native of Detroit, Michigan and serves on the Fairfax County Police Department. He is the author of an article in the most recent issue of *Blue and Gray* magazine and a forthcoming book from H. E. Howard on these battles. We look forward to hearing him enlighten us on the importance of the actions between Federal General Alfred Pleasonton and his Confederate rival J. E. B. Stuart as they dueled in the Loudon Valley.

**HEAR IT ALL AT THE OCTOBER MEETING!!!**

**Welcome New Members:**  
Bruce F. Carr of Manassas  
Dutch Drehle of Centreville  
Charles Folluo of Burke

We look forward to seeing you at the meetings and on the  
battlefield tours!!!

## FROM THE GENERAL COMMANDING

Headquarters - Dale City, Virginia

October 1, 1993

Members:

As the heat of summer dissipates and the comfortable climate of autumn arrives, I take this pen in hand to update you about the goings on at the Bull Run Civil War Round Table. For those that missed the September meeting, I offer my condolences. Our own Scott Patchan, Vice President at BRCWRT, gave a memorable and impressive presentation on the very underrated and overlooked battle of Third Winchester. Comrade Patchan provided an exceptional speech that was supported with a fine set of maps and slides to assist us through this interesting campaign. He provided a heaping plate of food for thought by demonstrating this battle's importance both for the outcome of the autumn election, as well as for continuous victories for Sheridan at Fisher's Hill and Cedar Creek. Thank you Scott for a job well done!

The fifty-plus crowd that did attend was also treated to a current selection at the book raffle - Steven Sear's To the Gates of Richmond and John Hennessy's Return to Bull Run. These books were won by two members with "a buck and a little luck!" We plan to continue with popular and desired selections such as these at future meetings. In addition, the round table is now providing our monthly speakers with a commemorative plaque to thank them for entertaining us for the evening. These things do look sharp.

Our Executive Committee, introduced at the September meeting, is scheduled to meet again at the end of October; therefore, there is no pressing business for me to bring up at this time. Bill Miller has included a piece on preservation around the Richmond area and Gary Ecelbarger has updated us on the Gettysburg Tour in this edition of the "Stone Wall." Please take note of these sections of the newsletter. While I'm on the topic, it's not hard to notice that the newsletter has a new look to it this year. Our editors - they call themselves PatchEck Productions - have added features such as "Permission to Speak Freely" and "From the Ranks" to stimulate debate within the club and to expose us to rare and timely soldier accounts. I think they have made a good newsletter even better and hope you feel the same. They want me to encourage you to respond to the editorial (the Most Decisive Day of the Civil War) and to the questionnaire included at the end of this edition of "The Stone Wall." We always would like to hear from you.

I will close here with the reminder that this coming meeting is certain to be an entertaining one. Robert O'Niell is prepared to dazzle us with information about the cavalry battles at Aldie, Middleburg, and Upperville. I encourage you to make all the necessary plans to attend on October 14. Hope to see you there.

I am Most Respectfully  
Your Obedient servant,

Kevin Leahy

## **MARCHING ORDERS!**

## **PREPARE RATIONS!**

We have, to date, approximately twenty members of the Round Table who will be attending our self-guided Gettysburg Tour on Saturday, October 30. There is room for more!! We plan to meet at Manassas Battlefield at 7:30 a.m. on Saturday morning and will take a small caravan of cars to Gettysburg. Our estimated travel time will be about one and one-half hours.

Please review the September newsletter for the planned tour stops. If anyone is interested in presenting at one of these stops, we will have a sign-up list available at the October meeting. We are looking for more "tour guides" and back-up drivers. Most of all, we want to see more members who are interested in spending an autumn afternoon with others who will be learning about one of the most studied battles in military history. Our tour will begin ~10:00 a.m. We will break by 1:00 for lunch and expect to finish the campaign between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m. You will be returned to the visitor center by 6:00 p.m.

Tour information will be displayed at the October meeting. Mark your calendars (and our sign up lists) and prepare to have a great time!

## **??? CIVIL WAR TRIVIA ???**

The first person to answer each question correctly will receive a free ticket for the monthly book raffle:

- 1.Name the six Civil War officers who became President of the U.S.
- 2.Name the U.S. President who hired a substitute after he was drafted to serve in the Civil War.

## **LAST MONTH'S TRIVIA**

Michael Wolf was the only member to answer both of last month's trivia questions correctly. He won a book raffle ticket for these answers:

- 1.W.E. "Grumble" Jones was killed in combat on June 5, 1864 in VA.
- 2.General Abner Doubleday took immediate command of the Federal troops at Gettysburg after the death of John Reynolds on July 1, 1863.

## **A REMINDER...**

Joe Gray cordially invites you to join him on our quarterly road cleanup of Featherbed Lane in the Manassas Battlefield Park. The date will be Saturday October 16th at 9:30 a.m. Let's all get out there to help our park and to spend some time with other club members!

**PRIVATE FUND DRIVE  
TO SAVE  
GLENDALE AND MALVERN HILL BATTLEFIELDS  
OF THE SEVEN DAYS BATTLES**

Many of you have heard the good news that the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites (APCWS) has signed an option to purchase 750 acres on the Virginia Peninsula encompassing portions of two extremely important battlefields of The Seven Days Battles. APCWS is one of the few organizations in the Civil War preservation community that is actually doing something. While many groups generate smoke and hot air, the APCWS has, in just a few short years, saved almost 500 acres of precious Civil War battlefield land in both theaters of the war and donated more than \$130,000 to other preservation groups engaged in saving battlefields. Now, at Glendale and Malvern Hill on the Peninsula, APCWS has begun a huge project, one that Ed Bearss, chief historian for the National Park Service has called, "the largest private Civil War preservation undertaking in American History." I should like to encourage you to join me in becoming a part of this undertaking.

***The Battles***

The Battles of Glendale and Malvern Hill were fought on adjacent fields on successive days, June 30 and July 1, 1862, respectively. They were the final engagements in The Seven Days. At Glendale, or Frayser's Farm, as Southerners usually call it, Robert E. Lee, in command of his army less than a month, attempted to sever George B. McClellan's retreating army of the Potomac. Lee failed when three of his four commanders failed to attack vigorously, but the fourth column, under James Longstreet and A.P. Hill, launched vicious attacks on a makeshift line of Federal defenders. Survivors remembered the battle for its intensity, Gen. E.P. Alexander saying that to his knowledge no battle of the war saw as much hand-to-hand fighting as Frayser's Farm. Casualties for the afternoon totaled over 7,000, including almost 1,000 dead, most of them falling in about three hours.

At Malvern Hill, McClellan's massed artillery on the heights above the James River withstood repeated but poorly coordinated attacks from Lee's infantry. Lee lost more than 5,500 men in a battle he later wished he had not fought. McClellan lost about 3,000 men and must have considered himself lucky. Many of the 15,000 casualties at Glendale and Malvern fell on the land APCWS is attempting to buy.

***The Land***

This one purchase of 750 new acres would approximately *double* the size of RBNP. Richmond National Battlefield Park (RBNP) holds only 762 acres, divided among 11 widely separated battlefield sites from both the 1862 and 1864 campaigns. Contrast this acreage to the 5,000 acres held by the park service at Manassas, the 6,000 acres held at both Gettysburg and Fredericksburg, and the 3,200 acres controlled by the park service at Antietam. Unlike these and other battlefield parks, RBNP cannot buy land with federal funds. Congressional legislation neither authorizes nor appropriates federal money for the acquisition of land by RBNP. By law, the only way for RBNP to acquire battlefield land is through the donation of the property.

Enter APCWS. The park service owns just 130 acres at Malvern Hill, a very small portion of a sprawling battlefield. Virtually nothing is protected at Glendale. One family controls all the acreage APCWS seeks to acquire. The tracts include almost all of the Confederate attack routes at Malvern Hill and the southern third of the battlefield at Glendale. The two battlefields lie just 15 miles east of Richmond, a rapidly growing, major metropolitan area, so the danger of losing the property to development is very great. After APCWS acquires the land, it intends to donate it to the National Park Service, which has indicated it will gladly accept the land.

**The Cost**

The total cost is about \$2.3 million with payments to be made in semi-annual installments between January 1, 1994 and July 1997.

**The Deal**

The first installment -- \$288,000 -- is due January 1, 1994. APCWS has named this project as its "top priority" and is actively seeking support from private and corporate donors. APCWS has succeeded in gaining a challenge grant from The Gilder Foundation of New York. For every three dollars (\$3) APCWS raises before the end of this year, The Gilder Foundation will donate one dollar (\$1). This is therefore a good chance to make a real difference in preserving two key Civil War Battlefields.

**This Fund Drive - Raffles and Contributions**

Between now and January 1, we will collect private donations then send the money to APCWS in time to help it make its payment. Our goal is \$750 (a buck an acre), so with the additional funding kicked in by The Gilder Foundation we will be sending \$1,000 to APCWS. Keep in mind, this is a *private* fund drive. The Round Table is not organizing it or funding it; this is a grass-roots effort.

We will raise the money in two ways: by dedicating donations of small change and small bills placed in the Preservation Pot, which will be on a table in the lobby of the Visitor Center, and by raffling off valuable items, including a very fine print given to us by friend and noted Civil War artist Keith Rocco. The print is of Jackson and the Virginia Brigade on Henry Hill at First Manassas and is titled "The Stone Wall." It is a very handsome print and very appropriate for us. The print will be on display at our meetings.

These two battles were very important, and this land is very threatened -- in five years urban sprawl will alter the areas irreparably. Go see what development can do to a battlefield at Fredericksburg and Petersburg, then think about how fortunate we are to have this chance to prevent the same from happening at Glendale and Malvern Hill. Every penny of your contribution will go to paying the option on the land at Glendale-Malvern Hill. If you believe in preservation, this is a fine time to lay out a few dollars and really have it count. Please consider participating in our fund drive by making a donation, buying some raffle tickets or both.

I will present the money to APCWS as a gift from "Individual Members of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table." I will provide a full accounting of all funds received to anyone at any time and will announce our progress each month in the newsletter. Finally, you may certainly make the donation on your own if you wish to do so by sending it directly to APCWS at P.O. Box 1862, 613 Caroline St., Fredericksburg, VA 22401. If you chose to do this, be sure to indicate that your donation should go to the Glendale-Malvern Hill Drive. All donations deposited in the Preservation Pot are tax deductible.

I will gladly provide anyone with more information on the battles, the campaign, APCWS and its deal to purchase the land. I'll have extra copies of the information with me at all meetings between now and January 1.

Bill Miller

P.S. and F.Y.I.: Mr. A. Wilson Greene, executive director of APCWS, will address our Round Table this season on Stonewall Jackson, and, coincidentally, I will be speaking this year on Glendale. Let's add meaning to those meetings and answer this call to arms.

## PRESERVATION UPDATE

### The Year Ahead

The goal of the Preservation Committee in 1993-1994 is to influence Civil War-related issues of local concern in a positive manner that contributes to preservation and appropriate interpretation of our Civil War heritage. To achieve this, we intend to interact with local government, and others, and to contribute accurate information and credible opinion on the Civil War as it relates to land use and other historic matters. In addition, we hope to stimulate greater interest and participation in preservation issues by Roundtable members. Our objective will be to report on a few successes rather than lots of motion on a host of issues.

We will continue with the preservation issues already underway and begin selected new initiatives following principles that reflect the limits of our resources and desires of Roundtable members.

A primary focus of attention will be preservation issues related to Manassas National Battlefield Park. We want to lend constructive support to Park management in resolution of those issues. We propose to continue our clean-up of trash around the battlefield, participate in the "adopt-a-resource" program, and continue to influence the appropriate interpretation at the Brawner House and, now, the Robinson House. Mr. Joe Gray, of our Committee, will serve as our liaison to the Park on these and other matters.

Our secondary interests will focus locally, defined as a radius of about 50 miles from the Park. Our voices will have greater impact if we cannot be easily dismissed as outsiders. Also, by limiting our activities it will be easier to attend public meetings and interact with relevant local government officials. There is more than enough issues--Brandy Station, Bristoe Station, Wakefield Tract--to keep us busy in our own area.

We will pursue greater interaction with other organized preservation groups so as to be better informed about preservation activities going on around us.

From time to time we may make a recommendation to provide financial support, from the Roundtable treasury, to preservation causes. The final decision on use of treasury funds resides with the Executive Committee and the membership per our Constitution and By-laws. (The Chair of the Preservation Committee is not a member of the Executive Committee and has no authority to expend Roundtable funds beyond reimbursable expenses.)

We wish to encourage all Roundtable members interested in preservation to become members of the Committee. A few more active members will multiply our efforts and, hopefully, our successes. Even if you are interested in, or able to work on, only one preservation issue--say Brandy Station--your contribution will be welcome and we will not ask you to undertake other activities.

We invite the ideas, information and views of our membership on preservation matters. This includes a critique of Roundtable positions and actions on preservation or your suggestions for new issues to which we should devote our attention.

Ralph and Renata Swanson  
Preservation Committee Chair  
703/709-7411

#### CURRENT EVENTS

October 1993

Each month this calendar will feature events occurring locally that may be of interest to roundtable members. We encourage anyone who attends an event to write a brief review for publication in the newsletter for the benefit and enjoyment of our readers. If readers become aware of an event that should appear on these pages, please notify the newsletter editor by the 15th of each month. Reviews and notices can be mailed to the BRCWRT, P.O. Box 951, Manassas, VA 22111.

October 16, 17 - Cedar Creek Battle Reenactment - Always one of the best with civilian living history at Belle Grove Plantation. Expecting 3,000 reenactors. Proceeds benefit battlefield preservation. Middletown. Admission. (703) 869-2064.

October 23 - War Between the States Collectors Show - Fredericksburg Armory. I-95, Exit 130, Routes 1 and 3, Fredericksburg. \$3 (703) 899-5565.

October 30 - BRCWRT Gettysburg Field Trip - The field trips we do ourselves are always the best. Lecture on a portion of the battle yourself or just come to listen and learn (and argue) about one of the most important battles of the war. Sign up at the Roundtable meeting, then meet at Manassas Battlefield picnic area on Hwy 234 north of Stone House, 7:30 am.

October - Home Care of Heirlooms and Collectibles - A preservation lecture series will provide professional guidelines for the home storage, handling and display of fine collectibles. Oct 9--photographs; Oct 16--furniture care; Oct 23--paper objects; Oct 30--care of textiles. Sessions are on Saturdays from 1-3pm at Ft. Ward Museum, 4301 W. Braddock Rd., Alexandria. Fees are \$5 per lecture, \$17 for the series. For information and registration, call Ft. Ward at (703) 838-4848.

November 13, 14 - Capital of the Confederacy Civil War Show - Probably the biggest show on the east coast. 500+ tables. Sales and educational exhibits. An entire day of non-stop Civil War education. Virginia State Fair Grounds, Richmond. Admission (804) 273-2358.

Thru January 31, 1994 - Fighting for Freedom: Black Union Soldiers of the Civil War - An exhibition of photos, documents and memorabilia interpreting and commemorating African-American service to the union supplements Fort Ward's already-significant exhibits on the Civil War. Fort Ward Museum, 4301 W. Braddock Rd., Alexandria. Free. (703) 838-4848.

## **"PERMISSION TO SPEAK FREELY"**

### **THE MOST DECISIVE DAY OF THE CIVIL WAR**

**By Gary Ecelbarger**

The criteria to establish the most important day of the Civil War is to choose the day that had the greatest impact on the outcome of the war and also the day that became the most pivotal; i.e., that day that would have rerouted the direction of the war if fortunes had somehow been reversed. The most popular selection to fit these criteria has been July 3, 1863 - the day Gettysburg and Vicksburg were won by the North. Unfortunately, this day's importance fails the test for two reasons. July 3 was not a pivotal day in Gettysburg because the battle was really over at the end of the second day of fighting on July 2nd. If Pickett's charge had been successful to drive the Union army from Cemetery Ridge, what was Lee going to do with fewer than 50,000 healthy soldiers - capture the Army of the Potomac? March on Washington? This battle took place during a non-election year and therefore was also of little political importance. The fact that Vicksburg fell on the same day was merely coincidental as the outcome of the siege was a foregone conclusion (just ask the poor Southern soldiers who were forced to feast on rodents in the besieged port).

The most important day of the Civil War was September 17, 1862 - the bloody battle of Antietam - because of what was and what should have been accomplished. On this day the beaten Confederate forces were left with no option but to leave Maryland and return to Virginia soil (completed the following evening), thus reversing a tremendous Southern momentum fed by a nearly unbroken string of seven separate battle victories that same summer. More importantly, the very real threat of European recognition was extinguished by the Emancipation Proclamation. Had Lee and his army been able to stay in Maryland or push into Pennsylvania, Lincoln would have been forced to pocket the document and his hand would very likely have been forced by England and France, who were finally beginning to suffer from the blockage of southern cotton exports during the autumn of 1862.

What should have been accomplished this day was the annihilation or forced capitulation of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia to McClellan's Army of the Potomac. Although outnumbered nearly two to one, Lee chose to face McClellan with a river at his back. Though this strategy was questionable, Lee's tactics were masterful. Aided by poorly-coordinated Union attacks, Lee was able to maneuver troops to strengthen his tested lines. The timely arrival of A.P. Hill preserved the Southern forces to fight for another two and one-half years. A more aggressive Northern Commanding General initiating the battle at least one day sooner with a thoughtful coordinated strategy could have hastened the Civil War on September 17, 1862 by performing a rarity of the war - the total destruction of an army. The fact that this did not occur attests to the spirit and durability of the Confederacy. The Union soldier, though poorly deployed at times this day, also fought with renewed spirit in defense of northern land and was able to emerge victorious to forever alter the outcome of the Civil War. The casualties for both sides on September 17, 1862 was over 22000, marking this historic day as the pinnacle of human sacrifice in America as well as the most decisive day of the Civil War.



## FROM THE RANKS

October in 1864 was election time. The following two soldiers' accounts are presented to display the antithetical views toward the Presidential candidates Abraham Lincoln and George McClellan.

### A PENNSYLVANIA SOLDIER FOR ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Near Petersburg VA  
Oct. 12th 1864

Captain A. C. Thompson,

Dear Sir: - I received your welcome letter of the 3rd Inst., and was glad to hear from you. I and the men of Co. K are all well as usual. You state in your letter that you had heard that I and Co. K were going to vote for the Gun Boat McClellan... I positively deny the whole charge. I have never said that I would vote for McClellan, the little failure, and the men of my Co. are intelligent and know who to vote for. I have not heard one man of my Co. say that he would support any man that would carry out the principles of the Chicago Convention. This is no time for an armistice, and any sensible man knows it. There is not a man in this army who does not know that we have been successful..... I say that we have been successful and may God give us success until every armed rebel is subdued. Now Captain, I tell you that the soldiers are almost unanimous for the Union, and I do not see why they should not be. I mean unanimous for President Lincoln a second term in the Presidential chair. At our election yesterday, there were 95 votes Union, 8 coppersnakes; there were only 103 votes polled in the regt. There were many that could not vote on account of not having receipts for paying tax, who will be better prepared before the next election. Captain, I think that a man serving in the army and voting for McClellan is no better than an Idiot. It would be the worst kind of nonsense to fight to preserve the Union and turn around and vote to destroy it. You may find men of that kind around Brookville, but they are scarce here (Punxsatawney). I have said enough on this subject.

Yours &c.

James Miller,  
Capt. Co. K, 105th P.V.V.

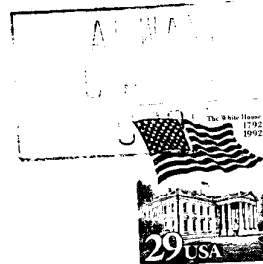
### From the Diary of William McVey, 126th Ohio Volunteer Infantry 6th Corps, Army of the Shenandoah

September 1, 1864: Clear and pleasant laying in camp two miles west of Charlestown, Va. on the Charlestown and Smithfield pike. All quiet. The day passed pleasantly. All anxious to hear who the nominee for president is by the Chicago convention. The papers came in the evening, with the news that McClellan was nominated. great joy among his friends, a good deal of excitement. I beleive our regiment will give a majority for McClellan. Had prayer meeting in the evening.  
(McVey diary is in the collection of the Ohio Historical Society)

## QUESTIONNAIRE

The following set of questions are provided to guide the members of the Executive Committee at BRCWRT toward the interest of its members. Please take a few minutes to answer these questions and return it to any officer at the October meeting or via mail (BRCWRT PO Box 951 Manassas, VA 22111). Your name is not required,

1. What do you like most about the Bull Run Civil War Round Table?
2. What would you like to see improved within this Round Table?
3. What battlefield would you like BRCWRT to tour this spring?



Mike Duggan  
5214 Claridge Ct.  
Fairfax, Va., 22032

