

BULL RUN CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

# THE STONE WALL

*December 1994*



## GRANT TAKES COMMAND

March 1864

At our December meeting Joseph W. A. Whitethorne will talk about the issues facing Ulysses S. Grant when he took supreme command of the Federal army.

Whitethorne is a retired U.S. Army lieutenant colonel and a well known expert of the battle of Cedar Creek. A popular tour guide for the Cedar Creek battlefield, he has written a booklet, "Battle of Bell Grove, or Cedar Creek." He is also the author of a three volume history on the Inspector General Corps.

*Thursday, December 8, 1994, 7:30 p.m.  
Manassas National Battlefield Park  
Visitor Center*

**BULL RUN CIVIL WAR  
ROUND TABLE**

P.O. Box 196  
Centreville, VA 22020

Scott Patchan  
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Gary Ecelbarger  
*Vice President*

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*Membership*

Bron Wolff  
*At Large*

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**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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**SPEAKER SCHEDULE  
1994-1995**

- JAN 12 **McNeil's Rangers**  
Roger DeLauter  
Civil War author
- FEB 9 **The Logistics of Supply: White House Landing**  
William J. Miller  
Author of *Mapping for Stonewall*
- MAR 9 **The Role of Artillery at the First Battle of Bull Run**  
Jim Burgess  
NPS Historian
- APR 13 **The Battle of Ball's Bluff, Oct. 21, 1861**  
Kim Holien, Author
- MAY 11 **Chancellorsville 1863: The Soul of the Brave**  
Ernest B. Furgurson, Author
- JUN 8 **The Battle of Piedmont, Jun. 5, 1864**  
Scott C. Patchan
- JUL 13 **To be announced**  
J. Michael Miller  
Author of *The North Anna Campaign*
- AUG 10 **Jackson in the Valley, June 1862**  
Robert Krick  
Author of *Stonewall Jackson at Cedar Mountain*
- SEP 14 **The Battle of Antietam**  
Dennis Frye  
Author and NPS Historian
- OCT 12 **The Fighting Irish in the Civil War**  
John P. McAnaw, BRCWRT Preservation Chairman
- NOV 9 **The West Virginia Campaign of 1861**  
E.B. Vandiver, BRCWRT Member
- DEC 14 **Stonewall Jackson's Winter Campaign, Dec. '61-March '62**  
Dan Jenkins, BRCWRT Member



## 1995 DUES FORM

Membership in BRCWRT runs from January to December. Unless you joined in October-December, this is the last newsletter issue covered by your dues.

Make checks payable to Bull Run Civil War Round Table. Drop it off at the membership table at the next meeting, or mail form and dues to **Bull Run Civil War Round Table**, P. O. Box 196, Centreville, VA 22020.

Membership categories    \$ 15    Individual  
(circle one)

\$ 25    Family

\$ 10    Student (age 22 and under)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

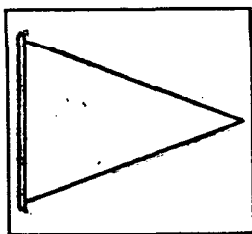
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## Permission To Speak Freely



### Most Underrated Brigade STONE'S BUCKTAIL BRIGADE

By Gary Ecelbarger

Forever derided as the "bogus" Bucktails, and heavily criticized for what has been considered a poor performance at the battle of the Wilderness, Roy Stone's brigade receives my vote as the most underrated Union brigade that participated in the Civil War.

This brigade was organized in the summer of 1862 by Major Roy Tone of the 13th Pennsylvania Reserves, the original Bucktail regiment. He capitalized on the Bucktails' notoriety and set out to put together a full Bucktail Brigade. His recruiting was cut short by Lee's invasion of Maryland, and his brigade consisted of only three regiments, the 143rd PA, 149th PA, and 150th PA. They performed well in their first action at Chancellorsville by capturing 132 Confederates on a May 4th reconnaissance.

One day in the Bucktail Brigade's history has sealed their nomination as the most underrated: July 1, 1863 at Gettysburg. Stone's men held McPherson's Ridge against three times their number in Confederate infantry coming from the north and west. They finally were ordered to Cemetery Ridge after losing 853 of 1317 men engaged, an incredible casualty rate of 65%. Their losses were not in vain, for their staunch defense of the advanced ridge was heavily responsible for the Federal securing Cemetery Ridge later that afternoon.

The Bucktail Brigade panicked and fled on two separate occasions at the Wilderness, but led by an intoxicated brigadier and suffering an additional 500-plus casualties during the two deadly days at least partially exonerates their inability to hold their positions. Mounting casualties at Spotsylvania and Petersburg resulted in the brigade being transferred to Elmira, N.Y. where they finished the war as prison guards.

Stone's Bucktail Brigade was not a premier fighting unit, but the Union army owes them a debt of gratitude for their sacrifice and performance in two years of extremely heated action. They were the most underrated brigade that fought for the north.

# Field Trips

## WHERE IS SUDLEY FORD?

By Armando Mancini

Sudley Ford has been mentioned in probably thousands of Civil War books and articles, yet not many people know where it is, or have ever seen it.

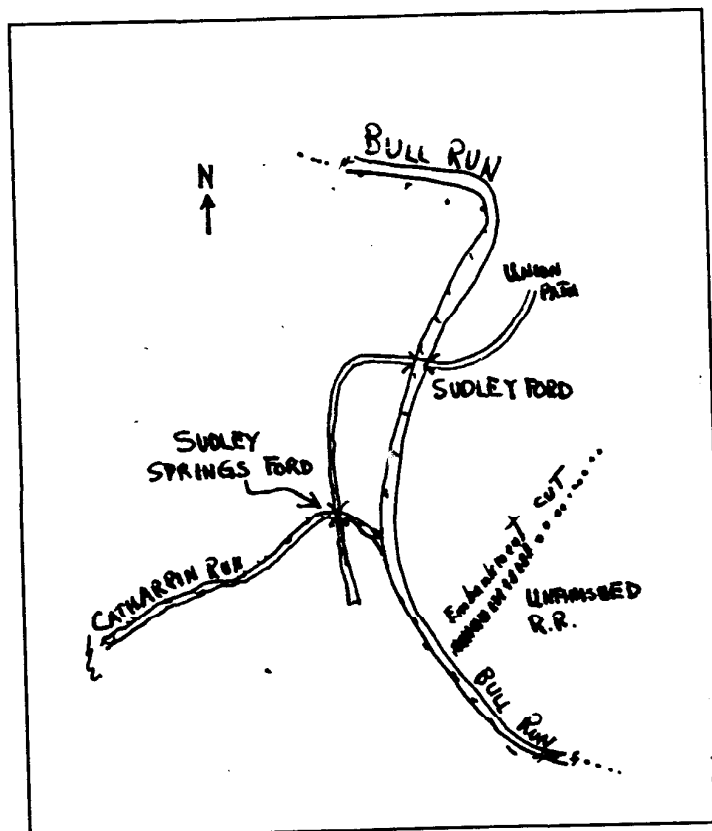
Sudley Springs Ford often is mistaken for Sudley Ford. But Sudley Springs Ford is on Catharpin Run, not Bull Run, and is 100 yards west of the confluence of these tributaries.

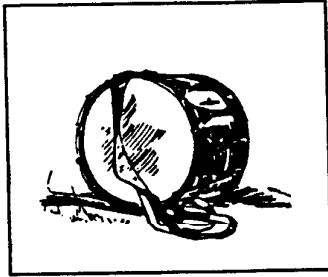
Some wartime photographs of Sudley Spring Ford were miscaptioned as Sudley Ford. A famous photo of a ford showing a springhouse and the Sudley Church in the background, is taken to be Sudley Ford, but is really Sudley Springs. In fact, I have never seen a photo of the Sudley Ford nor do I know of anyone who has.

While photos of Sudley Ford are lacking, many sketches, maps and drawings give us a fairly good idea of its location. By plotting the average location given in many of these sources I found that the Sudley Ford over Bull Run must be within 200 to 300 yards north of the confluence and just about midpoint between the confluence and the northern point of Bull Run where it turns abruptly west (see sketch). I paced the area twice and found Sudley Ford 250 yards from the confluence. This location is further supported by the shape and the slope of the run's banks. All things considered, I now have a good fix of the ford.

Members of our round table crossed and toured the site and the surrounding area on November 26. They also viewed the extension of the unfinished railroad, its embankments and cuts on the east side of Bull Run just outside the park boundary.

If there is more interest in visiting Sudley Ford, we can schedule another tour, but we need to do this with the permission of the land owners.





## EVENTS

Dec 30-Jan 1  
**Civil War and Gun Collectors' Show**  
Ramada Inn  
Gettysburg, PA  
(717) 334-4564

Through April  
**Embattled Emblem: The Army of the Northern Virginia Battle Flag, 1861 to the Present**  
Museum of the Confederacy  
1201 East Clay Street  
Richmond, Va.  
(804) 649-1861

Through May  
**A Confederate Sampler: Objects from the Fort Ward Collection and Zouaves of the Civil War**  
Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site  
Alexandria, Va.  
(800) 388-9119

Through September  
**Mosby and Sheridan in the Valley**  
Museum of the Confederacy  
1201 East Clay Street  
Richmond, Va.  
(804) 649-1861

## Book Review

### **Defend the Valley A Shenandoah Family in the Civil War**

Margaretta Barton Colt

*The newest newsletter feature is a book review column. Commentaries on new publications, classics or favorites are welcome. GARY ECELBARGER considers a family history.*

"How could I portray to you the state of mind in our own and other families at that time. My oldest brother just killed in battle almost at our very door. My younger brother in a Federal prison. My father's farms overrun and laid waste, and all income from his law practice stopped; his slaves ... set at liberty by the federal troops; a large family of young children thrown upon him for support by the death of my sister Maria, the absence of their father in the army, and also by the death of Dr. John Baldwin, his widow and two children coming back also to be supported."

So writes the despairing Robert T. Barton only one-third of the way through Margaretta Barton Colt's captivating family history, *Defend the Valley: A Shenandoah Family in the Civil War*, published by Orion Books in 1994. A direct descendant of the Barton-Jones family, Mrs. Colt weaves the family's papers to present an absorbing story about one family's Civil War. The Barton-Jones family lived in Winchester, Virginia, a town in the northern Shenandoah Valley that endured five battle-sized engagements and several Federal occupations.

After introducing the town and its families, Mrs. Colt chronologically strings together her ancestors' mostly unpublished letters, memoirs and diaries. She lets the family members tell the story through nearly 200 family

letters she found in private hands and archives, and includes over 100 published sources to place the story in perspective.

What a story. Five Barton brothers fought in Stonewall Jackson's division. The youngest Barton brother was a VMI cadet who fought at New Market. Included is Tom Marshall, the heir of Turner Ashby's 7th Virginia Cavalry and a brother-in-law. An uncle, Frank Jones, a major of the 2nd Virginia, left a diary and letters. Another uncle and three cousins also served the Confederacy. Four died in the war.

The soldiers' letters and memoirs describe several battles including Manassas, Port Republic, and Petersburg. But the non-battle descriptions are the most fascinating. Marshall Barton portrays a VMI instructor as "such a *hell of a fool*, whose name is Jackson" and continues with a derogatory poem about Jackson. Randolph Barton visited John Brown just days before his execution, writing "he arose from his chair and received us with dignity and composure." Frank Jones confirms Kyd Douglas' account of Stonewall Jackson denying a soldier permission to visit his dying wife and identifies the bereaved officer. Jones writes about the horrendous Romney Campaign that "it was strange to see the men encased in ice and icicles hanging from the visors of their caps." The book is replete with anecdotes.

The soldiers' service alone would make a decent Civil War book. But the letters about the war's

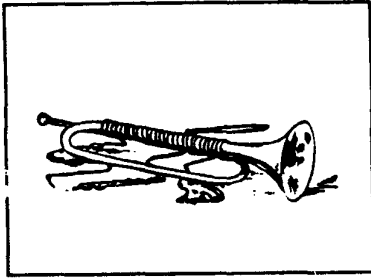


effects on the homefront lift *Defend the Valley* above the all-too-many narratives published recently that rehash the soldiers' perspectives. Mrs. Colt includes letters from the Barton-Jones wives, mothers, and sisters as well as neighbors' diaries. Their experiences are so noteworthy that for better or worse, this book has 'mini-series' written all over it. It's a better story than the fictitious 'North and South.'

Inevitably mistakes were made. Mrs. Colt's debatable analysis of why the family's emancipated slaves left the area suggested that "many of the Winchester slaves had succumbed to Yankee blandishments," an opinion better left said by a family member. I was also surprised that the author used quotes in the introduction without identifying the sources. Only a handful of historical errors were noted: Secretary Seward, not Stanton, visited Winchester after the 1st Battle of Kernstown, and J.E.B. Stuart was not with the 7th Virginia Cavalry as a footnote suggests. But these are forgivable considering the meticulous footnotes identifying nearly every periphery character named.

The book's greatest handicap is not the author's fault. Mrs. Colt includes a genealogical tree but it isn't easy to follow this family, and there are frequent references to unfamiliar people. Another identification problem is the repetitive names: Strother Jones and Strother Barton; two Robert Bartons; and no fewer than three Frances Jones'. Mrs. Colt tries limit the confusion by identifying characters by their nicknames.

Mrs. Colt's has produced a gem of a Civil War book. *Defend the Valley* won't satisfy the aficionado of battle and campaign histories. But for anyone interested in how the war affected citizens and soldiers, this book should be placed toward the front of your must-read list. It is that good.



## TOURS

History America Tours has announced its 1995 Civil War tours.

**Riding with Grierson** will be led by Stacey Allen. Memphis, Tenn., April 22-28.

**Campaigns in Kentucky** will be led by Ed Bearss. Louisville, Ky., May 25-30.

**Riding with Forrest** also will be led by Ed Bearss. Memphis, Tenn., Sept. 27-Oct. 1.

**Lincoln and the Final Years of the Civil War** will be led by David Long and special guest William C. Jack Davis. Washington, D.C., Oct. 7-13.

These tours are expensive but good. To get more details, call 1-800-628-8542.

### **BRCWRT Field Trips**

The field trip committee is meeting soon to decide on the spring and fall 1995 field trips.

If you have any suggestions, call them. Or pass on your suggestions at the December meeting.

*Armando Mancini*

## PRESERVATION UPDATE

### **Brandy Station**

According to the American Battlefield Program (ABPP) Battlefield Update of November 1994, the preservationists' bid for Brandy Station was rejected by the bankruptcy court. The judge ruled that the land can be sold to the folks proposing the racetrack.

### **Shenandoah National Battlefield Park**

The ABPP also reported that the legislation introduced this year in the 103rd Congress to form the Shenandoah National Battlefield Park was not acted on. It is likely to be reintroduced in Congress in 1995.

The battlefield would consist of almost 2,000 acres to cover Second Winchester, 2nd Kernstown, Opequon, Cedar Creek, Fisher's Hill, Tom's Brook, New Market, Cross Keys, Port Republic and McDowell.

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## PHOTO IDENTIFICATION ISN'T EASY

The area highlighted as the unfinished railroad by the ERIM aerial photograph 94-20604-R1 which John Davis provided to us at the last meeting, is not the unfinished railroad.

Rather it is the pipeline easement trace. The unfinished railroad however can be seen in the left photograph midway and one-half inch up from the bottom border of the photograph.

Incidentally, the area shown in the photograph is just north of the Brauner house.

Maybe Mr. Davis can get us stereopairs of the area. That would be interesting to look at through a stereoscope in 3D.

How about it, John?

*Armando Mancini*



## Preservation Corner

### Preservation Committee Meeting

There will be a meeting of the Preservation Committee and interested BRCWRT members at 7:00 PM Dec 8, 1994, at the Manassas Battlefield Visitors Center. We will discuss the focus of our preservation efforts for the forthcoming year. We need your ideas and input. Join President Scott Patchan and myself at the meeting.

### UNION MILLS: PART II

Submitted by John McAnaw 978-3371

On consecutive Saturdays, Nov. 12 & 19, 1994, several members of the BRCWRT and myself conducted extensive ground reconnaissance's of the undeveloped area surrounding Union Mills. The first trek covered the woodland on the Fairfax County Side of Bull Run, and the second explored the Prince William side.

Before proceeding further, please remember that Civil War soldiers considered the Orange and Alexandria RR bridge over Bull Run the center of the Union Mills area. The soldiers also used the term "Union Mills" to describe the location of present day Clifton. For our purposes, the term "Union Mills" defines the geographic area within a two mile radius of the old O & A RR bridge over Bull Run. This area takes in a lot of terrain and is loaded with archeological and historic sites.

On Nov 12, we set out to locate Civil War sites in the Fairfax sector of Union Mills and pinpoint fords across Bull Run. Our sojourn through this undeveloped section was truly a journey back into our nation's past. Even the remains of several junked cars and scattered trash piles failed to mar the significance of the terrain. During the 6 hour hike, we encountered only two individuals and experienced the silence, solitude and natural beauty of the area. The area's stillness seemed eerie, and few birds were seen. We visited a well preserved redoubt; a ring fort designed for four artillery pieces; several rifle pits of extensive length and several hastily prepared defensive positions dug out by infantrymen. We also found several very old house foundations, the soapstone (steatite) quarry and several long abandoned mill sites along the Popes Head and Johnny Moore Creeks. Popes Head mill site appears to be the "Union Mills" of Civil War fame.

We located several fords below the RR bridge over Bull Run including the probable location of McClean's ford (I still am not sure). We defined a ford to be a place where wagons, carts and cannon could cross the run

The presence of engineer tape, ribbons, stakes, drill holes and test pits covered much of the forested area east of Bull Run and disheartened us to the man. All signs point to the imminent development of these archeologically and historically valuable part of Fairfax County. Only a thin ribbon of Bull Run Regional Park will separate Bull Run from the forthcoming residential development.

On Nov 19, Bron Wolff and I set out to explore the Prince William County portion of Union Mills. We determined to locate fortifications, campsites and fords and were favored with excellent weather. We spent six hours in the woodland along the banks of Bull Run and found a number of positions dug by

Confederates which were not on the scale found the previous weekend in Fairfax. We located two fords below the RR bridge and an old narrow road led from one ford up to the high ground overlooking the stream and tracks. No doubt this ancient road trace predated the Civil War.

The apparent discovery of a small military cemetery proved to be the most notable find of the day. Visual evidence indicates that grave robbers long ago dug up the remains of several of the dead. Bron and I believe that these graves should be protected from further desecration. We hope you share our concern and will support our efforts to do so.

Again, the only disconcerting aspect of our reconnaissance was more evidence of impending residential and golf course development creeping northward from the Blooms Crossing housing area. The physical evidence pointed toward development, or if you prefer, "land mauling." Not only we lose scenic forested areas, but irreplaceable archeological and historic sites.

No matter how well several token historic sites will be preserved or how well interpretative walks winding between upscale homes are designed by "concerned developers," they will not amount to more than a pimple on an elephant's posterior compared to the grandeur of the current landscape.

Weather permitting, we will reconnoiter the area again on Dec 17, 1994. We will assemble at Manassas Battlefield visitors center at 0900. We will focus on the Prince William sector of Union Mills. If you are interested, call me, evenings, at 978-3371. Do not show up unannounced as the reconnoiter may have been postponed without your knowledge.

**Bull Run Civil War Round Table**  
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