



The Stone Wall

Bull Run Civil War Round Table
January 1994 Newsletter



"The Precious Day"

Robert E. Lee and Confederate Failure at the Battle of Glendale

The Battle of Glendale, or Frayser's Farm as Southerners call it, was the climax of the Peninsula Campaign. Historians of Lee's army have looked back at June 30, 1862, with regret. Gen. E.P. Alexander thought Glendale offered Lee "the opportunity of his life" and called it "the precious day." Douglas Southall Freeman, biographer of Lee, simply called it "the decisive day" in what was to that point the most important campaign of the war.

The fighting at Glendale was remembered by veterans for its savagery. "No more desperate encounter took place in the war," wrote Gen. Alexander, "And nowhere else, to my knowledge, so much actual personal fighting with bayonet and butt of gun." But due to determined Federal soldiers and a series of blunders and failures by Lee's generals, McClellan's army escaped. Lee was deeply disappointed and wrote in his report, "Under ordinary circumstances, the Federal Army should have been destroyed."

Bill Miller will discuss the battle and the extraordinary circumstances that saved the Union army -- and perhaps the Union -- on that hot summer day. How close did Lee come to destroying McClellan? How might the war have proceeded differently if the Army of the Potomac had been destroyed at Frayser's Farm? Did the courage of the individual Union soldier save the day? Did the tenacity of the Confederate infantryman almost carry it?

Bill Miller is a member of our Round Table and the author of three books on the war. He is editor of a journal of scholarship *The Peninsula Campaign: Yorktown to the Seven Days*. His book on the Battle of Glendale will be published in 1995.

HEAR IT ALL AT OUR JANUARY MEETING!!!

7:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 13, 1994

Manassas National Battlefield Park Visitor Center

FROM THE DESK OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

I hope you all have enjoyed a wonderful holiday season with family and friends. As we move into 1994, the Bull Run Civil War Round Table is experiencing some changes. Those of you that were at last month's meeting already know that President Kevin Leahy will be taking leave of us to attend college at Radford University. We wish Kevin the best of luck in his school work and future endeavors. I will be taking over the responsibilities that the President had previously assumed.

Last November past President Armando Mancini attended the rededication of the Groveton Monument - an event made possible by BRCWRT's monetary donation. I would like to thank Mr. Mancini for attending that ceremony on behalf of the Round Table.

We are always interested in getting our Round Table members to participate in our activities. Our newsletter editor, Gary Ecelbarger, has presented an excellent opportunity for us to do so in the new feature of "Permission to Speak Freely - Overrated and Underrated Generals of the Civil War." I encourage as many of you as possible to get involved and offer us your opinions.

I look forward to meeting more of the members of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table in the upcoming year. I encourage you to bring any friends and acquaintances who are interested to the next meeting to keep our membership vibrant and expanding. New members are always the source of fresh ideas which will keep BRCWRT in the forefront of the Northern Virginia Civil War Community.

Yours in the Cause,

Scott C. Patchan, Vice President, Bull Run Civil War Round Table

FROM THE QUARTERMASTER'S DEPARTMENT

My duties of serving the Bull Run Civil War Round Table as the treasurer have proven to be very agreeable ones. As 1994 opens a new season, it is my pleasure to report a healthy positive balance in the coffers of BRCWRT with all known accounts current. This might be a difficult achievement without a cheerful, responsible, and ever-growing membership, officers that have been frugal and wise with expenditures, and a very fortunate situation of being in a location where so many knowledgeable and talented speakers are readily available.

For a fledgling organization, the BRCWRT has made some very sizable contributions. In 1992 (our first full year) the generosity of our individual

members provided a \$650 donation for a flagpole at the new administrative building in Manassas National Battlefield Park. In this past year of 1993, the membership provided a donation of \$600 from the treasury to MNBPF for the repairs of the Groveton Monument at Deep Cut. The BRCWRT is solicited monthly for many good and worthwhile causes; it is simply not possible to respond to all of them. Sorting out when and where we will make donations is probably the most ponderous task of the Executive Committee. Decisions are complicated by the fact that there are many views and favorite causes represented within our diverse membership. While we cannot do it all, or ever enough, the committee always wants to know how the membership wishes their funds to be dispersed.

From its very inception in the spring of 1991, this group has grown steadily. Won't you help bolster that trend by introducing a friend to the Round Table? After all, there is no charge for attending our meetings. The benefits of membership include the monthly newsletter, presentations by top-notch speakers year round, monthly book raffles, and field trip opportunities. Many of our members have already renewed for 1994 and we thank them for their promptness. You will find another renewal form below. Please mail this form with a check for the proper amount payable to "The Bull Run Civil War Round Table" and mail it to my address (below) by January 31. We hope by February 1st everybody will have reenlisted and we can print an up-to-date roster of our membership for the March newsletter. In the meantime, on behalf of the officers at BRCWRT, we wish you and yours a very healthy and prosperous 1994 and look forward to your camaraderie at our monthly meetings this coming year.

I Remain Your Humble and Obedient Servant,
Martha Hendley, Treasurer/5704 Featherbed Lane/Manassas, VA 22110

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 _____

City & State _____ Zip _____

Phone # _____ Today's Date _____

MARCHING ORDERS!! PREPARE RATIONS!!

The Commanding General once again orders us to make all necessary preparations for our self-guided spring campaign. For the benefit of those of us who endured the treacherous conditions at Gettysburg in October, we hope that Mother Nature is kinder to us this time around.

We will be conducting this (our third) self-guided tour through the Western Maryland Campaign of Autumn 1862. The tour is tentatively scheduled for May 14, 1994 (the Saturday after our May meeting). Once again all who are interested will meet at the picnic area of Dogan's Ridge at 7:30 am. We will begin the tour with a stop at Harper's Ferry where Jackson's capture of the town will be reviewed. After this we will trek (by car, of course) to one or two South Mountain Gaps to discuss the clash of armies that occurred on September 14, 1862. From there, we will stop for lunch, probably at a restaurant in Keedysville, and we will spend the rest of the day describing the action that occurred on the bloodiest day in American History - the Battle of Antietam fought on September 17, 1862.

We hope to have 10 total tour stops for this campaign and will specify where these stops are by the March edition of the newsletter. This tour will be Round Table guided; therefore, we can use any volunteer drivers and tour presenters. We hope to have a big turnout, rain or shine. More details will be provided in future editions of "The Stone Wall" to update you if you are interested in attending the tour. You are guaranteed to be entertained and educated at the same time!!

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TRIVIA ANSWERS

No one in the Round Table answered December's trivia questions correctly. Here are the answers:

1. Galena, Illinois was the lead-mining town that was the home of nine Union Generals.
2. a. True - General Longstreet was wounded at the Battle of the Wilderness.
b. True - General Jackson was killed at the Battle of Fredericksburg - General C. Feger Jackson of Meade's Division, that is (what General Jackson were *you* thinking of?).
3. Joe Wheeler and Marcus Wright are the two Confederate Generals buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

PRESERVATION UPDATE

Chantilly Battlefield

On January 10th the County Board of Supervisors will hold a public hearing on budget issues including acquisition of Parcel 5 for the Ox Hill (Chantilly) Battlefield Park. The Board will hear public testimony at this meeting but will not likely vote on the issue until the next meeting. The Preservation Committee plans to attend and make a statement supporting purchase of Parcel 5. All Round Table members are invited to attend as well. Unfortunately, the meeting is at 10:00 am in the Board Chamber at the County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax 22035-0071. That is just south of Fair Oaks Mall.

To speak before the Board, register with the Clerk of the Board at 703/324-3151. Please limit oral presentations to 3 minutes. Alternatively, a written statement may be mailed to the Clerk of the Board at the foregoing address. Request that your letter be placed into the public record on the "Parcel 5" acquisition for Ox Hill Park.

Bristoe Station

The Prince William County Planning Commission will consider rezoning certain lands in Bristoe Station on January 19 at 7:30 pm at the Prince William County Government Center on Davis Ford Road. County Supervisor, and BRCWRT member, Ms. Bobby McManus favors a zoning density of one house per acre or one house per 5 acres over the entire area. All Round Table members, particularly Prince William County residents, are urged to attend this meeting. Supervisor McManus will speak to us concerning this issue at our January meeting.

Kernstown

The Charles Hardy Grim estate, 375 acres in all, lies partly within the city limits of Winchester and mainly within Frederick County in the village of Kernstown. The F & M Bank-Winchester is the trustee of the estate (Mr. Grim died in 1989) and has decided to sell the land via auction, but has postponed the sale for approximately 40 more days to allow Winchester and Frederick County officials time to buy the property. At stake within the property is Pritchard's Hill, an eminence that served as an important Union artillery position for the two battles of Kernstown, particularly the first battle fought on March 23, 1862 which launched Stonewall Jackson's famous Valley Campaign. The Winchester Common Council and the Frederick County Board of Supervisors have formed a nine-member Economic Development Commission, headed by Jane Wilmont, which is responsible for procuring the necessary funds for the purchase of

the battlefield property. It is anticipated that if the purchase is successful, this once-private property will eventually be open to the public with interpretive markers, or perhaps a small visitor center to aid in the interpretation of the Battle of Kernstown.

The BRCWRT will draft a letter within the next two weeks indicating our strong support for the purchase of the Grim property. Copies of this letter will be sent to the Mayor of Winchester, Rep Frank Wolfe, Governorelect George Allen, and other appropriate city and county officials.

CURRENT EVENTS

January 2 - Pickett's Charge A new exhibit at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond. Eleven of the 15 regimental flags carried at Gettysburg by Pickett's Virginians are on display. Other artifacts are Pickett's sash, Armistead's sword, scabbard and belt, and Garnett's monocular. 1201 E. Clay St. 10 am to 5 pm Monday-Saturday, noon to 5 pm Sundays. 804/649-1861. Admission.

Culpeper City Museum The Culpeper City Museum is finally open with Civil War artifacts and interpretation of Culpeper's important role in the "late unpleasantness." The cavalry exhibit material from the well-known "Culpeper Cavalry Museum", which unfortunately closed about three years ago, is once again on display. 140 E. Davis Street, Culpeper, Tues.-Sat. 11 am to 4 pm. Closed Sunday. 703/825-1973. \$2 admission.

TRIVIA QUESTIONS

Here is an opportunity to win three tickets for the upcoming January book raffle (a \$5 value). They will go to the first person who answers all of these questions correctly:

1. What Southern victory caused the Union to create the Committee on the Conduct of the War?
2. Who are the only Civil War officers that were also veterans of both the War of 1812 and the Mexican War?
3. This Union Brigade was led at different times by two North Carolinians and earned a reputation as one of the hardest fighting units in the Civil War. Name the Brigade and the two Carolinians that commanded it.

FROM THE BOOK SUTLER

We gave away only one book last month. The holder of the second place ticket already had the remaining book, so he graciously let us retain it. But, sir, whoever ye be, we owe you something and should like to make it up to you. We neglected to get your name (another reason we all need name badges), but we will recognize you when you present yourself. Please call Bill Miller at 369-0602 to discuss options. We want to do right by you.

As for our next meeting, the Book Sutler has proclaimed January "A Civil War Classic Month." Every once in a while we have a book or set of books that we feel should be in every Civil War library. Last May we parted with a complete 4-volume set of *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War* (incidentally, we will offer that set again this May). This month, we offer the classic 2-volume set *Generals in Blue* and *Generals in Gray*. With photos and biographies of every general on both sides, these hardcover books, totaling 1,100 pages, are indispensable to anyone who reads about the war. The set will cost you about \$60 in stores -- if you can find it. We will not break up the set, but will award both books to one lucky winner. Come take a chance on two beautiful reference books that will be ornaments to your library, will enhance your understanding of the war and add to your enjoyment of virtually every other book that mentions a Civil War general.

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GLENDALE-MALVERN HILL FUNDRAISING

Congratulations to John Scully of Fairfax, who won the Keith Rocco print of Jackson at First Manassas. The raffle raised \$250 and other donations brought the total to \$266. After deducting the cost of the print, the total profit equalled \$201, which was sent to APCWS on December 14. Because the Gilder foundation of New York pledged to donate \$1 for every \$3 donated to APCWS, the raffle permitted APCWS to gain a grandtotal of \$268 toward the purchase of the land at Glendale and Malvern Hill. Thanks to everyone who bought a ticket or made a donation: You are a part of the largest private fundraising effort in history on behalf of a Civil War battlefield. Next up: the bus tour of the Seven Days, April 2. Details forthcoming.

"PERMISSION TO SPEAK FREELY"
**WHO ARE THE MOST OVERRATED AND UNDERRATED CIVIL WAR
GENERALS?**

The new year allows us the opportunity to present opinions on a new topic, and this one is sure to arouse the interest (and ire) of our Round Table members. For the next several issues of "The Stone Wall," we will present opinions related to the above topic. If you would like to send us your opinion, you are encouraged to do so following these guidelines:

1. You can send as many as four separate views; i.e, most overrated Union & Confederate, and most underrated Union and Confederate.
2. Limit your focus to Generals or politicians (no colonels, lieutenants, privates, etc.)
3. Present your case as briefly as possible. We do not need to see a full-scale biography of the person(s) you select as most overrated or underrated, but rather a list or brief descriptions of facts associated with your chosen officer to bolster your case for or against him.
4. Send your opinion to BRCWRT/ PO Box 951/ Manassas, VA 22111

Gary Ecelbarger will initiate this feature with his selections of the most overrated and underrated Federals:

George Thomas - Most Underrated Union General

This one is a no-brainer. General Thomas was one of the finest and most successful Generals in the Civil War but never received the recognition he deserved because he was not a personal favorite of U.S. Grant. His accomplishments far outweigh Grant's criticism of his "slowness." He saved his army with his stubborn defense of Snodgrass Hill at Chickamauga. His Army of the Cumberland broke through the Confederate lines at Missionary Ridge during the Battles at Chattanooga. Finally, and most importantly, Thomas became the only General in the war to destroy an army in battle when his forces annihilated Hood's men at Nashville. George Thomas was the most underrated General in the war. Case closed.

John F. Reynolds - Most Overrated Union General

As was the case with other Generals who died during the war, John Reynolds star rose higher than it really deserved to based on his actual performance in the field. Aside from a commendable performance at the 2nd Battle of Manassas, Reynolds leadership as a division commander was suspect at best. He was captured after falling asleep during the Peninsular campaign, was not active during Antietam and Chancellorsville (though not his fault), and was off playing with artillery pieces instead of leading his corps during the critical moments at Fredericksburg. His decision to defend McPherson's Ridge moments before his death relegated Reynolds to superstardom; but, if one thinks about it, what other choice should a capable Corps Commander make? A good General, yes, but not a great one.

FROM THE RANKS

The Battle of Stones River, fought in Tennessee near Murfreesboro on December 31, 1862-January 2, 1863, was the only Civil War battle fought in two different years. The following represent opposing first hand accounts of this contest:

Alfred Pirtle: First Lieutenant, 10th Ohio Volunteer Infantry

The advance of the enemy the third time was in several deep lines of battle, with a front long enough to cover both batteries. These lines (I could not see how many, for they had become hid in the smoke) advanced very rapidly and completely deployed, at which instant our batteries opened on them a deafening, unceasing, deadly fire, throwing twenty or twenty-four pounds of missiles from each piece across the small space without any decided interval between the discharges. I found myself at this moment between the batteries in company with Major Loomis and Major Carpenter, commander of the battalion of the Nineteenth Regular Infantry. Like me, they were fascinated by the rash bravery of our foes, who seemed determined to have those guns at any cost. I never saw guns served on trial drill as fast as those were now. Before the recoil was expended, the gunners grasped the spokes and threw the pieces into position; like lightning the sponge was run in, turned and withdrawn, the load sent home and the piece fired. Such a roar was deafening, making our little group use signs to each other...

And the enemy! They were running, swarming across the field, firing and shouting; we could not hear them, but we got sight now and then of their waving arms and weapons, while every moment a bullet hissed near us, or we could see some man in the batteries fall, or perhaps a horse rear, plunge and drop. We kept our gaze fastened on the charge coming, coming on like the breakers of the sea, always nearer at each succeeding wave. But men were not yet born who could longer face that storm of iron sweeping death and destruction to all in its path. They broke, they fled, some taking refuge in a small clump of trees. Our fire ceased, and cheers of victory rose from the many throats of our brave canoneers, which were taken up on the right and left as soon as it was seen that the charge had been repulsed, followed by handshaking and congratulation on all sides, changed into a perfect frenzy of cheers at the charge of the Second Ohio Infantry into the bushes, returning with a flag and a group of prisoners...

P. R. Jones: Company I, 10th Texas Cavalry (dismounted)

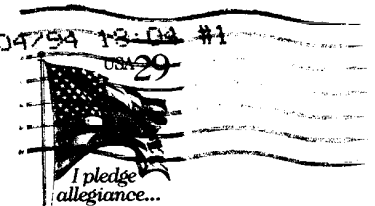
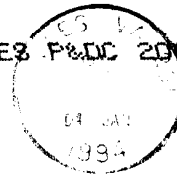
...Just about fairly good daylight, orders were given to move forward. The boys went over the rail fence and soon encountered the enemy's

pickets, driving them back into their camps which were lit up with fires, around which they were cooking breakfast. Many were still in their "pup" tents asleep and were killed while lying there. The onslaught was so sudden and the slaughter so great that they retreated in great confusion, every fellow for himself and the devil take the hindmost. In going through their camps we noticed that they had abandoned everything in order to get away. I noticed one of their dead some two hundred yards to their rear who had been killed still holding firmly to his pot of coffee.

There was a battery or two some distance in the rear of their camp that turned loose on us and killed a number of our men...I fell in with Adjutant Sparks of my regiment soon after we became scattered, and, coming to a log pen in a cotton patch, noticed that the top of the pile had been lately disturbed. Thinking that there might be some Yankees hid in there, Sparks picked up a stick (we had no matches) and remarked: "I will just strike a match and set this cotton on fire." With this he scratched his stick across the door, when lo and behold, eight Yankees jumped out of the cotton and raised their hands in token of surrender. By this time quite a number of our men overtook us and joined in the pursuit. We turned our prisoners over to some of our men, who carried them to the rear.

SEASONS GREETINGS FROM DULLES P&DC 2011 01/04/94 13:04 #1

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