



# The Stone Wall

**Bull Run Civil War Round Table**



December 1993 Newsletter

## **"STONEWALL" AT FREDERICKSBURG**

The Bull Run Civil War Round Table welcomes Frank A. O'Reilly as our speaker at the December meeting to be held on Thursday December 9, 1993 at 7:30 p.m. in the Manassas National Battlefield Park Visitor Center. Mr. O'Reilly has authored a new book through H. E. Howard's Virginia Civil War Battles and Leaders Series. The title of the book, as well as the topic of the presentation, is "Stonewall" Jackson at Fredericksburg: The Battle of Prospect Hill December 13, 1862.

Frank O'Reilly has been a member of the National Park Service for several years. He grew up in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and obtained his history degree at Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Virginia. In addition to writing a new book, Mr. O'Reilly is a newlywed. He and his wife Amy live within the boundaries of the Fredericksburg National Military Park. We look forward to his presentation on the under-reported action against Jackson's flank during the Battle of Fredericksburg.

**HEAR IT ALL AT OUR DECEMBER MEETING!!!**

### **BOOK BONUS!**

There will be a limited number (15-20) of Frank O'Reilly's new book, "Stonewall" Jackson at Fredericksburg, available to interested members for purchase during our December 9 meeting. The price will be approximately \$20. The author will be available after the meeting to personally sign each purchased copy. Now is the chance to take advantage of this rare opportunity to acquire an autographed copy of a good Civil War book!

BRCWRT P.O. Box 951 Manassas, Virginia 22111

## FROM THE ADJUTANT'S DESK

As Secretary of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table and co-editor of "The Stone Wall," I would like to take the opportunity to update you concerning matters associated with BRCWRT.

Membership renewal to our organization is next month. For the low price of \$15 per year (\$25 per family, \$10 per student) you will continue to receive all that BRCWRT has to offer - monthly issues of "The Stone Wall," top-notch speakers at our monthly meetings, book raffles, two or three field trip opportunities, and the camaraderie of other Bull Run Round Table members. It should also be noted that we are one of the few organizations that holds meetings during the summer months - an added bonus! We added about 30 Civil War enthusiasts to our Round Table during 1993 and we now have a membership of over 120. A renewal form is included on the last page of the newsletter. Please complete and return the form by January 30, 1994. We look forward to having you on board for another exciting season.

The remainder of our speaker's schedule is included in this month's newsletter. You should take note of the change in April. Due to scheduling difficulties, Alan Nolan's visit has been postponed. In his stead we have scheduled an historian from Ford's Theater to speak to us about the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln. We consider it a timely substitution as Mr. Maione's talk will occur 129 years to the day after the actual event. Vice President and co-editor Scott Patchan is hard at work organizing a set of speakers for the 1994 -1995 season. We will provide details when the schedule is complete.

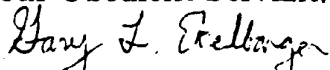
Ralph and Renata Swanson deserve special mention for their contributions to the newsletter. As preservation co-chairs, the Swanson's are very pro-active in preservation issues and they contribute thorough and responsible reports in their monthly segments on "Preservation Update" and "Current Events" in the newsletter. Their work is greatly appreciated.

While I'm on the subject of "The Stonewall," I should remind you that the newsletter is designed to inform and entertain you. Our current opinion feature - "The Most Decisive Day of the Civil War" - continues to generate responses and we will continue to run the series until no more opinions on the subject are received. I also would like to take this opportunity to thank BRCWRT member Bron Wolf for contributing the November soldier accounts for "From the Ranks." If any member would like to donate a copy of a soldier's letter or diary for this feature, please contact me at 703/406-4933. I am in need of both Confederate and Union accounts for springtime events - The Mud March, Chancellorsville, Shiloh, etc. All accounts will be appreciated and appropriately credited.

The sixty-plus members that heard BRCWRT's own Colonel Allan Howey present "Technology for Tragedy" in November were treated to a special program that educated us all on the innovations of weaponry. I highly recommend to make all necessary preparations to attend our December meeting. Having just read Frank O'Reilly's sorely-needed contribution to the Civil War literature, I am certain that you will learn something new and interesting about the Battle of Fredericksburg.

Finally, on behalf of the officers and executive committee at BRCWRT, I would like to extend our warmest wishes for a happy and festive holiday season with family and friends. We look forward to your presence and participation during our 1994 campaign.

I am Most Respectfully  
Your Obedient Servant.

  
Gary L. Ecelbarger, Secretary - BRCWRT

## 1994 Bull Run Civil War Round Table Schedule

All meeting times begin at 7:30 p.m. in the Manassas National Battlefield Park Visitor Center  
All scheduled speakers are subject to change

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| January 13  | William J. Miller, Editor of the Peninsula Journal:<br>"The Battle of Glendale"                              |
| February 10 | A. Wilson Greene, Executive Director of APCWS:<br>"Stonewall Jackson"  |
| March 10    | Noah Andre Trudeau, Author of Bloody Roads South and<br>The Last Citadel:<br>"The Two Battles of Five Forks" |
| April 14    | Michael Malone, NPS Historian:<br>"The Assassination of President Abraham Lincoln"                           |
| May 12      | Ed Bearss, Chief Historian of National Park Service:<br>"The Siege of Vicksburg"                             |
| June 9      | Gary Ecelbarger, BRCWRT:<br>"The Battle of Kernstown, March 23, 1862"  |
| July 14     | BRCWRT Members:<br>2nd Annual Intramural Skirmish  |
| August 11   | Mike Litterst, NPS Historian:<br>"Lincoln in Richmond, April 1865"   |

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### Civil War Trivia Answers

John McAnaw has won himself five December book raffle tickets for correctly answering the trivia questions that stumped BRCWRT for 2 months:

1. Patrick Cleburne was the Confederate Major General whose brother, Captain Christopher Cleburne, was killed at Cloyd's Mountain on May 10, 1864. Comrade McAnaw tells us that his name is pronounced "Clēē-bŭrn"
2. Brigadier General James Archer was the first General that Robert E. Lee lost by capture since he took command of the Army of Northern Virginia. Archer was captured by a member of the Iron Brigade on July 1, 1863 at Gettysburg, PA.
3. James Shields was the Union General who became the only man in U.S. history to represent three different states in the U.S. senate - Illinois, Minnesota, and Missouri.

Congratulations on an Impressive Performance!!!

## Preservation Update

### Chantilly (Ox Hill) Battlefield

Sully District Supervisor Michael Frey has identified a source of funds which might be available to purchase Parcel 5, the last available land associated with the Battle of Chantilly, Fairfax County. The developer of Fairfax Towne Center, to be located immediately north of the existing battlefield park at West Ox Road and Monument Drive, has, as a condition of that approval, donated \$114,000 to help interpret the existing Ox Hill park. This money could instead be available for additional purchases, with the County providing interpretation funds at a later date. In addition, Mr. Frey has secured the approval of the full Board of Supervisors to have a portion of the current budget reserve set aside for Parcel 5 if negotiations for the purchase succeed. All Round Table members should phone Mr. Frey's office (703/378-9393, ask for staffer Paul Liberty) and thank him for his efforts.

### Disney's America

The Disney proposal to build a theme park and other developments on about 3,000 acres at the intersection of I-66 and State Route 15 in Prince William County is much in the news. The new park would be about five miles west of Manassas National Battlefield Park. We attended an overflow meeting of concerned residents in The Plains recently at which much opposition was expressed based on impacts to air and water quality, secondary growth, traffic congestion, and the effects on Manassas NBP.

The BRCWRT has no position on this proposal at this time, because available details do not permit accurate predictions of effects on Manassas NBP or other areas of Civil War significance in PW or surrounding counties. We will continue to seek additional information upon which to base an eventual position. Our goal is to present credible opinion based on factual information to decision-makers. It is equally important that the Civil War battlefield preservation cause not be mis-used by an emotional public with other agendas, or mis-understood by government officials who will eventually decide the fate of Disney's America.

### Manassas National Battlefield Park News

\*The National Park Service recently employed high-tech aerial radar and camera gear developed for cold-war spying to search for unmarked graves on Manassas and Antietam Battlefields. The Park Service hopes to locate and protect these graves before they are looted by relic hunters. This method may also help to locate hitherto unknown roads, building foundations and troop camps thereby improving the overall interpretations of the battlefield landscape.

### American Battlefield Protection Program Awards

The American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP) recently announced the recipients of its 1993 Partnership Funding awards. This year, ABPP is awarding over \$419,000 for 23 projects at Civil War battlefields. Local projects receiving funding are: **Brandy Station Foundation**, \$20,000 to stabilize and conserve historic wall graffiti; **Maryland Historical Trust**, \$15,000 to conduct a survey of

the Monocacy battlefield area and prepare an interpretation plan; **Hanover County**, \$20,000 for planning at the Cold Harbor Battlefield and for interpretive improvements including a pedestrian trail and signage; **Frederick County Department of Planning**, \$21,000 to develop a Winchester/Frederick County plan for battlefield preservation. **Shenandoah Valley** groups and communities will share \$107,400 in grants for planning at several valley battlefields, including McDowell and Cross Keys. Perhaps this will help pave the way for enactment of Rep. Wolfe's valley park legislation.

In addition ABPP is sponsoring several model projects with national organizations including a comprehensive management plan for Brandy Station by the **Civil War Trust**; and a nation-wide study of the economic benefits of preserving battlefield lands and development of model curricula for Civil War heritage education at seven battlefields by the **National Trust for Historic Preservation**.

Finally, the Rappahannock Valley Civil War Round Table will receive \$2,900 to conduct a Civil War Preservation Conference in March 1994. Your Preservation Committee will make every effort to attend.

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### Current Events

December 10 - Christmas at General Grant's HQ - Grant's last HQ in the field, from where he prosecuted the Petersburg campaign and the final drive to Appomattox, will be open for Christmas. Bonfire, hot apple cider, live music. City Point National Historic Site, Hopewell, VA. 7-8:30 p.m. 804/458-9504.

December 11 - Christmas at Stonewall Jackson's HQ - The General's home, office, and headquarters during the winter of 1861-62 in Winchester will be decorated for the season and the 7th Virginia Cavalry will receive visitors and host tours. All those wishing to pay their respects to the General are ordered to report to HQ, 415 N. Braddock St., Winchester between the hours of 7-9:00 p.m.

Arming the Confederacy - The southern effort to build a military-industrial complex. Over 150 Confederate-made weapons and accoutrements. Virginia Historical Society, Kensington and Boulevard Streets, Richmond. A permanent exhibit. Open seven days a week. \$3. 804/358-4901.

Confederate Battle Flag - A new exhibit interprets the history and controversy surrounding "other stars and bars." White House of the Confederacy, 12th & E. Clay Streets, Richmond. Indefinite. Admission. 804/649-1861.

Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center - A temporary exhibit features the exploits of J. S. Mosby and J.E.B. Stuart in Fairfax County. Currently on display are some outstanding Stuart war possessions. A must-see for all BRCWRT members. 10209 Main St., Fairfax. Free.

\*\* In lieu of the recent and long-standing acts of criminal behavior occurring at Manassas NBP, Va Rep. Frank Wolfe has slated a follow-up law enforcement forum to be held at the Park Administration Building (corner of Pageland Lane and Route 29) on December 8th at 10:30 a.m. All who are interested are encouraged to attend. You can confirm the meeting time & place by calling Congressman Wolfe's office - 202/225-5136.

### **From the Book Sutler:**

'Tis December, we know, but no books have we on December battles (Fredericksburg, Nashville, etc.). Our speaker and his new book can provide you with winter-battle fare if you desire, but the Book Sutler shall instead turn back the clock to September and offer two fine studies of battles in the ninth month. We have a signed first-edition of John Michael Priest's *Before Antietam: The Battle of South Mountain*. Mike Priest, you will recall, spoke to us last season on South Mountain, a subject on which he is well qualified to discourse, considering his long years of research and his residency in Boonsboro, MD, which lies in the morning shadow of the battlefield. Our second book, *This Terrible Sound: the Battle of Chickamauga*, was written by Peter Cozzens, author of the acclaimed *No Better Place to Die: the Battle of Stones River*. Chickamauga is a battle we Eastern Theater snobs need to know more about. The war was not won and lost in Virginia, at least so I'm told by Westerners, and Chickamauga was one of the big fights in the "other" theater, so this book is certainly worthy of our attention. Come take a crack at two good books during December's book raffle.

### **In Memoriam: Linda Schumacher**

from Bill Miller

I am saddened to report that one of our charter members, Linda Schumacher, passed away at her home November 12, 1993, after a long bout with cancer. She was 41. Linda was one of the people primarily responsible for the early success and growth of the Round Table. At our second meeting, back in June 1991, Linda approached me and offered her energy and enthusiasm to assist me in running the Round Table. Strapped as I was for help at the time, I almost kissed her. She subsequently proved to be efficient and energetic, serving as secretary of the Round Table for two years, though her activities in the second year were curtailed by her illness. She was primarily responsible for the distribution of our newsletter and the creation of our mailing list. Linda was one of those friendly, cheerful, energetic people we all know too few of -- the kind of person always willing to pitch in and lend a hand and a smile. We have missed her at our meetings these many months, as we have missed her husband, Willi, also a charter member. We are grateful for having had her friendship and her energy, and we extend our deepest sympathy to Willi.

### **Fund Drive: Glendale-Malvern Hill**

from Bill Miller

Don't forget, the drawing for the very fine Keith Rocco Print: *The Stone Wall: Jackson at Manassas, July 21, 1861* will be held at our December meeting. All proceeds go to the Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites (APCWS) for the purchase of the Glendale-Malvern Hill battlefields tract on the Peninsula. If you have not visited our table and made a donation, you have one more chance to buy a chance and help save *two* battlefields. Fewer than 30 tickets have been purchased, so all comers have an excellent chance to win this very nice print. Come on by and take a look. Also, the Tour of the Seven Days Battles led by Mike Andrus, historian at Richmond National Battlefield Park, and yours truly has been rescheduled for April 2, 1994. Please mark your calendars and plan to come along on what I promise will be a great bus tour. Please call me with questions or for information -- 703/369-0602. All profits go to APCWS.

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

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

Submitted by "Handspike"

The Civil War was ultimately won by the Union armies in the field, not by an election nor by the suppression of European intervention. In order for the Northern armies (particularly the Army of the Potomac) to be victorious, the men in the ranks needed confidence in their abilities. This could only be achieved through advancement, not retreat nor immobility. If a Northern army in one theater of the war became stalemated or immobilized, Lee would have the golden opportunity to reinforce the Southern force facing a dynamic foe in the other theater of operation.

In early May of 1864, the Army of the Potomac terminated its winter quarters near Culpeper, Virginia and crossed the Rapidan River to initiate another campaign against Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. In addition to untested draftees and recruits, the Union Army had a sizable portion of re-enlisted veterans who desired to bring an end to the Civil War. The veterans had learned disappointment through experience. In the spring of 1862 they reached the gates of Richmond, only to stall and to eventually be recalled to Washington. Later that year, the Army of the Potomac turned Lee back at the Battle of Antietam; but once again their plodding Commanding-General was unable to follow up on their success. This resulted in two disasters at the Battles of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, followed by successive retreats across the Rappahannock and Rapidan Rivers. Even the army's stupendous victory at the Battle of Gettysburg dimmed as the North failed to follow up on its victory during the Mine Run campaign. These veterans were tired of unsatisfying victories and stalled campaigns that were doing little, save for lengthening the war and producing more heartache at home.

Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant, in charge of all Union armies in the field, moved with Meade's Army of the Potomac in May of 1864. His Overland Campaign required continued advancements of all Northern forces in the country in order to force the Southern armies to capitulate. On May 5 and 6, 1864, the Army of the Potomac clashed with the Army of Northern Virginia in a brutal and bloody drawn struggle forever known as the Battle of the Wilderness. Both sides lost over one-sixth of their fighting force as Lee determined to force Grant and Meade to retreat northward over the Rapidan River, just as he had successfully done at nearly the same location one year earlier after the Battle of Chancellorsville.

May 7, 1864 was the most decisive day of the Civil War. If Grant moves his battered force north of the Rapidan as Lee wishes him to do, the Army of the Potomac will be stalemated and Lee can think about sending reinforcements to other theaters of operation. The effects of another retreat on the tired and angry veterans, as well as the impressionable draftees and recruits of the Army of the Potomac would have been devastating as their sacrifices would once again be in vain.

Grant continued to advance his army southward on May 7, 1864. The reactions of the veterans, obtained in numerous post-war accounts, clearly indicated the relief and joy of carrying a campaign to its eventual terminus. A disappointed and perhaps surprised Robert E. Lee was finally faced with a commander in Grant that was determined to win a war of attrition because both Generals understood that the numbers favored the Union side. During the next thirty days of continuous fighting, the Army of the Potomac suffered over 40,000 casualties; however, they produced similar percentage losses on Lee's forces and, by continually moving around his right flank, forced Lee into a predicament that he previously predicted to be disastrous for the South - a siege at Petersburg. Although many noteworthy battle days would be observed during the Civil War, it would be a simple movement southward from a wilderness intersection on May 7, 1864 that would eventually decide the outcome.

## FROM THE RANKS

The following Confederate and Federal infantry accounts describe opposing views and actions during the Battle of Fredericksburg. Both accounts are from unpublished sources. Some minor punctuation editing was necessary for clarity.

### From the War Diary of Samuel Angus Firebaugh, 10th VA

Friday 12 (December, 1862)

7 A.M. marching in the direction of Fredericksburg. Heavy canonading. 12 O'clock in line of Battle 5 miles from town. Big fight anticipated. 2 and 3 Changing our position. Heavy Picket firing. 4 P.M. Our Brigade held as reserve. Marched back about a mile and Camped.

The other troops Camped in line of Battle. Yankee forces said to be very large. Burnt a portion of Fredericksburg. Skattered the Women and Children in every direction.

Saturday Dec. 13

9 A.M. Some picket firing. Our Brigade quiet. 10 A.M. Canonading commenced. Marched into line of Battle. The Third Colom. 10 A.M. Skirmishing Very heavy Canonading. 1 P.M. Battle Commenced along the whole line. Seased 1/2 past 2 -- Enemy repulsed with a heavy loss. Our loss Considerable. Camped in line of Battle or rather slept. John Andes shot himself through the hand, by his gun going off by catching in a bush. Mat Baer also wounded in the hand. 2 others of the Regt. Fingers off.

Sunday 14 (December, 1862)

5 P.M. (A.M.?) Marched to the front line of Battle. Break of day. Skirmishing Commenced. 11 P.M. (A.M.?) still Skirmishing some Canonading on both sides. Are now lying in sight of the Enemy's line, some 6 hundred yards off. 2 P.M. Yankee wounded barers permitted to come to our line after several men that was wounded on Saturday's fight. Some of our Brigade had a Conversation with them. Brought a couple of our killed with them. Yankees sent over a flag of Truce to berry there dead. (Next follows a prayer "before a Battle." This covers nearly two pages. Other prayers)

Source: "The War Diary of Samuel Angus Firebaugh: September 25, 1862-March 3, 1864." John Walter Wayland Collection. Archives Room, Handley Library, Winchester, VA.

### From a Christmas Night Letter by Thomas Goldsborough, 84th PA

Dear Brother,

..We have just passed through a dredfull Battle called Fredericksburg, Va, it was the hardest Battle I ever was in as yet, our Brigade has the, ---, of making the best bayonet charge on the rebels of the fight. Ed, it was a hard sight to see men fall in the ranks...Our Brigade (Carroll's) was under the fire of the enemy for



26 hours. They layed not 50 yards from the enemy under a little raven (ravine?) on the flat of our bellys and did not dare to raise our hand or foot 4 inches above the level of the little hill fore the enemy would throw grape and canister into us and the sharpshooters would pick us off one by one. Dear brother just emaggine your self and 4 or 5000 men laying on a little hill not over 4 or 6 inches higher than your head and the Enemy throwing grape and canister over your head 3 or 4 inches and when one would strike a man to tear him al to pecis and wound 5 or 6 in the bargan and you be compeled to lay along side of him from Saturday at 3 o'clock until Sunday night at 8 o'clock and have to fight too, it may seme impossible to you but it is the case. Look at the numbers of men killed and wounded. Why we could not turn on our side to get a cracker out of our haversacks without being shot in the side. If you set 1000 Locomotives to whistling in a small shop and made all the noise you can, you will not compete with the noise of this Battle.

Dear brother, this is Christmas night and I am still alive. Thank god for it but if I have to go through next year what I have this year, I nead not speak of next Christmas. Last Christmas you remember i was down to Clairs at lancaster Pa eating turkey and chicken. This time I am eating crackers and salt meat (ho would not live and die and fight for thair country)....

Editor's note: Goldsborough was mortally wounded at the Battle of Olustee in February of 1864.

Source: Thomas Goldsborough Papers. Civil War Miscellaneous Collection, United States Army Military History Institute, Carlisle Barracks, PA. Letters donated by Gerald P. Emmer, Lake Geneva, WI.

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### CIVIL WAR TRIVIA

The first person to correctly answer all of the following questions will be awarded three tickets for the January meeting book raffle (a \$5 value):

1. What was the name of the lead-mining town that was the home of nine Union Generals?
2. True or False (a two-part question):
  - a. General Longstreet was seriously wounded at the Battle of the Wilderncss.
  - b. General Jackson was killed at the Battle of Fredericksburg.
3. Who are the two Confederate Generals who are buried in Arlington National Cemetery?

\*\* Trivia question responses can be mailed to: BRCWRT P.O. Box 951 Manassas, VA 22111, or phoned in to Gary Ecelbarger 703/406-4933. Only one attempt per member will be accepted.

**BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE**  
DUES PAYMENT FORM - JANUARY - DECEMBER 1994



Circle one membership category:

Individual \$15

Family \$25

Student \$10 (age 22 and under)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street or P.O. Box \_\_\_\_\_

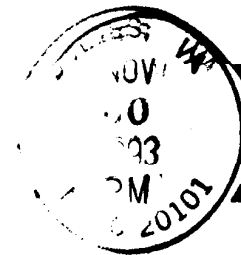
Town \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form with a check for the proper amount payable to "The Bull Run Civil War Round Table" to:

Martha Hendley, Treasurer  
5704 Featherbed Lane  
Manassas, VA 22110

The Bull Run Civil War Round Table  
P.O. Box 951  
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